

Oncology Update

LEON HESS CANCER CENTER at Monmouth Medical Center

An affiliate of the Saint Barnabas Health Care System

Vol. 3, Issue 1

February-March 2008

A Message from the Medical and Administrative Directors


Since 1982, Monmouth Medical Center has made a commitment to voluntarily place its cancer program “under the microscope” of the Commission on Cancer – a demanding evaluation process that has included a comprehensive performance review and rigorous on-site survey every three years. While we are proud to once again achieve “approval with commendation” for our teaching hospital cancer program through 2010 (see item at right), this time it comes with quite a distinctive honor: We have received the commission’s Outstanding Achievement Award for exemplary performance in key measurement standards.

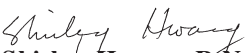
This highly coveted recognition illustrates that our prominence as one of the nation’s leading academic cancer centers is driven by one guiding principle — to provide our patients with the highest quality of care whenever they seek our expertise across the continuum of care. We thank everyone for their hard work and dedication efforts to ensure we are not only “survey-ready” at all times, but that we strive to be the very best in every standard of care.

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In what will mark another milestone for the Leon Hess Cancer Center, we are finally entering the homestretch in bringing TomoTherapy to patients in the Monmouth County region (see item at right below).

This is an exciting moment that will catapult us into a new realm of radiotherapy, ultimately benefiting a growing number of patients through improved clinical outcomes, survival and quality of life.


David J. Sharon, M.D.
Medical Director


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

Monmouth Earns Outstanding Achievement Award in Marking 26 Years of National Commission on Cancer Approval



Monmouth Medical Center has gained “approval with commendation” from the national Commission on Cancer for another three years with an added distinction — earning its Outstanding Achievement Award for reaching a new level of excellence in providing cancer care.

Monmouth captured the highly coveted award for the first time after retaining approval with commendation for its “teaching hospital cancer program” — an accomplishment it has now held for 26 years and is earned by only one in four hospitals in the United States offering cancer care.

The Commission on Cancer grants its Outstanding Achievement Award to a smaller, elite group of these hospitals after they attain top scores in several major categories of performance following a comprehensive evaluation process.

Monmouth received the commission’s latest “seal of approval” and accompanying achievement award based on the results of its triennial on-site survey in October 2007. In addition to being in full compliance with a total of 36 commission standards, it received a commendation rating — the highest level of compliance — in nine specific categories, which elevated MMC’s status to the highest level of recognition.

For more information on the Commission on Cancer designation, call Jenny Lin, M.B.A., manager of the Oncology Data Center, at 732.923.6510 or jljin@sbhcs.com.

▲ News from the Institute for Advanced Radiation Oncology



TomoTherapy on Schedule to Go Live in March

The final countdown to the operational launch of TomoTherapy has begun.

With construction to make way for the groundbreaking radiotherapy system nearly complete, Monmouth’s Institute for Advanced Radiation Oncology expects to begin patient treatment in March.

Monmouth will become the first hospital in the region to offer TomoTherapy, a 3-D imaging guidance technology that is revolutionizing the delivery of radiotherapy for cancers of the prostate, head and neck, and other organs that are near vital areas of the body.

The system integrates treatment planning, imaging, patient positioning and treatment delivery into one system. By utilizing a highly sophisticated form of intensity modulated radiation therapy (IMRT) to treat cancer like a moving target, it combines 3-D imaging from computed tomography (CT) scanning with precisely targeted beams of radiation delivered in a 360-degree radius around the patient.

During the procedure, CT images are acquired in real time so that the shape and position of the tumor, as well as any changes in the patient’s position, can be verified just seconds before each treatment. If needed, adjustments can be made immediately to ensure the precise targeting of the tumor.

Because the radiation dose is delivered with such pinpoint accuracy, exposure to surrounding tissue and structures is reduced, resulting in a significant decrease in side effects.

For more information about TomoTherapy, call the Institute for Advanced Radiation Oncology at 732.923.6890.



▲ News from the David Zocchi Brain Tumor Center



Teens Turn Texting into Innovative Fund-Raising Event

In a novel twist on teenagers and text messaging, the David S. Zocchi Brain Tumor Center held its the first-ever “Text for 10” fund-raising event on Thursday, February 28.

Here’s how it worked, remembering 10 or multiples of 10 are the key: With their cell phones in hand, 1,000 or more teens and tweens representing 100 teams assembled at 6 p.m. at Surf Tacos locations throughout Monmouth County and at Monmouth Medical Center.

At the designated time, they began to simultaneously text persons who have already pledged to donate a minimum of \$10 each. Each participant texted no less than 10 donors in 10 minutes to reach the goal of raising at least \$100,000 to support the Zocchi brain tumor center. MTV and Surf Taco are donating prizes to the top-earning teams. The event’s teen organizers hope “Text for 10” will raise funds to help support children whose lives have been touched by brain cancer, as well as to raise awareness of the disease.

For more information, call the “Text for 10 Hot Line” at 732.528.4517.

▲ News from Pediatric Oncology



Valerie Children’s Center Welcomes Two Physicians

Two pediatric hematologists/oncologists have joined The Valerie Fund Children’s Center for Cancer and Blood Disorders at The Children’s Hospital at Monmouth Medical Center.

Nataly Apollonsky, M.D., received her fellowship training in pediatric hematology/oncology at Schneider Children’s Hospital, New York, and was chief resident at Mount Sinai School of Medicine, New York, where she completed her residency and internship in pediatrics. She received her medical degree from St. Petersburg Medical University, St. Petersburg, Russia. Board certified in pediatrics, Dr. Apollonsky is member of the American Society of Pediatric Hematology/Oncology and the American Society of Hematology.

Anna Perl, M.D., is fellowship trained in pediatric hematology/oncology from Children’s Hospital of Philadelphia, where she was an instructor and involved in clinical research before joining MMC. After earning her doctorate of medicine from the University of Zurich, Switzerland, she completed her pediatrics residency at Miami Children’s Hospital. Dr. Perl is board certified in pediatrics with subspecialty certification in pediatric hematology/oncology.

In Other Valerie Center News

December’s “Hope Concert III,” held at Count Basie Theatre in Red Bank, raised \$597,000 for the center. The sold-out event featured an all-star lineup that included Tim McCloone’s Holiday Express and Bon Jovi. McCloone’s 11-year-old son, Jack, is receiving treatment for leukemia at Monmouth’s Valerie Center.

▲ News from Clinical Research



Patients Sought for Study on Radiation-Induced Dermatitis

Monmouth Medical Center is recruiting patients for participation in a clinical trial that compares the effectiveness of two skin care creams in preventing skin reactions caused by radiation therapy.

“Phase III Randomized Study of Calendula vs. Biafine to Prevent Radiation-Induced Dermatitis” is the first multi-center national study to explore the preventive benefits of both skin ointments in reducing skin damage in breast and head and neck cancer patients receiving radiation therapy.

More than 90 percent of this patient population develops radiation-induced dermatitis, which can range from mild inflammation to severe ulceration, resulting in varying levels of pain, poor functional status and declining quality of life.

The study is open to patients through the Saint Barnabas Health Care System, with MMC serving as coordinating center. Currently, there are 62 patients (42 breast and 20 head and neck) participating in the study. Although a data analysis has not been conducted, initial patient feedback indicates that these products are lessening skin reactions to radiation treatment. For more information, call Jenny Lin, M.B.A., manager of the Oncology Data Center, at 732.923.6510 or jlin@sbhcs.com.

For more information on adult clinical trials, call the Clinical Research Office at 732.923.6582. Details on active pediatric protocols can be obtained from The Valerie Fund Children’s Center for Cancer and Blood Disorders at Monmouth at 732.923.7455.

Participation in Wide Array of Clinical Trials Opening New Frontiers

Monmouth Medical Center participates in clinical trials that provide cancer patients — both adults and children — with cutting-edge care and procedures before they are widely available.

These protocols, which offer alternatives to observation or standard cancer treatment, generally involve radiation therapy, medical oncologic treatment or a combination of both modalities for prostate, breast, head and neck, brain, gastrointestinal, thoracic and gynecologic cancer.

▲ Look Good, Feel Better

This special program sponsored by the American Cancer Society is for women cancer patients undergoing chemotherapy and radiation. Patients learn to cope with the side effects of treatment and feel comfortable with changes in their appearance by receiving a personal makeover by cosmetology professionals.

For next date, time, location and to register, call 732.758.8220.

▲ News from the Ethnic-Specific Outreach Program



Growing Asian Community is Focus of New Initiative

Responding to the health care needs of a multicultural community, the Leon Hess Cancer Center has established the Ethnic-Specific Outreach Program to help heighten cancer awareness among targeted segments of the population.

The program's initial focus will be on reaching Asian-Americans, one of New Jersey's fastest-growing sectors. With nearly 538,000 Asian residents, including 24,400 in Monmouth County, New Jersey has the fifth largest Asian-American population in the country, climbing nearly 95 percent from 1999 to 2000 — far exceeding the state's overall population growth of 9 percent, according to the U.S. Census Bureau. Additionally, 72 percent of Asians in New Jersey are foreign born, increasing the likelihood that language barriers may hinder the delivery of health care.

Coinciding with the observance of National Colorectal Cancer Awareness Month in March, Leon Hess Cancer Center representatives will hold a series of programs geared to the Mandarin-speaking Asian population. "Cancer Facts and Screening: Focus on Colorectal Cancer" will be presented to the following groups:

- Jersey Shore Chinese School: Saturday, March 1, 10 a.m. at William R. Satz School, 24 Crawford's Corner Road, Holmdel.
- Monmouth Chinese Christian Church: Sunday, March 2, 1:30 p.m. at 189 Holland Road, Middletown.
- Fidelity Chinese School: Saturday, March 15, 11:30 p.m., at Marlboro Middle School, Marlboro.

Also, Shirley Hwang, R.N., M.S., AOCNS, administrative director of the Leon Hess Cancer Center, is the invited speaker at a program co-sponsored by the Distinguished Citizen Society International Meeting and the American Cancer Society/Asia Initiatives NJ on Sunday, March 16. She will present "Understanding Your Results: Diagnosis and Laboratory" at the noon meeting to be held at World Buffet, Route 33, Hamilton.

For more information on the Ethnic-Specific Outreach Program or any other scheduled programs for the Asian community, call Jenny Lin, M.B.A., manager of the Oncology Data Center, at 732.923.6510 or jljin@sbhcs.com.

▲ News from the Jacqueline M. Wilentz Comprehensive Breast Center

American Cancer Society's Gala of Hope to Honor Dr. Staiger

Melinda Staiger, medical director of the Jacqueline M. Wilentz Comprehensive Breast Center, will be honored at the American Cancer Society's Gala of Hope on Saturday, March 8.

Now in its eighth year, the annual event honors medical professionals who have dedicated their lives to the fight against cancer. Since 2002, Dr. Staiger has served on the ACS Jersey Shore Region's Board of Advisors, most recently as its chief medical officer, and is a member of its Breast Cancer Task Force. She also holds membership in the Monmouth Cancer Coalition and is considered the region's expert spokesperson on breast cancer issues and screenings.

For more information on the Gala of Hope, which will be held at The Mill at Spring Lake Heights, call 732.758.8259 or e-mail carolyn.stack@cancer.org.

Quick Facts on Colorectal Cancer

- Colorectal cancer is the second most common cause of cancer death among Americans, claiming about 52,000 lives each year.
- Most colorectal cancers develop from polyps. The removal of polyps can help prevent colorectal cancer.

Risk Factors

- Age (90 percent of cases are diagnosed in patients age 50 and older).
- A family history of colon cancer.
- History of polyps in the colon.
- Hereditary conditions, such as familial adenomatous polyposis and hereditary colon cancer.

Prevention and Screening

- For individuals at normal risk, begin annual screening at age 50 with a colonoscopy every 10 years.
- For high-risk persons, colonoscopy surveillance should occur at more frequent intervals.

Screening Options

- Fecal occult blood test
- Sigmoidoscopy
- Colonoscopy
- CT colonography

Services Available at MMC

- Virtual and optical colonoscopy
- Genetic testing and counseling
- Familial Colorectal Cancer Registry Program
- Multidisciplinary and comprehensive colorectal cancer treatment programs

For more information on these services, call 732.923.6575.

In the Community

In observance of National Colorectal Cancer Awareness Month, the Leon Hess Cancer Center is sponsoring the following events at right. Please encourage your patients to join us.

Virtual vs. Traditional Colonoscopy: Screening for Colorectal Cancer

Wednesday, March 5 • 1-3 p.m.
Presented by: Roy M. Dressner, D.O., SCAN Learning Center (age 50 and over) Monmouth Mall, Routes 35 and 36, Eatontown. To register, call 732.542.1326.

Colorectal Cancer – What You Need to Know

Tuesday, March 11 • 11-11:45 a.m.
Presented by: Roy M. Dressner, D.O., Howell Senior Center (age 60 and over), 251 Preventorium Road. To register, call 732.938.4500, ext. 2554.

"To Your Health" Showcase

Friday, March 14 • 11 a.m.-1 p.m.
Monmouth Mall, near the food court, Routes 35 and 36, Eatontown.

Colorectal Cancer Awareness Lecture

Tuesday, March 25 • 1:30 p.m.
Presented by: Marissa Guzman, R.N., M.S.N., APCN, Second Baptist Church, 13 Liberty Street, Long Branch.

Professionally Speaking

Susan Dulzack, R.N., M.S.N., P.N.P., clinical director of Monmouth's Valerie Fund Children's Center, has been elected vice president of the New Jersey Chapter of the Association of Pediatric Hematology/Oncology Nurses.

Ruth Kreis-Orkoulas, R.N., research nurse coordinator in the Department of Academic Affairs, has achieved designation as a certified clinical research professional (CCRP) from the Society of Clinical Research Associates.

Melinda Staiger, M.D., medical director of the Jacqueline M. Wilentz Comprehensive Breast Center, and MMC medical physicist and radiation safety officer **Tom Piccoli, DABMP, DABR**, were invited speakers at the annual meeting of the Mid-Atlantic States Radiation Control Programs, hosted in Lambertville by the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection. Dr. Staiger spoke on digital mammography and the Digital Mammographic Imaging Screening Trial (DMIST) conducted through the American College of Radiology Imaging Network (ACRIN). Piccoli addressed the federal Mammography Quality Standards Act (MQSA) standards for digital mam-

Leon Hess Cancer Center Telephone Directory

- Leon Hess Cancer Center732.923.6575
- David S. Zocchi Brain Tumor Center1.877.577.9800
- Head and Neck Cancer Program732.923.6575
- High Risk Cancer Assessment Program732.923.6711
- Institute for Advanced Radiation Oncology732.923.6890
- Jacqueline M. Wilentz Comprehensive Breast Center732.923.7700
- Valerie Fund Children's Center for Cancer and Blood Disorders732.923.7455

**Leon Hess Cancer Center
March 2008 Calendar of Events**

For Patients and Families

Monmouth Medical Center offers a host of free, professionally led support groups, including the following:

Newly Diagnosed? Coping with Breast Cancer: Second Tuesday of each month for a time-limited period for six months, 5:30-7 p.m.; 732.923.7582.

When Breast Cancer Returns: Fourth Tuesday of each month, 1-2:30 p.m.; 732.923.7582.

Support for People with Oral, Head and Neck Cancer: Second Thursday of each month, 6-7 p.m.; 732.923.6575.

Prostate Cancer (Us TOO): First Thursday of each month, 7-9 p.m.; 732.923.7269.

Valerie Fund Children's Center: For parents and siblings of children diagnosed with cancer; sessions scheduled on an as-needed basis; 732.923.7455.

Bereavement Group: Six-week program for persons who have lost a loved one over the past year; meets periodically; 732.923.6463.

Children/Adolescents Experiencing Loss: First Wednesday, 6-7 p.m.; 732.923.6990.

Kids Need Support Too: For children and adolescents with family members diagnosed with cancer or other serious illnesses; first Wednesday, 7-8 p.m.; 732.923.6990.

Smoke-Free Support Group: For persons who have recently quit smoking, or struggling in stopping the habit; fourth Tuesday, 7-9 p.m.; 732.923.6990.

For the Community

Tobacco Dependence Treatment Program: Six-week program on Monday, 6-7 p.m. or Thursday, 3-4 p.m.; \$15/session; call 732.232.2833 to schedule a free assessment.

For Your Health and Well-Being Stress-Free Workshop – Dealing with Feelings: Tuesday, March 11, 7-9 p.m.; \$10/session; 1.888.SBHS.123.

Evening Enlightenment – Mediations to Transform Your Life: Tuesday, March 11, 7:30-9 p.m.; \$20/person; Tatum Park Activity Center, Red Hill Road, Middletown; 732.842.4000, ext. 1.

Unless otherwise indicated, all support groups, programs and other events are held at Monmouth Medical Center, 300 Second Avenue, Long Branch.

SAVE THE DATE

National Cancer Survivors' Day at Monmouth Medical Center

Saturday, May 31 • 4-7 p.m.

This annual worldwide "celebration of life" unites participants in a symbolic event to show that life after a cancer diagnosis can be a reality.

To volunteer or to join the fun, call 732.923.6952 or e-mail **Bridget Saraceno, oncology social worker, at bsaraceno@sbhcs.com.**

**Oncology Update
LEON HESS CANCER CENTER at
Monmouth Medical Center**

Oncology Update is published monthly by the Department of Public Relations and Marketing for members of the Monmouth Medical Center Medical and Dental Staff.

Frank J. Vozos, M.D., FACS
Executive Director

David J. Sharon, M.D.
Medical Director

Shirley Hwang, R.N., M.S., AOCNS
Administrative Director

To submit information for **Oncology Update**, contact **Trudy Merer Office Manager,**

CANCER SERVICES
732.923.6575 • 732.923.6577 (fax).
tmerer@sbhcs.com