

# Oncology Update

LEON HESS CANCER CENTER at Monmouth Medical Center  
An affiliate of the Saint Barnabas Health Care System

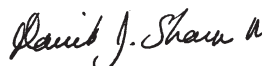
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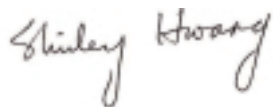
## A Message from the Medical and Administrative Directors

Cancer Services has introduced a new initiative to measure patient satisfaction, and in this issue of *Oncology Update*, we highlight our first report, which provides a summary of patient feedback for BBR4, BBR2 and Radiation Oncology, with a small section for patient comments. The Cancer Center continually looks to improve our patient care, and while we have always kept informal patient satisfaction scores, we have now adopted a detailed format that we adapted from a survey used at John Hopkins University Medical Center. The survey includes sections on physician and nursing care, coordination of care, psychological aspects of care, education and overall satisfaction. We feel our care is excellent, and each of us in cancer services knows that patient satisfaction is extremely important — as it provides a forum for our patients to show us where we can improve. It also provides an opportunity for our patients to provide positive feedback, and we are exceedingly proud that for our Institute for Advanced Radiation Oncology, the percentage of our patients who would recommend this service to others is 98.5 percent.

Also in this issue is a new section titled “Our Patients Say it Best” that provides a snapshot of the recognition by our patients of the outstanding Leon Hess Cancer Center staff. If you have any questions about this initiative, call Trudy Merer, office manager of cancer services at 732-923-6575.



David J. Sharon, M.D.  
Medical Director  
Leon Hess Cancer Center



Shirley Hwang, R.N., M.S., AOCNS  
Administrative Director  
Leon Hess Cancer Center

## ▲ News from Radiation Oncology

### *National Study Supports Monmouth's Use of Higher Radiotherapy Dose to Treat Prostate Cancer*



An original report published in the May issue of the *Journal of Clinical Oncology* that addresses the dose of radiation using external beam radiation alone to treat prostate cancer supports the practice at Monmouth Medical Center, according to radiation oncologist Sang Sim, M.D. He notes that at Monmouth, prostate cancer patients are treated to 81 Gy, which is higher than the dose escalation arm in this study of (78 Gy). The report, titled “Dose-Response in Radiotherapy for Localized Prostate Cancer: Results of the Dutch Multicenter Randomized Phase III Trial Comparing 68 Gy of Radiotherapy With 78 Gy,” provided results of a five-and-a-half-year study whose purpose was to determine whether a dose of 78 Gy improves outcome compared with a conventional dose of 68 Gy for prostate cancer patients treated with 3-D conformal radiotherapy. This multicenter randomized trial showed a significantly improved “freedom from failure” (FFF) in prostate cancer patients treated with a higher dose of radiotherapy. “So you can say, we are well ahead of the pack and continue to strive to make advancements rather than follow advancements,” Dr. Sim says.

To learn more about the Institute for Advanced Radiation Oncology, or to schedule a consultation with a radiation oncologist, call 732-923-6890.

## ▲ News from Radiology



### *MMC Earns ACR Seal of Approval for CT Units*

Monmouth has earned American College of Radiology (ACR) accreditation for all three of its computed tomography (CT) units — including the two multi-slice units in radiology and the unit that is located in the Emergency Department. These units have been under review by three independent ACR radiologists for clinical quality, and three independent medical physicists for quality control, image quality and radiation dose to the patient. Monmouth was granted full accreditation for a three-year period, through May 1, 2009. Through this accreditation, Monmouth is featured on the ACR's Web site in the accreditation facility finder feature as an accredited facility for CT scan, which provides patients with access to that information. To learn more about CT scan or other diagnostic imaging services, call the Department of Radiology at 732-923-6800.

## ▲ News from Breast Imaging

### *Dr. Staiger Named Examiner for ACR Ultrasound Accreditation Program*



Jacqueline M. Wilentz Comprehensive Breast Center medical director Melinda Staiger, M.D., was an invited speaker in the “Oncology Screening and Treatment for Primary Care Physicians” held June 7 at Saint Barnabas Medical Center. She spoke on “Breast Cancer Screening: Who, When, How?” She also addressed the members of the Women's Council for the Leon Hess Cancer Center at Monmouth on the results of the ACRIN D-MIST study.

In other news, Dr. Staiger has been appointed to be an examiner for the American College of Radiology's voluntary Breast Ultrasound Accreditation program.

## ▲ News from Inpatient Oncology

### *Nursing Research Project Targets Needs of Patients with Advanced Cancer*



This month, an inpatient Cancer Nursing Outcome Research Project titled “Study of Unmet Needs, Symptom Burden and Quality of Life Outcomes in Advanced Cancer Patients at Monmouth Medical Center” was initiated. Advanced cancer patients usually present with multiple symptoms, which can lead to multiple needs. Identifying the patients’ unmet needs will help health care providers in providing the appropriate interventions, and ultimately lead to better outcomes. In addition, the information obtained from needs assessment will help to identify and prioritize the areas that need improvement in the health service delivery. The principal investigator of this research project is Shirley Hwang, R.N., M.S., AOCNS; administrative director of Cancer Services, and the inpatient cancer nursing research team is led by Darla Malaspina, R.N., M.S.N., clinical director of BBR-2, and staff nurses Mary Nasta, R.N., O.C.N., and Lina Perumpail, R.N., B.S.N.

On May 19, Pastor Tony Cinardo performed a wedding ceremony in the hospital chapel for an oncology patient and his fiancée. The couple celebrated at a small reception with family. Thank you to Landmark Floral Shoppe in Parsippany, who donated flowers for the bride, groom, maid of honor and best man, as well as alter flowers, and to Food Services for the refreshments and beautiful decorations. A special thank you to Laura Taddeo, Dan Sheehan and Evelyn Nitis of Food Services, and Edna Cruz of Housekeeping, the oncology team members on BBR2, and Bridget K. Saraceno, LCSW, who coordinated and organized the event, making this a dream come true for this very special couple. The oncology team realizes that psychological and emotional comfort are essential to competent care. Our staff clearly understands the emotional impact of a terminal illness and hospitalization on patients and their families.

## ▲ News from Pediatric Oncology

### *Valerie Fund Center at MMC Undergoes ‘Extreme Makeover’*



The new Valerie Fund Children’s Center for Cancer and Blood Disorders has opened to rave reviews from its most important audience — its young patients. Inspired by these youngsters and turned into reality by an outpouring of generosity, the

redesign has breathed new life into the center, where hundreds of children with cancer, sickle cell anemia and other blood disorders each year receive outpatient care. Focusing on the many facets of beach life through the eyes of a child, the new center places a major emphasis on patient comfort in a healing and positive environment. Currently, Phases 2 and 3 of this makeover are in the works. Phase 2 includes a new family and staff conference center, physician and social worker offices and the addition of another “cinema” room. Phase 3 includes renovations of the Third Avenue entrance.

In other news from pediatric oncology, Susan Dulczak, clinical director of the Valerie Fund, won the 2006 Angel Gilvary Award for Healthcare Leadership for the New Millennium. Additionally, through a grant obtained by Dulczak, the Valerie Fund sponsored the first Association of Pediatric Oncology Nurses (APON) chemotherapy and biotherapy course for the Saint Barnabas Health Care System. APO has defined practice standards for the safe administration of

chemotherapy. The first APON courses were held in May, and subsequent courses will be planned.

Joanna Luty, M.D., has been on board for nine months as the pediatric hematology/oncology physician for the Valerie Fund. Joanna is a member of The Children’s Oncology Group, the research group that develops treatment protocols for childhood cancer. Earlier this month, the Valerie Fund sponsored an evening for the pediatricians of Ocean and Monmouth counties where Dr. Luty presented an overview of childhood anemia. The Valerie Fund will be opening up a satellite office at the Women’s and Children’s Subspecialty Center — a service that debuted in Lakewood in September to provide Ocean County residents with access to Monmouth’s renowned, experienced pediatric subspecialty and high-risk maternity and specialty gynecology care — on July 16.

Monmouth Medical Center is among five hospitals in New Jersey that are part of the Valerie Fund — one of the nation’s largest and most advanced pediatric oncology/hematology networks, providing care to more than 5,000 children with cancer and blood disorders each year. In 2005, MMC’s Valerie Fund alone offered treatment to more than 1,100 young patients. To refer a patient, call 732-923-7455.

## ▲ News from Cancer Registry

### *Commission on Cancer Survey is Coming*



The Leon Hess Cancer Center will undergo its triennial Commission on Cancer survey in the fall of 2007, and subsequent issues of *Oncology Update* will review the eight chapters that outline the 36 specific standards that must be met for approval.

The chapters focus on Institutional and Programmatic Resources, Cancer Program Leadership, Cancer Data Management, Cancer Registry Operations, Clinical Management, Research, Community Outreach, Professional Education and Staff Support and Quality Improvement. In 2004, the Commission on Cancer of the American College of Surgeons upheld Monmouth Medical Center’s longstanding prominence as a leading academic cancer center in the nation. The commission approved Monmouth’s “teaching hospital cancer program” for another three years — a prestigious distinction that Monmouth has retained for more than 25 consecutive years. Only one in five hospitals in the United States offering cancer care meet the stringent standards for this select category of approval. Earning the Commission on Cancer’s seal of approval as an academic institution with an outstanding achievement award is the goal, and in the coming months, information about the key standards will be provided. To learn more about the survey, call 732-923-6510.

In other news from Cancer Registry, MMC cancer registrars Barbara Mihelic and Diane Kunen attended the National Cancer Registrars Annual Meeting in Washington D.C. last month.

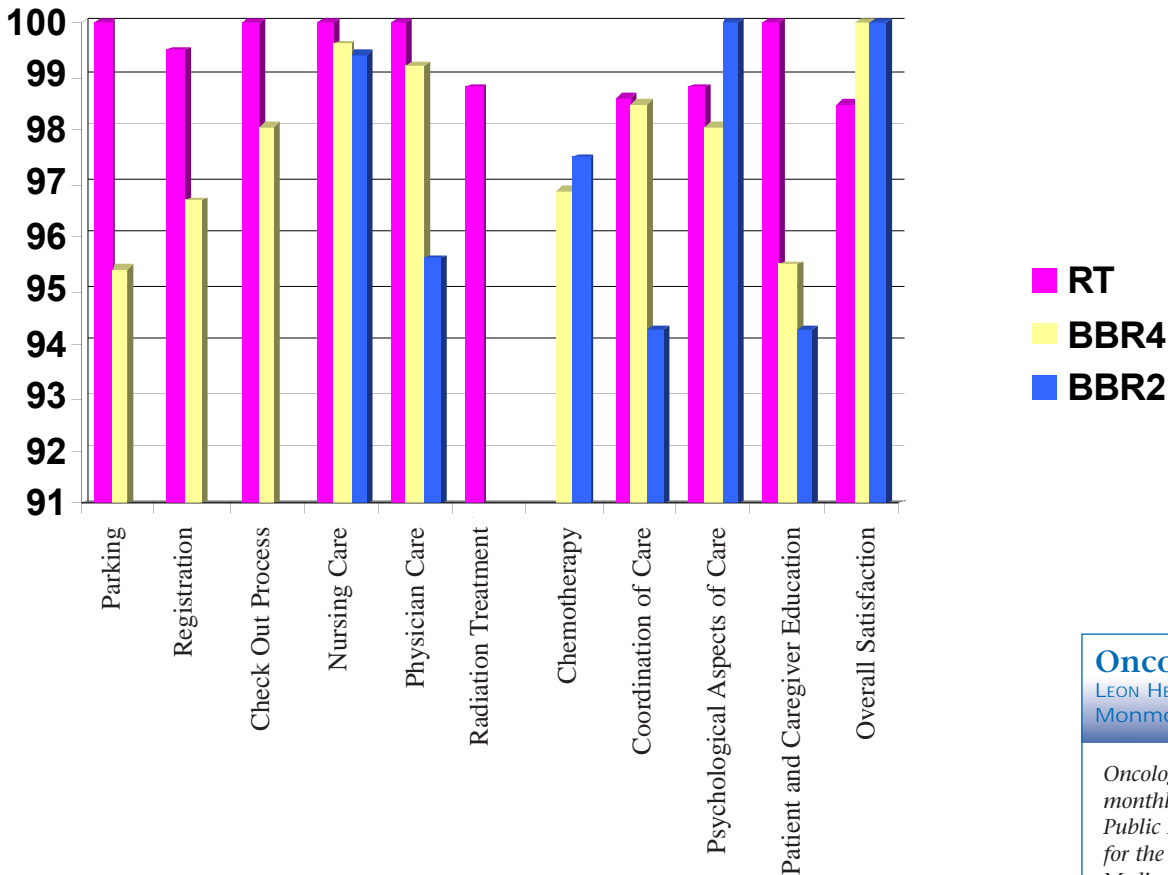
## *Cancer Services Wrap-Up*

The American Cancer Society’s Relay for Life was held Saturday, June 10 through Sunday, June 11 on The Great Lawn at Pier Village in Long Branch. Approximately 40 MMC employees and their families joined the hospital team, which raised more than \$5,600 for the American Cancer Society. A separate chance auction held last month at the hospital in support of the MMC Relay team raised approximately \$3,500 of that total. Our thanks to all who supported the MMC Relay for Life effort.

## Our Patients Say It Best

- *Yes, I was a little nervous when I came here, however, you couldn't find a nicer bunch of people.*
- *Kind and courteous. Above and beyond services.*
- *Would not go anywhere else. Great people and treatment.*
- *Program is above expectation. No need for any improvements.*
- *Shu was very good in the treatment of my radiation. So was the other nurse.*
- *I am glad I came here for my treatment.*

### PATIENT SATISFACTION SCORES CANCER SERVICES MAY 2006



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Monmouth Medical Center

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### Leon Hess Cancer Center Telephone Directory



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- Head and Neck Cancer Program 732-923-6575
- High Risk Cancer Assessment Program 732-923-6711
- Institute for Advanced Radiation Oncology 732-923-6890
- Jacqueline M. Wilentz Comprehensive Breast Center 732-923-7700
- Valerie Fund Center for Children with Cancer and Blood Disorders 732-923-7455