Friends and colleagues,
Welcome to Seattle Cancer Care Alliance’s (SCCA) 2018 Care in Action report.

All of us who have the privilege of working side-by-side with the people on our care teams are witness to countless acts of compassion and love for our patients, for each other, and for our colleagues. However, I am astounded to find myself most struck by the fact that “care” means something much more at SCCA.

The people and providers who treat our patients see care as a verb. To them, it is a call to action that demands effort well beyond offering comfort and solace. The people who treat our patients manifest this definition by working every day to push the boundaries of treatment and clinical effectiveness. Because our people care, they are committed to learning more, exploring more, doing more, and leading more.

Each of us works here because SCCA is a world leader in the prevention, treatment and cure of cancer. This report explores the incredible role the members of our care teams play as leaders in their own right.

As you review it, take a moment to think about how well our people exemplify professionalism in their work. Consider the level to which they are striving to innovate and to improve the lives of their patients. And celebrate with me, the fact that our people are right where they belong among the larger community of providers of oncological care — out in front, leading the way.

With respect and gratitude,

Theresa McDonnell, DNP, ACNP-BC
Chief Nurse Executive, Vice President of Clinical Operations

“Our people are right where they belong — out in front leading the way.”

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On the cover: Yuko Urano, LPN
We are patient-centered

Everything we do must be linked to our ability to deliver better, safer outcomes for our patients. Nothing is more important, and any choice that could lead us astray from that focus is no choice at all.
We approach everything we do with compassion, conviction and a constant striving because we know how profoundly important our work is to the lives of the patients we serve.

We are collaborative

Our ability to be better together hinges on cultivating a culture of teamwork that is not only unusual, but unprecedented. Not just among the many different people of SCCA, but with our patients and caregivers as well.
We understand that asking for and offering help in how to do better is not just a right, but among our most important responsibilities.

We are innovative

The existence of SCCA is the result of a truly innovative approach to fighting cancer. Each of us — regardless of the role we play — is here because we have the chance to push the boundaries of conventional wisdom in that fight. We will nurture an environment that fosters unconventional thinking, a passion for discovery and the open-mindedness to invite discovery from unexpected places.

We are agile

We cannot just be comfortable with change; we must embrace it as proof that we are making progress. The speed of our progress is entirely linked to how well we integrate new insights into our research, our teaching and our clinical work.
We will be known for our ability to adopt new approaches and practices, because our patients come to us for the most advanced care available.

We are respectful

Our diverse range of backgrounds, perspectives and experiences offers us the ability to meet the widely varied needs of the community of patients we serve. Each person and every job at SCCA plays a role in the safety and care of our patients. We are deeply respectful of our patients, their families and each of our colleagues who serve them in so many different and important ways.

We are responsible

Our work affects many dimensions of our patients’ lives. While our focus is on their health and safety, we are conscious of the impact cancer care can have on people’s emotional well-being, financial security, and the environment we all share. Because our work is centered on people’s well-being, we approach it with the highest level of ethical, fiduciary and environmental responsibility.
2018 SCCA Certified Nurses
SCCA Outpatient Clinic recognizes a value to patient care when nurses are certified in their area of specialty practice. Specialty certification provides an objective process to validate specialty knowledge. It promotes personal accomplishment and satisfaction and enhances personal and professional growth. SCCA has 209 certified nurses.

Professional Development Council Scholarships (4)
Each year, SCCA awards five scholarships valued at $2,000 each for attendance by non-presenting nurses at a national conference. The scholarships provide an opportunity to attend a national conference and learn how the subject matter presented may support future work.

2018 presentations in total
American Society for Apheresis (3)
Oncology Nursing Society (ONS) (3)
Puget Sound Oncology Nursing Society (3)
Seattle Nursing Research Conference (1)
TEDx: Human Face of Hope (1)
ASBMT Transplantation and Cellular Therapy Meeting (5)

2018 Awards

Colette Chaney, RN: March of Dimes Nurse of the Year for Research Advancement Award
Arlyce Coumar, RN, MN, OCN®: Distinguished Graduate Award, University of Washington - Bothell
Seth Eisenberg, RN, OCN®, BMTCN®: Oncology Nursing Society (ONS) 2018 Susan Baird Excellence in Clinical Writing Award
Allison Miller, MN, RN: Outstanding Scholar Award, University of Washington School of Nursing - Tacoma
Matthew Smith, MCHS, PA-C: Certificate of Added Qualifications (CAQ), National Commission on Certification of Physician Assistants (NCCPA)

2018 Scholarship Winners

Derrick Amooti Lusota
Aleandria Kahakua
Alexandra Beliveau
Rae Niculescu
Takali Eseza
Haley Slater Scancella
Tiffany Flanagan
San So
Carmelita Jacobina Palagi

2017 Scholarship Recipients

Katelyn Marie Dobyns
Eleanore O’Neil
Karyn Hilderbrand
Emily Anne Wassenaar
Annette Elizabeth Hill
Madeline Christina White
Annie Miller

“...is the most patient-centered investment we can make.”

Terry McDonnell, DNP, ACNP-BC

Rosemary Ford Scholarships — investing in nursing’s future
SCCA awarded 15 scholarships during 2017 and 2018 to seven of its own nurses, and students at eight nursing schools in Washington state, and one nursing school in Uganda.

2018 Winners

Derrick Amooti Lusota
Aleandria Kahakua
Alexandra Beliveau
Rae Niculescu
Takali Eseza
Haley Slater Scancella
Tiffany Flanagan
San So
Carmelita Jacobina Palagi

Steinberg Scholarship Recipients
Steinberg Scholarships cover continuing nursing education, including conferences, workshops and tuition. These scholarships are supported by generous contributions from Howard Steinberg, his family and friends in memory of his father Harold and brother John. Before his death in 1994, John Steinberg received two marrow transplants. Harold had multiple myeloma and passed away in 1981.

“...is the most patient-centered investment we can make.”

Terry McDonnell, DNP, ACNP-BC

Certifications, awards and scholarships

Retired nurses celebrate Rosemary Ford Scholarships Awards.
Ian Anderson, BSN, RN; Joanne Apchenets, RN; Christine Zemmer, BSN, RN

Left: Toni-Ann Lupinacci, BSN; Kathleen Shannon Darocy, BSN, MN, PhD, RN, FAAN; Collette Chaney, RN, Terry McDonnell, DNP, ACNP-BC

2018 Scholarship Winners with Nancy Davidson, MD, PhD and Kathleen Shannon Darocy, BSN, MN, PhD, RN, FAAN
Seth Eisenberg, RN, OCN®, BMTCN®, received the Oncology Nursing Society (ONS) 2018 Susan Baird Excellence in Clinical Writing Award for his article, “Hazardous Drugs and USP <800>: Implications for Nurses,” published in the Clinical Journal of Nursing in April 2017. As first author, Eisenberg received $1,000 and a certificate on behalf of the writing/research team. In addition, he was recognized on the ONS website and at the Annual ONS Congress in May 2018 in Washington, D.C.

Colette Chaney, RN, immunotherapy clinical research nurse, received the March of Dimes 2018 Nurse of the Year for Research Advancement award. This honor recognizes nurses who use research to guide practice and develop policies. “This award is a validation of the role of nursing in research and the importance of the skills that we bring in support of this bench-to-bedside treatment approach.”

Colette Chaney, RN

SCCA nurses take top honors

We’re very proud of our nurses, who are fundamental to the excellent care that SCCA provides to patients.

Allison Miller, MN, RN, OCN®, received the 2018 MN Outstanding Scholar Award at the University of Washington Tacoma, where she received a Master of Nursing (MN) degree. MN graduates are nominated by faculty each spring for the award. Described as a dedicated and scholarly thinker, Miller is a certified oncology nurse who works full-time at UW Medical Center. Her academic work focused on palliative care referrals for leukemia patients with liquid tumors, including analysis of symptom patterns, and palliative care benefits for patients. Miller is now considering pursuing a PhD.

“I appreciate the partnership with patients who have participated in our research efforts.”

Allison Miller, MN, RN, OCN®
SCCA Advance Practice Provider program earns Employer of Excellence Award

SCCA providers and patients have long advocated for the important role of physician assistants (PAs) and nurse practitioners (NPs) in delivering excellent cancer care. We were particularly pleased to receive the 2018 Employer of Excellence Award from the American Academy of Physician Assistants Center for Healthcare Leadership and Management (CHLM). The award is designed to showcase hospitals and health systems that have implemented practices designed to create positive work environments for PAs and NPs and encourage collaborative provider teams. It is the first and only PA-specific award program available to hospitals and health systems.

“This award demonstrates the incredible engagement of our physician assistant and nurse practitioner workforce and the impressive organizational leadership team that appreciates their collective skills and contributions.”

Gabrielle Zecha, director, advanced practice providers at SCCA.

Jennifer Broderick, managing director of CHLM adds that recipients of the award are taking specific steps to empower their PAs and promote mutual respect and effective communication among all of their healthcare providers.

“We are thrilled to be able to recognize organizations that are going the extra mile to ensure their PAs get the opportunity to work in engaging environments and achieve the best patient outcomes.”

Jennifer Broderick, managing director of CHLM

SCCA is planning and designing a large expansion to the South Lake Union clinic to better meet our patients’ ongoing and future needs. An operational design team of staff, providers, patients and caregivers actively working on improving the way we deliver care at SCCA. At the heart of this project are spaces designed to bring more services directly to our patients and to bring our care teams closer together to facilitate active collaboration. This expansion will improve both patient and staff experiences at SCCA.

A new clinic on the existing seventh floor in South Lake Union will allow SCCA to begin implementing some of these elements immediately, creating additional clinic space to meet the needs of our patients today. This innovative, collaborative clinic is expected to open in early 2020 and will be a foundation for the design of our South Lake Union expansion.

Marc Stewart, MD; Lisa VanDerhoof PA-C; Gabe Zecha, PA-C, MHA, DFAAPA; Lauren Low, PA-C; Barbara Silko, ARNP, PhD

“As a PA myself, I am truly proud to be part of an organization that is committed to building a thriving community of advanced practice providers.”

Gabrielle Zecha, PA-C, MHA, DFAAPA

Care neighborhoods support future SCCA clinic expansion

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Jennifer Broderick, managing director of CHLM
SCCA offers new program for patients with inherited blood cancer

SCCA opened the new Hematologic Malignancy Genetics Clinic in April.

The clinic, one of the first in the nation, offers personalized risk assessment and follow-up care for adult patients and family members who may be at increased risk for developing hematologic malignancies due to an underlying genetic cause.

The clinic is staffed and co-directed by a multidisciplinary team including hematology oncologists Siobán B. Keel, MD, and Marshall S. Horwitz, MD, PhD; genetic counselor Mercy Laurino, MS, CGC, PhD, and hematology nurse Amanda Weatherford, MN, RN, OCN®.

“The diagnosis and follow-up care of individuals with inherited cancer risk of blood cancer will inform treatment decisions, appropriate follow-up care and family planning.”

Siobán B. Keel, MD, director of the specialty clinic

In October, SCCA launched its new integrative medicine program.

This program combines evidence-based complementary therapies with conventional cancer treatment to help patients cope with treatment side effects and enhance wellness and quality of life. It is available to all SCCA patients who are undergoing, or who have completed, treatment following a cancer diagnosis. Endorsed by the American Society of Clinical Oncology, the patient-centered, evidence-based field of integrative oncology utilizes mind and body practices, including acupuncture, mind-body medicine, naturopathic medicine, yoga and lifestyle modifications.
Snoqualmie Tribe awards $1.4 million to SCCA for tobacco cessation

In September, Snoqualmie Tribe leaders and SCCA team members met at SCCA’s main clinic in South Lake Union to receive and celebrate the tribe’s $1.4 million donation to SCCA.

The donation — the largest in SCCA’s history — will benefit tribal members and citizens of the entire state of Washington who wish to leverage SCCA’s expertise in smoking cessation.

Governed by an elected council and tribal constitution, the Snoqualmie Indian Tribe (sduk’albix in their native language) consists of approximately 500 Native American members from the Puget Sound region of Washington. The tribe strives to support 501 (c) (3) organizations that exhibit tribal values, including determination, tenacity and strength.

This gift is part of the tribe's Charitable Donation Program. Since 2010, the tribe has donated more than $5 million to 501 (c) (3) organizations located within Washington.

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Seattle/King County Health Clinic

Seattle/King County Clinic brings together health care organizations, civic agencies, non-profits, private businesses and volunteers from across Washington state to produce a health clinic for 4,500 patients in KeyArena at Seattle Center. The four-day, volunteer-driven clinic provides a full range of free dental, vision and medical care to underserved and vulnerable populations in the region. Our work in the community is an extension of our mission. SCCA volunteers provided 254 free mammograms at the event. Following the event, 17 patients had follow-up imaging at SCCA. Three patients required biopsy, and two cancers were diagnosed. A proud partner of the clinic since it first launched, SCCA was pleased to provide women with this life saving screening and access to care in September.

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Workforce program trains future health care team members

SCCA recently signed on to support CareerWork$ Medical, a YWCA workforce development program that trains young adults for future careers in health care. Led by the Sheri and Les Biller Family Foundation, CareerWork$ Medical was inspired by BankWork$, a program that has trained more than 2,000 people for banking careers. Five students have engaged with the CareerWork$ Medical program to date.

“When I began this journey, I had very little idea how to go about it — especially how to network to discover new job opportunities. CareerWork$ made all the difference.”

Feyrus Ali

Feyrus Ali, SCCA Education Program Assistant

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Genny Hill, RT
SCCA nurses create, launch new practice model

SCCA nurses are leaders in research and skilled practitioners in delivering cancer care. Their wisdom is central to each patient’s care plan, and they are trusted partners for patients who are going through one of the most challenging experiences of their lives.

With this approach in mind, SCCA nurses Amelia Sherinski, BSN, RN, OCN®; Annette English, BSN, RN, OCN®; Diane Heye, RN, OCN®; Phuong Huynh, RN; Sherry Joseph, RN, OCN®; and Linda Ross, RN, created a practice model to capture what makes SCCA’s nursing so special and distinct.

Building on Swanson’s Caring Theory, the gold standard of many world-class cancer centers, the team created a model of care that captures the unique qualities of nursing at SCCA.

The four elements of the model include specialized nursing expertise; a never-ending commitment to innovation; a collaborative quest for excellence that is unique to our system of care; and a respectful, caring experience that SCCA nurses bring to their patients.

Like cancer care itself, nursing oncology will continue to evolve at SCCA. As it does, we are grateful to this team for providing a clear compass heading to ensure that change is always driven in the right direction.

SCCA leaders focus on patient-focused care approach in two national events

The Atlantic magazine convened a series of AtlanticLIVE events across the country in 2018 that focused on cancer care advances and featured several of SCCA’s leaders.

AtlanticLIVE is the live journalism division of The Atlantic. Nancy E. Davison, MD, SCCA president and executive director, spoke at The Atlantic’s People v. Cancer event in New York City in November. The event highlighted cancer stories and the latest medical breakthrough updates.

What will it take to beat cancer? That bold question was at the center of a session entitled, “The War on Cancer: Where Are We Now?” Dr. Davidson, one of three panelists, addressed the necessity of marrying science with clinical care. Because of advances in immunotherapy research, said Dr. Davidson, “we now understand the ‘invisible cloak’ that cancers have put over themselves.” It’s the job of physician-scientists to figure out how to “rip that cloak off.”

“The best outcomes will be achieved through continued focus on pairing clinical trials with clinical care,” said Dr. Davidson. “Tell patients that for me, clinical research is clinical care. These things are so tightly integrated that it’s hard to separate them. Today’s therapy is because of yesterday’s trials. Tomorrow’s therapy will be because of today’s trials.”

The good news, said Dr. Davidson, is that “(cancer) care is no longer top-down. At SCCA, patients are the center.”
Suni Elgar shares insights on succession planning

During the 43rd Annual Oncology Nursing Society (ONS) Congress in Washington, D.C., SCCA’s Suni Elgar, MPH, BSN, RN, OCN®, presented strategies for succession planning to address the national shortage in nursing. She shared advice about how SCCA is pursuing succession in its transplant clinic, where she leads the nursing team.

“Our staff are our greatest resource,” says Elgar. “Through continued investment in their personal and professional growth, we can, together, become stronger clinicians and a better team. One way to develop our newer nurses is by embracing the knowledge and understanding of our more seasoned nurses. We should support these two groups to work side by side, encouraging our seasoned nurses to mentor our new nurses, who will in turn invigorate our current practice by imparting their fresh ideas. In this way, we will be uniquely poised to tackle the many challenges of nursing and health care today through a greater understanding of where we have been and where we are going.”

Elgar also called on institutions to think outside the box, explaining that SCCA is also exploring telemedicine as a way for retiring nurses to provide ongoing mentorship to newer nurses.

“We create an ecosystem where seasoned nurses mentor new nurses, and new nurses invigorate our practice with fresh thinking.”

Suni Elgar, MPH, BSN, RN, OCN®

SCCA, Uganda nurses collaborate in support of oncology best practices

In October, SCCA’s Kathleen Shannon Dorcy, BSN, MN, PhD, RN, FAAN, and Arlyce Coumar, RN, MN, OCN®, traveled to Uganda to share oncology best practices and support patient care in the region.

Coumar, an advanced practice nurse at SCCA, is working with nurses at Uganda Cancer Institute (UCI) to help improve patient outcomes. UCI has a partnership with the Fred Hutchinson Cancer Research Center, one of three organizations that comprise SCCA.

Shannon Dorcy and Coumar are helping to build a nursing curriculum for Uganda that respects and reflects Ugandan culture. “We want to support collaboration,” says Coumar. Ugandan nurses want to expand information about patients’ access to counseling services, as well as finding ways to help people return for follow-up visits even if they live far from UCI or can’t afford care. “It’s about how they can help patients,” says Coumar.

“When she taught us will be put into practice for the good of the patients and relatives,” reiterated one Ugandan nurse.

“With this knowledge, I will be able to improve the understanding and approach to different types of cancers and their management,” shared another nurse.

Sister Tino Christine, RN, RM, Senior Nurse Officer, UCI, Joyce Balagadde Kambugu, MD, Head of Paediatric Oncology, UCI
A mouse with a legacy

In 1993, Sally Mann traveled with her family from California to Fred Hutchinson Cancer Research Center for a bone marrow transplant. When her acute myeloid leukemia relapsed, Sally and her family returned home for treatment in California. Sally later passed away.

As is almost always the case with our patients, Sally developed a very close relationship with her SCCA nurses. Before the Manns left Seattle, Sally gave her lead nurse, Kathleen Shannon Dorcy, BSN, MN, PHD, RN, FAAN, a small ceramic figurine: a mouse, chosen as a tribute to a mouse-derived clinical study focused on finding a cure for leukemia. She explained to Shannon Dorcy that she “wants us to continue finding hope for patients with leukemia,” and offered the little mouse as a reminder of Sally, the Manns and the journey they shared with us.

For the next 22 years, Shannon Dorcy brought the little mouse with her each time she changed offices, drawing from it the inspiration the Manns had intended.

In 2015, Kathleen received an unexpected phone call from the SCCA clinic. A young woman, named Jessica Mann, was visiting Seattle from New York on a business trip and had decided to make an impromptu visit to the place where her mother received love and care. Jessica had no idea that she would be reunited with the nurse who cared for her mother more than 20 years earlier, until she was met by Shannon Dorcy — mouse in hand — to recount memories of that difficult, but important, time.

Shannon Dorcy had intended to return the mouse to Jessica as a keepsake, but Jessica declined, deciding that she would prefer that it stay with the people of SCCA, where it might continue to inspire the nurses and all the clinical staff who work to relieve suffering and save lives.

In 2018, we ensured that inspiration touched the lives of every nurse by providing each of them with their own personal mouse figurine, as a token of appreciation, during Nurses’ Week. Today you will find ceramic mice in the most unexpected places throughout SCCA, reminding all of us that even when patients don’t survive their disease, we have impacted them and their families and are part of a significant and sacred experience.

Jessica and her mother Sally are just two of the countless people who have been impacted by cancer — and they are also two of the many who have had a lasting connection to SCCA and look to us to continue fighting the good fight.
BMT recipient, SCCA team member pursues health care career

Born in Uganda, John Masembe lost his baby sister and his older brother to sickle cell disease before becoming sick himself. After he underwent several treatments at Mulago Hospital in Kampala, Uganda — all of which failed — Masembe’s family decided that the only hope of saving his life was to bring him to SCCA for care.

After moving to the U.S., Masembe immediately began treatment at SCCA’s Sickle Cell Clinic, where his life was ultimately saved through a bone marrow transplant.

Although his treatments were grueling, Masembe graduated high school with honors, took a job as a treatment coordinator at the SCCA Immunotherapy Clinic and earned his associate’s degree. He is now pursuing a bachelor’s degree in health care management.

“If it wasn’t for my family and the amazing transplant team at SCCA, I honestly don’t know where I would be,” says Masembe. “Now that I have a second chance at life I am planning on using my experience to continue with my education in hopes of helping those in need someday.”
The Destination: One (D:1) program launched in October aims to unite multiple patient record platforms housed at UW Medicine and SCCA into a single platform. The program offers a connected care experience that improves workflows and simplifies foundational systems. Best of all, it will deliver a single, enterprise-wide electronic health record for each and every patient: “One Patient, One Record, One Story.”

D:1 is led by SCCA clinical and business leaders, including Terry McDonnell, DNP, ACNP-BC, chief nursing executive and vice president of clinical operations; Marc Stewart, MD, medical director; Dave Ackerson, chief information officer and vice president; and Dan Martin, MD, chief medical information officer.

When fully operational in 2020, D:1 will deliver a more personalized patient engagement and experience, enhance physician experience, improve patient care staff workflow and increase business and operating efficiencies.

Nurse graduates with top honors; helped by Tuition Reimbursement Program

SCCA nurse Coumar, BSN, MN, OCN®, RN, graduated from University of Washington – Bothell in June with a Master of Nursing degree. She was also honored with the Distinguished Graduate Award. And, Coumar says, it wouldn’t have been possible without the SCCA’s Tuition Reimbursement Program.

“The program really made a difference in pursuing my goal,” Coumar says.

Launched in 2016, SCCA’s Tuition Reimbursement Program provides financial support to staff seeking further education or professional development. To qualify, they must work toward a degree or certificate program at an accredited university, college or vocational/technical institute in a field associated with an SCCA-related career.

Coumar’s graduate studies centered on global health and nurse education, specifically in oncology. She completed her field work at the Uganda Cancer Institute (see page 19). She currently works in the Infusion Room and Nurse Education department. She has also worked with the adult transplant team. She helped to create the SCCA’s ambulatory care Dedicated Education Unit as well as the Nurse Residency program.

Coumar’s study goals have been recognized with a $5,000 Oncology Nursing Society scholarship and the 2016 Rosemary Ford Future of Nursing Scholarship. Congratulations to a talented scholar and nursing leader at SCCA.
Many patients are dealing with complicated issues that can be either masked or exacerbated as they live with cancer. Despite substantial evidence that people with cancer often experience psychosocial issues, many patients do not receive mental health care during their treatment for cancer.

A new program launched by SCCA is changing that by incorporating mental health support into cancer care. The Integrated Psychosocial Oncology Program (IPOP) at SCCA is based on the Collaborative Care Management model, which was first developed in primary care settings. The program, one of the first of its kind in the country, uses a team-based, patient-centered approach to provide population-based psychosocial care that is integrated into routine oncology care.

Clinical oncology social workers, consulting psychiatrists and psychologists work closely with the medical team to ensure that all patients at SCCA receive the psychosocial support they need throughout their cancer care.

“...the greatest challenge is how many requests we’re getting to present the IPOP program at cancer centers across the country.”
Jesse Fann, MD, MPH

“We are pioneering a more comprehensive approach to the well-being of our patients.”
Tiffany Courtnage, MSW, LICSW, OSW-C

“...dramatically improved our professional education and our patient care.”
Jesse Fann, MD, MPH

Social workers are the frontline providers of psychosocial care for SCCA patients. The program model supports social workers bringing their most challenging cases to twice-weekly discussion groups with clinical psychiatry and psychology teams. During these interactions, SCCA’s social workers present a registry of distressed patients and receive real-time clinical input and supervision from both their fellow teammates and SCCA Psychiatry.

“It’s been so successful that our greatest challenge is how many requests we’re getting to present the IPOP program at cancer centers across the country.”
Jesse Fann, MD, MPH
Long-term Follow-up Program supports cancer survivors

Declines in death rates for many cancers have led to an increase in the number of cancer survivors, who often have lasting complications from their treatment.

At SCCA, the Long-term Follow-up Program (LTFU) supports bone marrow transplant recipients with lifelong medical check-ins and comprehensive monitoring of their health and well-being while helping to manage post-transplant complications.

The LTFU is a comprehensive post-transplant survivorship program unique to SCCA, which has performed more bone marrow transplants than any other transplant center in the world. Its telemedicine component includes a hotline that patients, their doctors and their family members can call on weekdays. The free lifetime service fields about 60 calls a week, handled by dedicated LTFU nurses.

Research is also an important part of the LTFU. The program tracks more than 6,000 transplant survivors, many of whom have been followed for decades. The data collected continues to help refine patient care.

Medical Assistant-Certified (MA-C) Apprenticeship Program launches

In October 2018, SCCA launched the first Medical Assistant Apprenticeship Program with a cohort of four apprentices on our Medical Oncology and BMT clinics at SLU campus. This program is coordinated by the Washington Association of Community & Migrant Health Centers (WACMHC) and governed by Washington State Apprenticeship and Training Council (WSATC) standards.

The program offers culturally and economically diverse apprentices an opportunity to receive excellent on-the-job training to become a certified medical assistant. SCCA provides tuition, full-time employment status and 2,000 hours of hands-on clinical training with the support and guidance of an experienced Certified-MA coach/preceptor. Each apprentice works side-by-side with their SCCA coach/preceptor until they achieve competency in direct patient care and clinical skills. In addition, they complete 410 hours of supplemental online coursework, worth 56 college credits through a local community college.

The SCCA Education Department has partnered with clinical units’ MA-C leadership teams and staff to select, train and foster the apprentice’s knowledge and skill acquisition. The dedication and support of the staff extends beyond the MA team; physicians, physician assistants, nurse practitioners and clinical nurse coordinators have also provided many learning opportunities for the apprentices.

“Mentoring these incredible apprentices is part of our commitment to providing the best cancer care available anywhere.”
Sharol Kidd, MBA-HL, RN
A commitment to the future of nursing

In 2010, The Robert Wood Johnson Foundation and Institute of Medicine published a seminal work, “The Future of Nursing: Leading Change, Advancing Health.” The primary focus of the initiative was to increase the nursing workforce across a spectrum of clinical opportunities and prepare the country to respond to a predicted shortage of practicing nurses in 2020.

Much of the clinical education for nurses takes place on inpatient units, yet the vast majority of cancer care takes place in ambulatory community practice settings.

SCCA established a dedicated education unit in 2013 to develop new nurses, and 2018 saw an expansion of that program into our community clinic at Evergreen Halvorson Cancer Center.

Our clinical rotation at Evergreen affords nursing students exposure to a broad array of treatment modalities including chemotherapy, biotherapy and proton therapy. It also provides exceptional interdisciplinary collaboration with pharmacy, social work, genetic counselors, research coordinators, physicians, ARNPs and fellow nurses.

Advancing patient care during infusion

This year, SCCA’s infusion center implemented a significant advancement in patient care by ensuring an advanced practice provider is present on the infusion unit during all hours of operation. These critical team members lead rapid response teams that assess, diagnose and manage urgent and emergent patient needs. They also facilitate hospital admissions, serve as a resource for infusion nurses and coordinate care with attending physicians and teams. Welcome our advanced practice providers: Jim Drechsler, PA-C, Leslie Anderson, PA-C, and Jeannine Sanford, ARNP.