For everything you LOVE.
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A note to our colleagues

Dear colleagues,

At Frauenshuh Cancer Center, we continued to expand our range of services and support for patients and their families during 2012.

The most significant recent event took place just after the year ended. On Jan. 1, 2013, Park Nicollet Health Services and HealthPartners organizations combined under the name HealthPartners and a single, consumer-governed board of directors. In cancer care and other areas, the combined organization strengthens our patient-centered focus and coordination of care, and offers the advantages of collaborative planning and more value for patients.

After transitioning to the Epic electronic medical record (EMR) in 2011, Frauenshuh Cancer Center went live with our Beacon chemotherapy-focused EMR in February 2012. We have fully transitioned to computerized order entry (CPOE) and have begun easier, faster and more comprehensive communication with patients through MyChart. These technology advances help us continue to improve care, streamline documentation and provide information for patients who often are undergoing lengthy and complex treatment.

Also during 2012, we expanded our outreach to the communities we serve by launching Mammo a-go-go, our mobile mammography screening service. Mobile mammogram appointments are now offered at 13 of our Park Nicollet Clinic locations, in addition to Jane Brattain Breast Center locations in St. Louis Park and Wayzata.

In September, our focus on our patients’ mental health and emotional well-being took a step forward when Michael Miovic, MD, became Frauenshuh Cancer Center’s new oncology psychiatrist. It is unusual, and a big plus for our patients, to have someone with his training and experience working within a cancer center. Dr. Miovic received special training in psycho-oncology, which is mental health treatment for patients with cancer, at the Dana Farber Cancer Institute in Boston.

Through Frauenshuh Cancer Center’s Integrative Medicine services, we are doing more than ever to meet our patients’ physical, mental, emotional and spiritual needs. In the feature articles on pages 13-20 of this report, you can read more about our integrative therapies and educational and psychosocial support services in articles by: Miovic; Carol Ann Petersen, MSW, manager of Patient Support and Education; and Karen Carlsen, MSW, oncology psychotherapist.

During 2012, many people designated Park Nicollet Foundation gifts to support Frauenshuh Cancer Center (see Page 24). We are moved by and grateful for their contributions to our successes. Our thanks also goes out to the dedicated members of our 2012 cancer committee (see Page 30) and Patient Advisory Board. Finally, we want to welcome the new members who joined our cancer care team during 2012 (see Page 7).

If you have comments or questions about this report or our comprehensive cancer services, please call 952-993-3248.

Sincerely,

Mark A. Wilkowske, MD
Medical Director, Oncology Services

Laura J. Holasek
Administrative Director
Laura J. Holasek

Laura Holasek is the administrative director of Frauenshuh Cancer Center. Holasek earned her bachelor’s degree in health care administration from the University of Wisconsin-Eau Claire. She has been with Park Nicollet Methodist Hospital since 2000, working as radiation oncology manager in charge of Radiation Oncology daily operations before being named administrative director of the cancer center in January 2011. Holasek oversaw design and construction of Frauenshuh Cancer Center’s Radiation Oncology department, which opened in June 2009. She is a member of the Association of Cancer Executives. Her operational interests include budgeting, daily operations, patient flow, marketing and strategic planning, human resources and project management.

Mark A. Wilkowske, MD

Mark Wilkowske, MD, is medical director of oncology services for Frauenshuh Cancer Center. Dr. Wilkowske received his bachelor’s degree and medical degree from the University of Minnesota. From 1988 to 1994, he received postgraduate training in internal medicine and hematology-oncology. He is board-certified by the American Board of Internal Medicine, Subspecialty Board of Medical Oncology and Subspecialty Board of Hematology. Professional associations include American College of Physicians and American Medical Association. He is past president of the Minnesota Society of Clinical Oncology. Dr. Wilkowske has served on Park Nicollet’s Board of Directors, the Park Nicollet Foundation Board of Directors and the Park Nicollet Executive Medical Council.
2012 highlights

Library open house
On May 30, 2012, Frauenshuh Cancer Center Resource Library hosted an open house so that community members could meet our librarians, volunteers and staff members and learn about new resources available to support patients, families and clinicians.

All Staff meeting
On Oct. 4, 2012, cancer survivor Cathy Perme spoke on the theme of “Celebrating You” at the annual All Staff meeting. She focused on how Frauenshuh Cancer Center team members can support patients through change, and acknowledge when change affects them personally. In addition to being a cancer survivor, Perme is a consultant with C.M. Perme and Associates.

Local TV coverage of patient stories
Feature stories about two inspiring Frauenshuh Cancer Center breast cancer patients, Amy Taylor and Emily Hedberg, were broadcast on KARE-11 during the fall of 2012.

Hedberg, a former art teacher and artist, found a way to use her chemotherapy time to help other women with cancer. She began painting scenes that were meaningful for other chemo patients, after the images were passed along to her anonymously by music therapist McDougal Miller. Hedberg then painted the images on small tiles that became the centerpiece of charm bracelets that she made for the patients.

The story about Taylor, who died in 2008, was a follow-up with her husband, Warren, and children, Arbor and Isabella, who had attended Camp Erin in Willow River. The camp is a grief camp for children who have suffered the death of a family member or close friend. Before she died, Amy Taylor recorded dozens of video messages for her family so that she could continue to communicate with them after she was gone.

Quality improvement
Radiation Oncology completed a Kaizen quality improvement event designed to assist nursing team members in streamlining pre-consult and consult documentation using EPIC, our electronic medical record. Documentation time decreased by 20 to 30 minutes per patient.

Medical Oncology also completed a modified Kaizen event focused on treatment scheduling improvements, which are to be implemented during 2013.

Oncology Update
Our Oncology Update event for primary care physicians, other professionals and team members was held Oct. 26, 2012, in Naegle Auditorium. Topics included: The ABCs of Abnormal CBC; Cancer Survivorship; Guiding People to Acceptance; Malignant Pain Management Pearls; Palliative Care; Alternative Therapies, which included a patient case presentation; A Helping Hand on Hospice; Lynch Syndrome; Latest in Preventive Cancer Screening and HPV: Not Just for Women. Medicine and Community Care grew to more than 100 consults by August, with increases in referrals for advanced care planning, accessing resources for patients and Physician Orders for Life-Sustaining Treatment (POLST) completion.
2012 screening and prevention results

Skin cancer screening
Fraunshuh Cancer Center and Park Nicollet Dermatology hosted a free skin cancer screening event for the community on May 19, 2012. We have hosted screening events for many years as part of our commitment to provide skin cancer prevention information and screening services. Our goals are to educate community members about sun safety and to identify skin cancer at its earliest stages, when it is most treatable.

Fifty women and 15 men participated in the 2012 screening event. The median age of attendees was 54. Six people, or 9 percent of attendees, had a personal skin cancer history. Thirty-seven percent indicated that they had a family history of skin cancer. Of the people screened, 31, or 48 percent, were told that they should follow up with a specialist regarding their skin concerns.

The most common ways that attendees said they had heard about the event included friends or family members, Park Nicollet’s intranet site, flyers, Facebook posts and mailings.

Be Pink campaign
Jane Brattain Breast Center’s (JBBC) “Be Pink” initiative focuses on breast cancer awareness, breast health, community events and encourages women in the Twin Cities to get mammograms. In May 2012, JBBC was the presenting sponsor of KS95’s Team Moon & Staci for the Susan G. Komen Race for the Cure. In October 2012, there was a “Light the City Pink” campaign where local businesses lit their buildings in pink at night to raise breast cancer awareness. In conjunction with “Be Pink,” the second annual Project Glam event at Seven Sushi and Steak Ultralounge in Minneapolis raised funds for JBBC.

From September to October, Park Nicollet’s screening mammography volumes increased by 29 percent. All clinic sites offering mammography services noted an increase in volumes that correlated with the campaign.
**Team spotlight**

A number of new members joined the Frauenshuh Cancer Center care team during 2012.

**Kelly Furda, MD**, radiologist, became the new medical director of Jane Brattain Breast Center in 2012. She specializes in breast imaging and also practices general radiology at Park Nicollet Clinic locations and Methodist Hospital. She earned her medical degree at the University of Minnesota Medical School and completed an internship at Hennepin County Medical Center. She also completed her residency in diagnostic radiology and a fellowship in breast imaging, both at the University of Minnesota. She is certified by the American Board of Radiology.

**Michael Miovic, MD**, joined the team as an oncology psychiatrist in September 2012, enabling Frauenshuh Cancer Center to expand and enhance its efforts to care for the mental health and well-being of our patients. He works with adult outpatients at Frauenshuh Cancer Center and general medical inpatients at Methodist Hospital. His main responsibilities are psychiatric evaluations and medication management, along with brief problem-solving counseling. Dr. Miovic refers patients who are seeking ongoing psychotherapy and integrative treatments to other clinicians. As a member of the Patient Support and Education team, he works closely with the cancer center’s medical oncologists and with Park Nicollet Mental Health. Miovic earned his medical degree from the University of California Medical School in San Diego. He trained in general adult psychiatry at the Harvard Longwood Program in Boston and completed a fellowship in psycho-oncology at the Dana Farber Cancer Institute, also in Boston.

**Adina Peck, RN, NP**, joined Frauenshuh Cancer Center in July 2012. Her areas of practice include survivorship, geriatric issues and holistic care. She earned bachelor of science in nursing and doctor of nursing practice degrees, both from the University of Minnesota. She is board certified as an adult nurse practitioner, a gerontological nurse practitioner and an oncology certified nurse.

**Dylan Zylla, MD**, medical oncologist and hematologist, joined us in July 2012. He is interested in research on how the control of cancer pain may improve clinical outcomes for patients with cancers of the breast, lung, prostate and colon. He coordinates clinical trials that have the goal of improving patient care, relieving suffering and advancing the understanding of cancer. Dr. Zylla earned his medical degree from the University of Minnesota Medical School and recently earned a master’s degree in clinical research from the University of Minnesota School of Public Health. He completed a residency in internal medicine at the Minneapolis VA Medical Center and a fellowship in hematology/oncology at the University of Minnesota.
2012 awards and achievements

Mary Jo Nissen, MPH, PhD, and colleagues in the Survivor Care Plan working group received the 2012 Minnesota Cancer Alliance Spirit of Collaboration Award in recognition of collaborative efforts to control cancer in Minnesota. This award was presented at the Minnesota Cancer Alliance Summit on June 6, 2012, at the Earle Brown Heritage Center.

Amy Spomer, MD, was elected to the Park Nicollet Executive Medical Council. This honor recognizes the excellent patient care that she provides, service to colleagues, participation in committees and leadership.

Lorre Ochs, MD, FACP, served as president of Minnesota Society of Clinical Oncology.

Elaine Bell, RN, was among the nurses honored in Mpls. St. Paul Magazine’s first Outstanding Nurse recognition program. She was honored at a banquet on July 19, 2012, and was featured in the August issue of the magazine.

Karen Swenson, PHD, RN, AOCN, was elected director at large for the Metro MN Chapter of Oncology Nursing Society.

Susan Koering, RHIA, CTR, and Frauneshuh Cancer Center’s oncology registry manager, was appointed to a three-year term as chair of the National Cancer Registrar’s Association Education Foundation. The organization supports the advancement of the cancer registry profession through education and research.

Mary Ehresman, RN, received the 2012 Nurse of Excellence Award.

Joan Clark, RN, received the Helen Berg Service Award, which was established in 2009 and is named for our dear friend and colleague who lived and worked courageously with cancer for many years. Berg started as a Park Nicollet volunteer and later worked as our welcome desk concierge.

Susan O’Connell, BS, RHIT, Oncology Registry, passed the exam to attain her certified tumor registrar (CTR) credential.

Lisa Bugman and Ella, her canine pet therapy companion, who volunteer with Frauneshuh Cancer Center, Park Nicollet Home Care and Hospice, received the Earl Dresser Volunteer Services Award.
Oncology registry

Most common cancer sites
The four most common cancers for Park Nicollet patients in 2012 (excluding skin cancers) were breast, prostate, lung and colorectal. These four sites, listed by the American Joint Committee on Cancer (AJCC)* stage in Table 1, account for 46 percent of all cases.

In Minnesota, the most common cancers listed in order of occurrence as published in the American Cancer Society’s “Cancer Facts and Figures 2012,” are prostate, breast, lung and colorectal.

Table 1:
Four most common sites by AJCC stage at Park Nicollet

*Carcinoids of the appendix not included
Table 2 compares by site and percentage Park Nicollet’s case totals with the estimated number of cancer cases in Minnesota and the United States.

For these four cancer sites and all cancers, initial diagnosis and treatment at an earlier stage is a very important prognostic variable. The earlier the stage at which these cancers are diagnosed and treated, the better the patients’ long-term prognosis and survival.

Table 2:
Four most common cancer sites

Table 2 compares by site and percentage Park Nicollet’s case totals with the estimated number of cancer cases in Minnesota and the United States.

For these four cancer sites and all cancers, initial diagnosis and treatment at an earlier stage is a very important prognostic variable. The earlier the stage at which these cancers are diagnosed and treated, the better the patients’ long-term prognosis and survival.

Table 3:
Five-year observed survival, cases diagnosed 2003-2006

Table 3 shows the five-year observed survival of five cancer sites and all cancers at Park Nicollet compared to national figures. This includes only patients with one primary cancer. Observed survival is the actual percentage of patients still alive at some specified time after diagnosis of cancer. It considers deaths from all causes, cancer or otherwise.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Site</th>
<th>Park Nicollet cases</th>
<th>2003-2006 Park Nicollet</th>
<th>2003-2006 NCDB*</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Breast</td>
<td>1,080</td>
<td>90%</td>
<td>86%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Colon</td>
<td>249</td>
<td>66%</td>
<td>55%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rectum</td>
<td>64</td>
<td>78%</td>
<td>59%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lung</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-small cell</td>
<td>381</td>
<td>14%</td>
<td>17%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Small cell</td>
<td>81</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prostate</td>
<td>611</td>
<td>89%</td>
<td>88%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>All cancers**</td>
<td>4,657</td>
<td>69%***</td>
<td>58%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*National Cancer Data Base
**In-situ and invasive cancers
***Park Nicollet exceeds national level by 11 percent
Table 4: 
Fraunshuh Cancer Center administrative report 2012

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>2011</th>
<th>2012</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Analytic cases*</td>
<td>2,139</td>
<td>2,080</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nonanalytic cases**</td>
<td>56</td>
<td>48</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cases presented at tumor conferences (general, gynecologic, breast, lung, gastrointestinal)</td>
<td>521</td>
<td>596</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Physicians attendance at conference</td>
<td>1,145</td>
<td>1,123</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Radiation therapy patients (new)</td>
<td>671</td>
<td>609</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Radiation therapy treatment fields</td>
<td>15,937</td>
<td>15,472</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Outpatient IV therapy visits</td>
<td>27,556</td>
<td>29,294</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Outpatient oncology-hematology clinic visits</td>
<td>23,333</td>
<td>24,169</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New cancer admissions to hospice</td>
<td>384</td>
<td>311</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New cancer admissions to home care</td>
<td>126</td>
<td>59</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Percent of patients entered on protocols</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>7%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Analytic: cases diagnosed and/or having initial therapy at Park Nicollet
**Nonanalytic: cases having all initial therapy elsewhere, seen at Park Nicollet for further care and treatment
## Table 5: 2012 cancer sites diagnosed by tumor site and gender

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Tumor Site</th>
<th>Total Cases</th>
<th>Male</th>
<th>Female</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Breast</td>
<td>477 23%</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>473 39%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Skin</td>
<td>253 12%</td>
<td>142 16%</td>
<td>111 9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prostate</td>
<td>187 9%</td>
<td>187 21%</td>
<td>0 0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lung</td>
<td>164 8%</td>
<td>73 8%</td>
<td>91 8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Colorectal</td>
<td>126 6%</td>
<td>59 7%</td>
<td>67 5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lymphoma</td>
<td>94 5%</td>
<td>50 5%</td>
<td>44 4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bladder</td>
<td>89 4%</td>
<td>57 6%</td>
<td>32 3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other/ill-defined</td>
<td>78 4%</td>
<td>35 4%</td>
<td>43 4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Uterus</td>
<td>70 3%</td>
<td>0 0%</td>
<td>70 6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leukemia</td>
<td>66 3%</td>
<td>41 5%</td>
<td>25 2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Endocrine</td>
<td>55 3%</td>
<td>16 2%</td>
<td>39 3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Head and neck</td>
<td>54 3%</td>
<td>43 5%</td>
<td>11 1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other GI</td>
<td>52 3%</td>
<td>30 3%</td>
<td>22 2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kidney</td>
<td>48 2%</td>
<td>27 3%</td>
<td>21 2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nervous system</td>
<td>40 2%</td>
<td>15 2%</td>
<td>25 2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pancreas</td>
<td>37 2%</td>
<td>18 2%</td>
<td>19 1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ovary</td>
<td>32 2%</td>
<td>0 0%</td>
<td>32 3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Multiple myeloma</td>
<td>30 1%</td>
<td>17 2%</td>
<td>13 1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unknown primary</td>
<td>30 1%</td>
<td>15 2%</td>
<td>15 1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stomach</td>
<td>26 1%</td>
<td>17 2%</td>
<td>9 1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Testis</td>
<td>27 1%</td>
<td>27 3%</td>
<td>0 0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vulva</td>
<td>26 1%</td>
<td>0 0%</td>
<td>26 2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Anus</td>
<td>19 1%</td>
<td>12 1%</td>
<td>7 1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>2,080 100%</strong></td>
<td><strong>885 100%</strong></td>
<td><strong>1,195 100%</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Patient Support and Education:  
Who we are and what we do

By Carol Ann Petersen, MSW, MAHS

“At Frauenshuh Cancer Center we understand that cancer affects your whole life. It is a life-changing event.”

This statement, found in our new publication for patients, Your Care Guide for Living With Cancer, offers reassurance that our oncology doctors, nurses and support staff “get it” when it comes to caring for patients with a cancer diagnosis. Along with state-of-the-art medical care and treatment, Frauenshuh Cancer Center provides “whole person” support by meeting the physical, psychosocial, emotional and spiritual needs of our patients and their families.

Patient support

The Patient Support and Education (PS&E) team at Frauenshuh Cancer Center comprises an array of experts from a variety of disciplines: oncology psychotherapy, medical social work, oncology psychiatry, spiritual care, genetic counseling, music therapy and guided imagery.

In addition to the direct care services provided by PS&E team members, Frauenshuh Cancer Center offers integrative therapy services. Therapies include acupressure, reflexology, massage therapy, Healing Touch and Reiki. Each patient is offered two sessions per month free of charge. Integrative Therapy is supported by a generous grant from Park Nicollet Foundation, as well as Frauenshuh Cancer Center’s annual Marathons of Hope fundraiser. All of our integrative therapists are certified or licensed practitioners.

Additional “whole person” patient support is offered by music therapy interns who, every year, provide hundreds of hours of music therapy support for patients before, during and after their cancer treatments.

Patient education

It is our goal to equip all Frauenshuh Cancer Center patients with the knowledge, skills and confidence to manage their diagnoses. We offer classes and support groups for our patients, their family members, caregivers and significant others on the cancer journey.

We offer classes for newly-diagnosed patients, caregivers of patients with cancer and those wanting to learn more about lymphedema prevention and management, plus a Fabulous Faces skin care class and nutrition classes.

Support groups include: Advanced Breast Cancer Couples, Spanish Support Group (for Spanish-speaking patients and their families), and Multiple Myeloma, a survivor-led group for patients, family and friends.

2012 milestones

We began the year with an assessment and evaluation process that encompassed every aspect of PS&E – from direct care services to classes, groups and patient education literature. By mid-2012 we identified areas of strength and growth, prioritized needs and established goals. By year’s end, we had welcomed our new oncology psychiatrist, Michael Miovic, MD, and immediately set to work strategizing and planning for 2013.
One of the outcomes of the assessment and evaluation process was the development of a new Survivorship Education Program that is designed to address the psychosocial, emotional, spiritual and physical needs of our cancer survivors. This program was set to launch in January 2013 and include:

- A class that addresses common emotional responses patients experience post-treatment (see article by oncology psychotherapist Karen Carlsen on Page 18)
- A monthly Survivorship Education Series on topics of interest to cancer survivors, including nutrition, vulnerability and hope, genetics, physical therapy and rehab, health care directives and more
- An opportunity for patients to meet with a medical social worker for post-treatment and survivorship support and assessment

During 2012, we also developed Your Care Guide for Living with Cancer, an educational tool for patients, clinicians and support staff. The guide promotes communication and understanding, encouraging patients to participate fully in their care plans. Patients can bring it to appointments, groups and classes and use it as a shared resource with family and friends. We will begin introducing the care guide to patients and families in 2013.

We also developed a new mental health assessment tool and standard for all patients with cancer (see Michael Miovic’s article on Page 16).

Also in 2012, medical librarians from Arneson Library at Methodist Hospital joined Frauenshuh Cancer Center Resource Library. The medical librarians provide a rare and exceptional support service for our patients with cancer, including skills and expertise in Internet searches and research for all Frauenshuh Cancer Center patients and family members.
Carol Ann Petersen, MSW, MAHS  
Manager, Patient Support and Education  
Frauenshuh Cancer Center

Carol Ann Petersen has a background in palliative care, hospice, community health, education, holistic health and spiritual direction. She brings extensive experience to her role managing Frauenshuh Cancer Center’s support and education services for patients with cancer. Her areas of interest include loss, grief, transition, resilience, transformation and capacity building.

“I am honored to work on behalf of patients and families as they make their way living with cancer,” Petersen said. “I look forward to supporting each and every one of them on their journeys.”

Petersen earned master’s degrees in medical social work and holistic health from St. Catherine University and St. Thomas University in St. Paul. She has a certificate in spiritual direction from the St. Paul-based Spiritual Guidance Training Program. Petersen earned a bachelor’s degree in community health and education from Humboldt State University in Arcata, Calif. She is a certified Healing Touch practitioner and a member of the National Association of Social Workers, the Minnesota Coalition for Death Education and Support, the American Psychosocial Oncology Society and Spiritual Directors International.

Petersen, originally from California, is now a Minnesotan who savors time outdoors. She enjoys gardening, bicycling, hiking, paddle boarding, canoeing and snow shoeing, as well as music, cooking, reading, volunteering and leisure time spent with neighbors, friends and family.
Frauenshuh Cancer Center adds oncology psychiatrist plus new screenings, classes and support

By Michael Miovic, MD

In what is an unusual embedded role within a cancer treatment program, I became Frauenshuh Cancer Center’s oncology psychiatrist in September 2012. I’m excited about bringing psychiatric services to the center’s excellent spectrum of care.

My role is to work with patients to conduct psychiatric evaluations and manage medications to help with mood, anxiety, fatigue, insomnia and cognitive changes related to cancer treatment. When patients and families need help coping with stressful transition points in treatment, such as entering survivorship or dealing with progressive disease, I can provide short-term supportive counseling. When I believe patients can benefit from ongoing psychotherapy, integrative therapies, palliative care or chaplaincy support, I refer them to appropriate clinicians.

Screening for depression

My first project upon arriving at Frauenshuh Cancer Center was to help design and implement a method to screen for depression and assess suicide risk in all new patients. By Jan. 1, 2015, new regulatory guidelines will require all cancer centers certified by the Commission on Cancer to screen all patients with cancer for psychosocial distress. We’re proud to report that Frauenshuh Cancer Center is ahead of the curve.

For our screenings, we use the PHQ-9, a widely-used scale for assessing depressive symptoms, and added a set of questions to assess suicide risk. Our psychosocial support team worked with nursing and oncology staff to develop a work flow for distributing screening tools to all new patients with cancer. Based on the level of distress and risk reported, patients are told either that they do not need further evaluation or are offered routine or urgent mental health follow up. I conduct the initial evaluations for patients who choose to follow up, and together we develop an appropriate treatment plan.

We began planning for this screening project in 2012. In January 2013 we completed staff training, and the program formally began in February. We continue to follow the patients who have been screened and treated. In the fall of 2013, we will collect data on the percentage of new patients assessed for depression by the second office visit. We will enter this information into a database managed by the American Society of Clinical Oncology (ASCO). In early 2014 we will be able see how we are doing as compared to other cancer centers around the country.

In the future, we hope to expand our list of screening questions to cover a broad range of psychosocial needs, and to use tablet computers and online access to streamline the delivery of initial and follow-up assessments.

Support groups and classes

During 2012, I also collaborated with other members of the Patient Support and Education team to plan a series of support groups and educational classes for cancer survivors. These include classes for newly-diagnosed patients and for caregivers. We offer support groups for couples dealing with breast cancer, for patients and families dealing with multiple myeloma and more.

Our team has no shortage of ideas, and we look forward to developing and offering additional education and support services in the future.
Michael Miovic, MD  
Oncology Psychiatrist  
Frauenshuh Cancer Center  

Michael Miovic is a consultation-liaison psychiatrist who specializes in psycho-oncology, or mental health treatment for patients with cancer. He works with adult outpatients at Frauenshuh Cancer Center and general medical inpatients at Methodist Hospital. His main responsibilities are psychiatric evaluations and medication management, along with brief problem-solving counseling. Dr. Miovic refers patients who are seeking ongoing psychotherapy and/or integrative treatments to other clinicians.

“My focus is on helping patients and families cope with the emotional impact of medical illness and problems such as depression, anxiety, fatigue, insomnia and memory or mental status changes,” Dr. Miovic said. “My philosophy is to take a ‘whole person’ approach that combines the best that medications and talk therapies have to offer with other integrative approaches.”

Dr. Miovic earned his medical degree from the University of California Medical School in San Diego. He trained in general adult psychiatry at the Harvard Longwood Program in Boston and completed a fellowship in psycho-oncology at the Dana Farber Cancer Institute, also in Boston, where he then worked as an attending psychiatrist for seven years and received an award for psychosocial oncology and palliative care teaching in 2007. He is a member of the American Psychiatric Association.

Dr. Miovic grew up near Philadelphia. He moved to Minnesota in 2012. He enjoys time with his family, traveling and creative writing. He has studied Indian spiritual philosophy for more than 30 years and is involved with the development of Auroville, an intentional community in southern India that is inspired by the ideals of human unity, international cooperation, sustainable living and non-denominational spirituality.
Listening to the feelings and changes that cancer brings

By Karen Carlsen, MSW, LICSW

“I always wanted a happy ending ... now I’ve learned the hard way that some poems don’t rhyme, and some stories don’t have a clear beginning, middle and end. Life is about not knowing, having to change, taking the moment and making the best of it without knowing what’s going to happen next ...”

– Gilda Radner

As an oncology psychotherapist, I listen to patients tell their stories of cancer: how it was diagnosed, the course of treatment, and how the cancer impacts their lives, their loved ones and what they hope for. Many patients express their feelings through words like “this wasn’t supposed to happen” or “I did all the right things so how can this be happening?” Very few expect to get cancer, regardless of its prevalence. It happens to others, not to me or my mother or my son. These reactions are understandable and are some of the universal emotional responses to the experience of cancer. Everyone who goes through a diagnosis of cancer has a unique story to tell. Through all the stories I have heard, one thing remains constant: cancer changes one’s storyline.

I am part of a psychosocial-spiritual support team at Frauenshuh Cancer Center, and it is my job to help support those who are affected, both emotionally and psychologically, by the changes cancer brings. Although Frauenshuh Cancer Center’s primary mission is to provide expert medical and physical cancer care, the job of the support and education team is to help people cope and adjust to the impact that cancer has on their lives – emotionally, psychologically, spiritually and relationally.

My colleagues and I have developed various ways to support our patients through the experience of cancer. We see people individually, as couples, families and in groups. As a team, we believe that every patient is unique, and by simply walking through the cancer center doors, every one of our patients is already a survivor.

Loss and change

A diagnosis of cancer brings a myriad of seen and unforeseen changes to all aspects of life: schedules, routines, bodies, feelings, relationships, roles and assumptions. In addition, it may bring many losses that are harder to identify: loss of identity, loss of income, loss of hair or other body part, loss of control, loss of confidence and loss of dreams. Always there is a loss of assumptions – about the future, about health, about how we thought our lives would go. Much of my job involves helping people identify the ways in which cancer has changed their storyline. I help patients and their loved ones look at not only what has been lost, but possibly what has been found, at what needs to be grieved and let go and what needs to be reinforced and built up.

We are not taught to grieve; we learn through loss how to grieve. We also are not taught how to cope with cancer; we do the best we can with what we know. When a diagnosis comes, well-meaning friends and family support us by encouraging us to “be strong” and to “stay positive.”
We are told we can “beat this thing” and that many will be cheering us on or praying that we are the ones to defy the odds. These sentiments are meant well and can often bring great comfort. And sometimes, these sentiments can inadvertently put pressure on the patient and add to the stress of the experience.

I often see people in my office who are afraid to admit they don’t feel strong or positive. They worry that if they acknowledge the fear, sadness and loss of control they are feeling, they may disappoint their supporters. Or worse, they may bring on more cancer. Many of us fear that if we don’t “stay positive” we will make ourselves more vulnerable to disease – as though by admitting that we are afraid, we will actually bring to life that which frightens us most. To address this with patients, I often quote research that illustrates an important coping strategy.

**The power of expressing feelings**

The emerging field of psycho-neuro-immunology underscores the connections between our minds, our attitudes and our health. Research refutes commonly held assumptions about how what we feel affects our health. Many people assume that feeling positive emotions (joy, calm, happiness) strengthens the immune response, making us less vulnerable to disease. Conversely, feeling negative emotions (anger, disappointment, hurt, fear) is assumed to weaken our immunity, possibly making our bodies more susceptible to disease. However, studies have shown that authentic expression of any feeling we have has a positive impact on our immunity. In other words, allowing ourselves to feel and express what we are actually feeling can be good for us. Supporting patients as they identify, address, allow and experience the emotions that come as they cope with illness lies at the heart of my work and the work of my colleagues.

Cancer changes the storyline and sometimes helps awaken us to what is important, what needs our attention, the people we are grateful for and how we want to live. Though the story of cancer may not fit with what we wanted or assumed about our life stories, it can become a very powerful and life-giving story of healing. It is an honor to listen as patients tell and hear their own stories of courage, fear, perseverance, regret, trust and hope.
Karen Carlsen is a social worker and psychotherapist trained in the art of spiritual direction. She provides therapy, support, advocacy and resources for patients and their families who are learning how to best cope with cancer and the impact it has on their lives. She focuses on patients’ emotional, psychological and spiritual needs. Carlsen counsels individuals, couples and families. She also enjoys teaching cancer survivorship classes and facilitating support groups.

“I believe that each patient diagnosed with cancer has a story to tell and a need for non-judgmental listening,” she said. “By specializing in the areas of loss, grief, attachment, depression and anxiety, I am well suited to walk with patients in their fears, insights and struggles with cancer and its impact on their lives. Though not all cancer can be cured, healing is possible. I hope to be part of that healing process.”

Carlsen earned a bachelor’s degree in social work and women’s studies at St. Olaf College in Northfield, Minn., and a master of social work degree from the College of St. Catherine in St. Paul. She is a member of National Association of Social Workers, Association of Oncology Social Workers, and Minnesota Coalition for Death Education and Support and is an advisory panel member for Cancer Legal Line.
**Oncology research review**

Clinical trials are important in making advances in cancer treatment by systematically evaluating how effective new treatments or interventions are for patients. Our Oncology Research Program offers access to state-of-the-art treatment options for patients undergoing cancer treatments. We also conduct a wide variety of studies focused on cancer prevention and symptom management for patients undergoing cancer treatments, and studies to help us understand the biology of cancer. Our mission is to improve the survival and quality of life of those we serve. We have an expert research staff with many years of experience in clinical research. Park Nicollet patients also have access to clinical trials sponsored by the National Cancer Institute through the Metro-Minnesota Community Clinical Oncology Program (CCOP).

**2012 highlights**

- In 2012, 141 patients were enrolled in cancer treatment and symptom management studies at Park Nicollet. In addition, 941 patients were enrolled in the green tea breast cancer prevention study at Park Nicollet.

- Twelve new research studies were opened in 2012.

- Alice Shapiro, PhD, RD, LN, joined the oncology research staff to coordinate and oversee the Vitamin D study, funded by the National Cancer Institute.

- Kendra Kubiak, MD, was named the new oncology research medical director after Michaela Tsai, MD, stepped down in August of 2012. Rachel Lerner, MD, and Dylan Zylla, MD, were selected to be principal investigators for designated studies and to assist Kubiak in leading the program.

- Karen Swenson, PhD, RN, AOCN, served on the planning committee for the University of Minnesota School of Nursing Research Day held April 27, 2012.

- Karen Swenson continued as Associate Editor for the Oncology Nursing Forum. She was co-editor of the Clinical Challenges column of the journal. She also was selected to participate as a member of the 2012 Oncology Nursing Society National Research Advisory Panel Scientific/Research Advocacy Subgroup.


- Alice Shapiro presented “Nutrition and Lymphoma” at the Lymphoma Foundation meeting Sept. 29, 2012, at the Airport Hilton in Bloomington, Minn.

- Dylan Zylla, MD, presented “Opioids, Pain and Cancer Progression” Sept. 20, 2012, at the Methodist Hospital September Palliative Care Rounds.

- Karen Swenson was selected as the Walter and Anita Lubov Scholarship award winner by the Minnesota Ovarian Cancer Alliance (MOCA). This award was for $1,700 to attend the Gynecologic Oncology Group/NRG Oncology semi-annual meeting in January 2013.
**Manuscripts and book chapters published**


**Manuscripts submitted**


3. Nissen MJ, Tsai ML, Blaes AH, Swenson KK, Koering S. Effectiveness of treatment summaries in increasing breast and colorectal cancer survivors’ knowledge about their diagnosis and treatment. Accepted for publication in *Journal of Cancer Survivorship, December 2012.*


5. Swenson KK, Bell EM, Nissen J. Nail toxicity associated with paclitaxel treatment for ovarian cancer. Accepted for publication in the Clinical Challenges column of *Oncology Nursing Forum, November 2012.*

Grants

2. Final Report for Oncology Nursing Foundation Grant: The final report was submitted to the Oncology Nursing Society Foundation for the Aromatase Inhibitor Musculoskeletal Symptom (AIMS) Study Grant, February 2012.

3. Alice Shapiro received a $5,000 grant for her research study entitled “Vitamin D₃ effects on musculoskeletal symptoms with use of aromatase inhibitors” from proceeds of the Breast Festival silent auction held Sept. 8, 2012, sponsored by the Shoulak family.

Abstracts and presentations


5. Karen Swenson presented the oncology research section of the Park Nicollet Nursing Wall Walk, April 2012.


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The cancer committee meets quarterly at Park Nicollet Frauenshuh Cancer Center.

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Learn more about Park Nicollet Frauenshuh Cancer Center care and service by calling 952-993-3248 or visiting parknicollet.com/cancer.

Frauenshuh Cancer Center is located on the Park Nicollet Methodist Hospital campus in St. Louis Park, a western suburb of Minneapolis, Minnesota. This safe, convenient location is easily accessible from Hwy. 100.