

Multidisciplinary Team Delivers Individualized Breast Cancer Treatment

A breast cancer diagnosis is never easy to hear. In fact, it may be the most difficult situation a woman may ever experience. But the team at Concord Hospital Breast Care Center are doing everything they can to support each patient during the treatment journey and into survivorship.



Concord Hospital Breast Care Center (BCC) is a nationally accredited center offering patient-centered multidisciplinary, individualized care. This, along with state-of-the-art technologies, is making a difference in breast cancer prevention, diagnosis, and treatment.

The Center's nurse navigator, Lisa Delahanty, APRN, MSN, coordinates patient care alongside a team of breast surgeons, medical and radiation oncologists, radiologists, pathologists, genetic counselors, social workers, and plastic and reconstructive surgeons.

"We're different from other centers," Delahanty says. "Our focus is on treating the whole person and their family, which includes their physical, social, and psychological well-being during this difficult time."

High-Risk Preventative Care and Services

All BCC patients receive an extensive assessment of personal and family histories that may suggest an elevated risk of developing breast cancer. Should doctors deem a patient high risk for a gene mutation, genetic counseling and testing is available

on-site. BCC has partnered with the Dana-Farber Cancer Institute in Boston—a world leader in cancer care and research—to provide this genetic counseling service.

"Strategies for dealing with positive gene mutations include increased surveillance, risk reduction options, and surgical interventions," Delahanty explains.

Diagnosis

Early detection of cancer improves the chances that treatment will be effective, so the goal is to find cancers before they cause symptoms. BCC is a leader in advanced diagnostic imaging services, offering breast MRI in addition to digital 3-D mammography and ultrasound.

"National Accreditation Program for Breast Centers (NAPBC®) assures that a center is held to the highest standards of care for patients with diseases of the breast," says Sharon Gunsher, MD, Medical Director of the Breast Care Center.

Treatment

Should a biopsy indicate cancer, a multidisciplinary team will meet

and work together to develop the best possible individualized treatment plan. While no treatment will be initiated until all options have been reviewed with the patient, recommendations may include lumpectomy or mastectomy, chemotherapy, radiation treatment, hormonal therapy, or some combination of those options.

All breast care-related services are co-located, with appointments scheduled back to back when possible to ease the burden placed on patients.

The Center also provides comprehensive services including support groups, educational workshops, and rehabilitation services in addition to an oncology dietitian, social workers, a post-mastectomy fitter, a wig bank, and a cancer boutique. Complimentary therapies such as reiki, aromatherapy, and stress reduction techniques are also available.

BCC strives to make a difficult time less stressful for patients and their families, supporting them on their path to recovery.



CONCORD HOSPITAL
BREAST CARE CENTER

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Community Cancer Center Provides Patient-Centered Care and Services

Concord Hospital Payson Center for Cancer Care's emphasis on patient-centric care delivers quality care close to home for patients diagnosed with lung, prostate, breast, and other cancers.

"The beauty of the multidisciplinary approach to medicine is that up to 10 different specialists participate, all discussing what they think is going on with each patient, what should happen next, which treatment standards might apply, what current best practices are, and whether there might be relevant clinical trials available," says Jody Blumberg, Director, Concord Hospital Payson Center for Cancer Care. "Medical and radiation oncologists, surgeons, radiologists, pathologists, nutritionists, social workers, nurse navigators, and others all come together to develop a comprehensive, individualized treatment plan that meets the needs of each and every patient."

Part of offering top-quality, multidisciplinary cancer care and treatment includes Payson Center's dedicated nurse navigators who manage the care process and advocate for patients, while Payson's HOPE Resource Center provides guidance, information, and supportive programs for patients and their families.

The Role of the Nurse Navigator

Blumberg refers to nurse navigators as "the glue that holds the team together." Much of their responsibility is in coordinating patient care and ensuring patients have access to the resources they need.

"Nurse navigators act as a liaison between patients and providers, guiding them through the healthcare journey by coordinating appointments, explaining complicated health concerns, and providing education on various health topics. They also connect patients to support networks and community services," Blumberg says.

Nurse navigators facilitate communication among team members to ensure everyone is well informed about each step



in a patient's treatment, a value-added aspect of the role.

HOPE Resource Center

The HOPE Resource Center offers a host of services for cancer patients and their families. Psychosocial support groups account for a large portion of the Center's programming and include disease-specific groups as well as those for newly diagnosed patients, survivors, and children of cancer survivors. Participants share strength, encouragement, and camaraderie with peers who have "been there" and who understand the journey. Financial and nutritional counseling, social services,

spiritual care, and educational and lifestyle modification programs are also available.

Alternative therapies are also a part of HOPE Resource Center programming—and studies indicate they provide tremendous benefit to patients and caregivers. Reiki and aromatherapy, for example, help reduce patient anxiety and the nausea that may be associated with treatment. These therapies are offered at no cost by the HOPE Resource Center.

The Center is fortunate to be the beneficiary of much community support, financial and otherwise. Financial assistance is available through various Concord Hospital Trust funds, while events like Rock 'N Race and Pedaling for Payson support the HOPE Resource Center overall.

"The Payson Center for Cancer Care is a community cancer center that diagnoses approximately 1,000 patients a year. We've established an innovative, multidisciplinary team with integrative services, and we are pleased to be able to provide them to our community," says Blumberg.

 **CONCORD HOSPITAL**
Payson Center for Cancer Care

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