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MaineHealth: Revolutionizing Cancer Care

Evolving Network Delivers Comprehensive, World-Class Treatment Closer to Home.

In the state of Maine, cancer is the No. 1 cause of death. It's an alarming statistic with per capita mortality rates above the national average. But in 2013, MaineHealth, a not-for-profit consortium of high-quality healthcare organizations committed to the health and well-being of the communities and people it serves, launched the MaineHealth Cancer Care Network, an effort that is gaining a reputation as one of the best integrated programs as it develops innovative strategies for the treatment patients receive and how they receive it in a rural setting.

"The MaineHealth Cancer Care Network was created to deliver multi-disciplinary and patient-centered cancer care, leading-edge treatment options, and superior outcomes to a largely rural population," says Scot Remick, MD, Chief of Oncology for Maine Medical Center and MaineHealth. "With a coordinated system of eight member hospitals, three affiliate hospitals, 300 providers, and an affiliation with Boston's Dana-Farber Cancer Institute, we can connect patients with providers close to home, reducing travel and its associated stress and expense."

A Multidisciplinary Approach

The network was developed on a foundation of patient-centered, multi-disciplinary care. Surgical, medical, and radiology oncologists collaborate with a host of other specialists including pathologists, pharmacists, patient navigators, oncology nurses, social workers, and nutritionists. Since not every hospital member will have all such experts or services on site, multiple member locations may be involved in a single case, with patients always returning to their home hospital for follow-up treatment. Second opinions and treatment for more



Scot Remick, MD

complex cases may be referred to Maine Medical Center, Maine General Medical Center, or Dana-Farber for the highest level of sub-specialty cancer care.

To ensure its efforts as a whole continue to advance, the Harold Alford® Foundation granted the MaineHealth Cancer Care Network \$10 million over five years. Much of the grant is earmarked for the fast-track recruitment of sub-specialty physicians and other hospital-based staff, including social workers, geneticists, and nurse navigators, and significant investment in information technology platforms to better link all members of the network.

Leading-Edge Options

Through its affiliations with organizations like Dana-Farber and Bar Harbor's Jackson Laboratory, the MaineHealth Cancer Care Network sees on the horizon a host of innovations in diagnosis and treatment.

Research performed by the Maine Medical Center Research Institute in conjunction with Jackson Laboratory's Maine Cancer Genomic Initiative, Remick expects, will result in personalized therapy options based on the molecular signature of specific cancers. Such therapies, he suggests, could mitigate tumor growth, among other benefits.

But it's the potential of immunotherapy that Remick is particularly interested in. "More Maine cancer patients are being admitted into immunotherapy-based clinical trials due to our affiliation with Dana-Farber and our own Research Institute," he explains. "Immunotherapy is likely to result in a complete paradigm shift in which treatment would move to targeting the immune response to cancer rather than the cancer itself. Someday we could be describing cancer as a chronic condition as opposed to a potentially terminal disease."

"The MaineHealth Cancer Care Network has come far in a relatively short timeframe. Our members and patients alike have easier-than-ever-before access to not only diagnosis and treatment options, but to numerous support and holistic services and resources as well, all as close to home as possible and with the expertise and compassion our patients and their families deserve."

THE HAROLD ALFORD® FOUNDATION
MaineHealth
CANCER CARE NETWORK

IN AFFILIATION WITH
DANA-FARBER CANCER INSTITUTE

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