With Five-Year Non-Hodgkins Lymphoma Study
CHAIRMAN’S REPORT

Weiss Memorial Hospital’s Cancer Program is committed to providing state-of-the-art, comprehensive care for cancer patients. Working towards this objective, our multi-disciplinary team focuses on identifying cancer at an early phase of the disease when chances of successful treatment are best.

The Strauss Oncology Center started 25 years ago as a unique entity in a community hospital to promote the research and treatment of cancer. Weiss continues to participate in regional, national, and industrial clinical research studies through the University of Chicago Section of Hematology and Oncology, along with drug company-sponsored programs. By participating in these clinical trials, we are able to offer our patients the latest treatment for solid tumors and hematologic malignancies. The number of our patients enrolled in these studies continues to increase each year.

Unlike most community hospitals, Weiss has dedicated on-site oncologists; and unlike most academic medical centers, these outstanding physicians are able to provide highly personalized attention to our patients and their families. On call 24 hours a day, seven days a week, the oncology team remains highly accessible to those who need us most.

I would like to take this opportunity to publicly thank each of the members of the Cancer Committee for their contributions to this annual report.

Stuart Krauss, MD
Chairman, Cancer Committee
Director, Medical Oncology
Clinical Associate Professor of Medicine, University of Chicago
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ON THE COVER:
Drs. Marina Kuznetsova, radiation oncologist, Keith Shulman, medical oncologist, and Stuart Krauss, Director of Medical Oncology, in Weiss’ new advanced Diagnostic Imaging Center.
CANCER REGISTRY

The Cancer Registry has been accurately collecting, managing, and analyzing all cancer cases diagnosed at Weiss Memorial Hospital since 1990 — a process required for approval by the Commission on Cancer of the American College of Surgeons.

In addition to assuring that all the components for an approved cancer program are maintained, the Cancer Registry enables us to monitor the quality of care cancer patients receive at Weiss Memorial Hospital by comparing our data with data nationwide.

Data gathered on cancer patients is submitted to the Illinois State Cancer Registry and is used for preparing epidemiological studies for determining causes of cancer, incidences, and survival outcomes.

A total of 421 cases were diagnosed or treated at Weiss in 2003, including 393 analytic cases (newly diagnosed and treated) and 28 non-analytic (diagnosed or initially treated elsewhere). Our most commonly diagnosed cancers include: prostate (88 cases), bladder (54), breast (46), colorectal (47) and lung (43).

The number of new cases added to the Cancer Registry has steadily increased since 1990. A total of 5,780 cases are in our registry database.

Joyce L. Jones, CTR
Cancer Registry Coordinator
Tumor Board Coordinator

1990 Reference Date-13 year Incidence Trend
CANCER COMMITTEE

The Weiss Memorial Hospital Cancer Committee is the advisory body responsible for overseeing, planning, and assessing all cancer program activities. It is responsible for managing clinical activities involving cancer patients and for supervising the Cancer Registry.

Committee members provide multidisciplinary supportive care, such as surgical, radiation and medical oncology, nursing, and allied specialties. This group is involved in the diagnosis, treatment, and management of cancer, as well as in quality measurements and improvements studies. It identifies opportunities for improvement by pinpointing an issue, developing a plan, analyzing the outcome, and implementing the improvement. The major goal of the Cancer Committee is assuring high quality clinical cancer care and education.

Stuart Krauss, MD
Chairman, Cancer Committee
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TUMOR BOARD CONFERENCE

Monthly Tumor Board Conferences elicit valuable input from department physicians, nurses, social workers, pharmacists, dieticians, and research staff during all phases of cancer patient care.

Here treatment plans and follow-up care are discussed, and the latest techniques and methods of diagnostic and screening that affect treatment in cancer patients are explored. We also address topics that impact cancer management, genetics, treatment modalities, pain management, and psychosocial patient support.

“We pool the collective knowledge and skills of our experts to recommend the best treatment options available.”

Through this team approach to patient care management, we can ensure a treatment plan that meets the patient’s medical needs utilizing the latest state-of-the-art procedures and technology.

Joyce L. Jones, CTR
Cancer Registry Coordinator
Tumor Board Coordinator
STRAUSS ONCOLOGY

“For all our advanced technology and high-powered medical expertise, patient satisfaction surveys still rate the Strauss Oncology Center ‘number one.’”

Some extras we provide include assisting our patients with transportation throughout the community and drug reimbursement programs related to cancer care. We continue to offer programs such as LOOK GOOD, FEEL BETTER with the American Cancer Society and our own OUTPATIENT CANCER SUPPORT GROUP. Weiss Memorial Hospital also participates in the ANNUAL CANCER SURVIVORS DAY sponsored by the University of Chicago Hospitals.

Karen Elarde-McCuaig, RN, BS
Manager, Patient Care, Strauss Oncology Center

CANCER RESEARCH

At Weiss Memorial Hospital, we offer a wide variety of clinical trials involving the treatment of cancer. Our research studies are sponsored by CALGB (Cancer and Leukemia Group B) and CTSU (Clinical Trials Support Unit) — two national research consortiums. Trials utilizing some of the newest experimental treatments sponsored by pharmaceutical and biotechnology companies are also available here.

The clinical trial program at Weiss allows physicians to offer patients the most up-to-date treatments for lymphomas, leukemia, cancers of the breast, prostate, lung, head and neck, as well as tumors of the genitourinary and gastrointestinal systems.

Peggy Kotowski, RN, BSN, OCN
Protocol Research Nurse
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INPATIENT ONCOLOGY PROGRAM

Although cancer patients make up approximately one third of the patient census, oncology nursing remains our main focus of care. All of our full-time nurses are chemotherapy certified, and provide the following treatments: chemotherapy administration, radiation, brachytherapy, and drug administration for clinical trials, as well as post-operative care for surgical patients. They also specialize in caring for patients with side effects from therapy, and can help with hospice care when appropriate.

Karen Elarde-McCuaig, RN, BS
Manager, Patient Care, Strauss Oncology Center
RADIATION ONCOLOGY

In the past year, Radiation Oncology

• Underwent a facelift with new tile on the floors and walls, new paint, and new power exam room tables,

• Added a diode system that enables radiation oncologists to measure precisely the dose of each treatment field, allowing us to better customize treatments.

In addition, our full-time Radiation Oncology nurse became chemo certified this past year, enabling us to provide a comprehensive approach to the treatment of our patients receiving combined modality treatment.

The Radiation Oncology team strives to ensure that every patient’s overall well being is taken into consideration during the course of their treatment. Our team also provides comprehensive continuum of care after the completion of treatment.

Patient satisfaction surveys continue to show a positive patient experience in the Radiation Oncology Department and continued growth is anticipated.

“My priority is to provide cancer patients with the latest oncology treatment options in a more personalized, intimate setting.”

Marina Kuznetsova, MD, PhD
Medical Director, Radiation Oncology
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QUALITY RESOURCE MANAGEMENT

The cancer program’s Performance Improvement Plan allows for a systematic, coordinated and continuous approach to improve performance by focusing upon the processes, systems and mechanisms that promote quality health care.

The oncology center has undertaken the study of methods necessary to evaluate quality of life issues at all phases of cancer treatment. It is the purpose of the oncology group to evaluate the psychosocial, emotional, and physical outcomes of cancer treatment as perceived by the patient and patient’s family.

“Only by such evaluation will we have the ability to plan individual therapy and achieve remission or a cure while maintaining an optimal quality of life for the patient.”

Robin Little, RN, MA
Director, Quality Management

CHAPLAIN

The chaplain is available to provide emotional and spiritual support to patients and families of all faith traditions and spiritualities in both the inpatient and outpatient settings.

A new interfaith prayer room on the second floor is now available to everyone.

Nora Ausriene
Chaplain

SOCIAL SERVICES

Our duties range from crisis intervention, discharge planning, and grief counseling, to searching and accessing community resources. The RN case manager and social worker are often called upon to help coordinate hospice care for patients who have chosen palliative care. In addition, we collaborate with the physician to ensure patient healthcare needs are met.

Gail Davis, RN
Director, Case Management/Social Services
"Weiss began with a strength in oncology—a strength which we retain today."

Tracy A. Rogers
President and CEO

For a complete copy of our 2004 Cancer Annual Report, check out the home page of our website or go to www.weisshospital.com/clinicalprograms/cancerannual.cfm