Hope is Here

Elliot Regional Cancer Center

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Welcome

Welcome to the Elliot Regional Cancer Center’s 2017 Annual Report. We are thrilled to invite you to see why we proudly proclaim, Hope is Here, as you obtain a glimpse, in the following pages, of the life-saving work being done to support comprehensive cancer care in our community. The Elliot was a pioneer in bringing cancer care to the people of New Hampshire when it established the Elliot Regional Cancer Center in Manchester in the year 1966. It was the first of its kind cancer center and set the standard for the detection, treatment, and support for cancer patients and survivors.

Over 50 years later, we remain a pivotal community partner in battling cancer. We offer the latest cancer detection technology, state-of-the-art equipment for radiation treatment, technical expertise and highly trained and skilled medical professionals offering comprehensive treatment options, clinical trials, and programs directed toward prevention, education, and survivorship.

Having all of this, together with our personal and individualized approach to cancer care is something we take very seriously. Involving patients and family in treatment planning is central to our methodology as we aim to create a comforting approach to care that is medically informed, thoroughly discussed, and which results in desired treatment and therapy. When we do all of this well, we know we have set our patients on the most important path, and that is a path of Hope.

Thank you for your interest in our achievements!

In health,

Brian Knab, MD
Medical Director
Elliot Regional Cancer Center
Lung Cancer Screening

Each year over 150,000 individuals die of lung cancer in the United States, making this diagnosis the leading cause of cancer death throughout the country. Second only to smoking prevention initiatives, early detection of lung cancer remains the most important step in reducing lung cancer mortality. Unfortunately, the majority of individuals diagnosed with lung cancer today will have advanced stage disease, resulting in lower survival rates, even with aggressive therapy.

The Elliot Health System launched the Lung Cancer Screening Program on March 28, 2017. This life-saving initiative with coordination and efforts of primary care physicians, radiologists, pulmonologists, surgeons and oncologists help aid in the detection, diagnosis and treatment of lung cancer at an earlier stage, ultimately reducing lung cancer deaths in our community.

All patients who are found to have a suspicious finding on their Low-dose computerized tomography (LDCT) screening exam are automatically discussed at the tumor board conference, the goal is to provide a multidisciplinary approach to help assist and guide the referring physician to the best plan of care for their patient.

Individuals between the ages of 55-77, who are either current or former smokers and have a 30+ pack year history of smoking, are eligible for annual screening. Former smokers must have quit within the past 15 years. An annual low dose CT scan is recommended each year until the individual reaches the age of 77 or reaches the 15 year quit date.

Elliot Health System screened 314 patients with LDCT from March 28, 2017 through December 2017. In those short eight months, we detected 4 lung cancers, 3 patients were found to have stage I lung cancer and the other patient was stage III. In addition, we also detected an incidental stage II breast cancer.

LDCT lung cancer screening is now considered part of preventive care for those who qualify. It is covered by Medicare and private insurances.

We encourage patients to speak with their providers to see if lung cancer screening is right for you.

American College of Radiology-Designated Lung Cancer Screening Center
Elliot proudly serves hundreds of cancer patients each year. For example, our Radiation Oncologists consulted with 824 patients in 2017, many of whom benefited from treatment with radiation therapy. The top treatment diagnoses were the following:
At the Elliot Regional Cancer we pride ourselves in anticipating and providing care to meet every need for our patients and their loved ones. Our Social Services Team includes three mastered-prepared Social Workers as well as a Registered Dietitian to address all aspects of cancer care including: coping with illness, work issues, family issues, nutrition and financial strains. ERCC offers various support and education groups to bring patients and their families together to share common experiences. These programs show our ongoing commitment to our patients, even after the active phase of treatment is complete.

In 2017, 25 support programs were offered through ERCC, with over 100 survivors and their support persons in attendance. Our support programs are offered with the goal of providing skills and knowledge. A few of the various topics included were Nutrition, Mindfulness, Communication and Aromatherapy, as well as a celebration of Cancer Survivors with an interactive Drum Circle.

In addition to support programs for patients before during and after their treatment, ERCC also offers integrative services which can ease the journey, such as Reiki and Massage.

Collaborating with other departments throughout the Elliot Health System allows ERCC the opportunity to offer ongoing services to our survivors such as Cancer Rehabilitation, with specially trained physical and occupational therapists as well as Speech and language pathologists.

ERCC also works with community partners such as the YMCA to offer exercise programs for Survivors through the Livestrong program, The American Cancer Society to offer the Look Good, Feel Better program and YogaCaps, to offer Yoga.

A cancer diagnosis can affect many parts of a person’s life, and ERCC is here to help every step of the way.
According to the National Cancer Institute, an individual is considered a cancer survivor from the time of diagnosis, through the balance of his or her life. Cancer survivors make up a significant portion of the population, with the National Institute of health predicting that there will be 18 million cancer survivors by 2022. Many survivors experience physical and psychosocial late and long-term effects from their treatment.

At the Elliot Regional Cancer Center, we understand the importance of caring for our patients even after the active of phase of treatment has ended. To this end, our staff has developed Survivorship Care Plans (SCP), which are given to all patients at completion of their treatment. The SCP is a reference for patients to help them understand and document their diagnosis, what treatment they had, and what guidelines for surveillance they should follow. The SCP’s list resources that survivors may find helpful in dealing with any physical, emotional or financial after-effects of treatment. In 2017, the SCP’s were meticulously updated to include recommendations for healthy living which can help survivors minimize their risk of recurrence and/or avoid new cancer diagnoses. The SCP’s were developed using guidelines from respected organizations such as the American Society of Clinical Oncology (ASCO) and the National Comprehensive Cancer Network (NCCN). These SCP’s are given to patients, who can then choose to share with whichever providers they encounter throughout the trajectory of their lives.
Jeffrey Brower received his Bachelor of Science degree in Microbiology and Cell Science with a minor in Chemistry from the University of Florida. He then went on to earn his Ph.D. in Molecular Biology, during which time his research led to the discovery of a novel gene responsible for cellular respiration and energy metabolism. During his Ph.D. research, he was awarded the Alumni Fellowship and other research awards to include the Medical Guild award for his work in molecular biology. Following the completion of his Ph.D., Dr. Brower matriculated to medical school at the University of Florida, graduating with research honors in 2012.

After completing a transitional internship at St. Francis Hospital in Evanston IL, he went on to train in radiation oncology at the University of Wisconsin, serving as chief resident from 2016 to 2017. During residency, he gained extensive experience in the most current radiation therapy techniques, including intensity modulated radiotherapy (IMRT), Tomotherapy, image-guided radiotherapy, and stereotactic radiotherapy as well as the utilization of MRI-guided radiotherapy. In addition, Dr. Brower received comprehensive training in the utilization of brachytherapy to treat gynecologic malignancies. As a resident, Dr. Brower also participated in clinical research, publishing multiple peer reviewed manuscripts and presenting his work at national conferences. Dr. Brower has published manuscripts on esophageal, lung, brain, head and neck, prostate, liver, skin and gynecologic cancers as well as brain metastases. After the completion of his training, Dr. Brower joined Radiation Oncology Associates in 2017.

“It is a great privilege to care for such courageous and grateful individuals, as those with a cancer diagnosis. Community medicine provides me the opportunity to focus on patient care and ensure that the highest quality therapy is available to patients closer to home. I am thankful to be surrounded by an amazingly talented group of colleagues with a common cause of fighting cancer.”
New in 2017

TrueBeam™ System

Cancer treatments are changing. The TrueBeam™ system is the latest advance in radiotherapy technology from Varian Medical Systems. Developed from the ground up to deliver powerful cancer treatments with pinpoint accuracy and precision, TrueBeam opens the door to new possibilities for the treatment of challenging cases such as cancers in the lung, breast, abdomen, and head and neck as well as other cancers that are treatable with radiotherapy.

Treatments can be performed with unparalleled ease, precision and speed. In fact, most treatments take just a few minutes a day. As well as allowing for a more comfortable experience for patients with less time on the treatment couch, faster delivery also allows for reduced chances of patient motion during treatment.

TrueBeam was designed with many features that can improve the overall patient experience. With shorter treatment times and quieter operation, TrueBeam provides for a more comfortable environment for patients. Enhanced communication technology enables a constant interaction between the patient and the therapist who operates the equipment. Three closed-circuit television systems enable the therapist to monitor the patient at all times. Music can be played during treatment, helping to increase patient comfort.

TrueBeam is a game-changing leap in innovation in radiotherapy technology.
The Elliot Breast Health Center was the first center in New Hampshire to offer 3D™-guided breast biopsy, an advanced, minimally invasive technique utilizing the Hologic® Affirm™ Prone Breast Biopsy System together with the Hologic® Brevera Breast Biopsy technology. The Affirm Prone Biopsy System is the world’s first and only dedicated prone biopsy system to offer both 2D and 3D™ imaging-guided breast biopsies.

“The technology that we are now using is a game changer for the community and we are told we are the only center in all of New England using both the Hologic Affirm and the Hologic Brevera biopsy technology,” explained Dr. Marina Feldman, Elliot Breast Radiologist. “The ability to biopsy small areas of interest that may not be visible using other imaging techniques provides a significant advantage to our physicians and their patients.

Integrating this ability into a system that allows these procedures to be performed with patients in the prone position represents a transformative innovation in breast biopsy.” Feldman added.

The availability of 3D™ imaging for biopsy guidance facilitates the localization and accurate targeting of lesions, including those that can be challenging to detect with conventional imaging techniques. In addition, this new biopsy technology from Hologic has several key advantages over standard X-ray biopsy procedures, including faster targeting and fewer X-ray exposures, resulting in shorter patient procedure time and reduced patient dose.

Dr. Feldman further explained, “The use of the Brevera is also extremely advantageous to us as it provides real-time imaging of the specimen and has a unique automated post-biopsy specimen handling system that allows the pathologists to receive tissue that has never been touched from the moment we take the biopsy. Our patients are comfortable for the procedure and confident that the tissue we extract is reaching pathology through the most sophisticated technology and yielding fast and accurate results,” Dr. Feldman concluded.

“This investment in breast cancer detection technology makes us all extremely proud and we know it is in the best interest of the community,” said Doug Dean, CEO. “We are extremely fortunate to have a team of dedicated breast radiologists and breast surgeons at the Elliot Breast Health Center who are committed to delivering the most advanced care possible to our patients.”
In June, 2017 the 18th Annual Golf Classic raised $168,000 and was a sold out event.

In August, the Cigna/Elliot Corporate 5K Road Race spotlighted cancer survivors and has been turned into a fundraiser to support the The Elliot Regional Cancer Center.

In September, Elliot Health System hosted the 16th Annual Gala to support the cancer center, which raised over $398,000, our most successful Gala to date.

Throughout the year, our generous donors to the iGive Annual Fund raised nearly $290,000 for the growth of the Regional Cancer Center programs and services.

Every fall, Dr. Bryan Hoertdoerfer, an outstanding community supporter, hosts the Big Z Challenge to support the Elliot Regional Cancer Center. In its 7th year, this event raised over $26,000 and even included a visit from Bruins’ Captain Zdeno (Chara).

We are ever grateful for the benevolence shown by patients, families, staff, and the greater Manchester community. Many people have been touched by cancer or know someone she has been impacted by this disease. Every gift is meaningful and appreciated as we strive to expand programs and services so the highest quality cancer care can continue to be delivered here, close to home.