Bone Marrow Transplant Program at SCCA Recognized For Its One-Year Survival Rates

SEATTLE (March 06, 2014) – The Fred Hutchinson Bone Marrow Transplant Program at Seattle Cancer Care Alliance (SCCA) was recently recognized by the Center for International Blood and Marrow Transplant Research (CIBMTR) for outperforming its expected one-year survival rate for allogeneic transplant patients. The results published by the CIBMTR, analyzed the National Marrow Donor Program’s (NMDP) registry of 168 U.S. transplant centers over a three-year period for its 2013 Transplant Center-Specific Survival Report.

The Fred Hutchinson Bone Marrow Transplant Program at SCCA pioneered the clinical use of bone marrow and stem cell transplantation more than 40 years ago and have performed more than 14,000 bone marrow transplants – more than any other institution in the world. Today, the organization is one of just 13 stem cell transplant programs nationwide that exceeded its anticipated one-year survival rate for patients undergoing allogeneic transplants.

This type of transplant uses stem cells from a donor who may or may not be related to the patient. Stem cell transplants, including bone marrow transplants, are used to treat a range of leukemias and lymphomas, as well as other diseases such as severe aplastic anemia and sickle cell disease.

Comparing Transplant Centers

“Comparing transplant centers in the U.S. is an extremely challenging process,” explains Dr. Marco Mielcarek, medical director of the Adult Blood and Marrow Transplant Program at SCCA. “There are so many variables that must be taken into account, including type of cancer and stage, the patient’s underlying medical problems and age, the type of transplant they undergo, and the source of the stem cells for the transplant. Each patient has a unique risk profile.”

Although the process of comparing transplant centers can be challenging, the intensive analysis allows researchers to compare themselves to other centers, leading to improved outcomes. Additionally, the report provides patients and their families with valuable information necessary when evaluating where to go for treatment.

“When you adjust for risk factors, our patients’ outcomes exceeded expectations over a three-year period,” Dr. Mielcarek says, “that’s information that is helpful for patients to know when they are making important health care decisions with their families.”
To arrive at its findings, CIBMTR independently examined the survival rates of 19,945 transplants performed to treat blood cancers at U.S. centers in the NMDP network. The most recent reporting period covered January 1, 2009 to December 31, 2011. During this three-year period, 762 allogeneic transplants were performed at SCCA. The report, published annually, is required by federal law and is designed to provide potential stem cell transplant recipients, their families, and the public with comparative survival rates among transplant centers.

**Bone Marrow and Stem Cell Transplantation First Developed at Fred Hutch**

The clinical use of bone marrow and stem cell transplantation was first developed at Fred Hutchinson Cancer Research Center more than 40 years ago, based on the pioneering research of Dr. E. Donnall Thomas, who won the Nobel Prize in 1990 for his groundbreaking transplant work. Many of the current SCCA and Fred Hutch transplant experts have been trained by Dr. Thomas, including Dr. Fred Appelbaum, who came to the Hutch in 1978 to work with Dr. Thomas to steadily improve the transplant process. Dr. Appelbaum currently serves as executive director and president of SCCA and executive vice president and deputy director of Fred Hutch.

“I’m very happy to see that our transplant patients during this period again had a survival that was better than predicted, and thus we “outperformed” in the language of the CIBMTR,” said Dr. Appelbaum. “The study’s findings reflect the extraordinary and long-standing dedication by the staff of SCCA and the Hutch to improve the outcomes of our patients by continually refining transplantation to be a safer and more effective treatment.”

SCCA’s success in helping patients survive a wide range of cancers continues to be acknowledged by National Cancer Data Base (NCDB) rankings. SCCA has ranked at the top of NCDB patient survival rankings since 2002.

For more information on the Fred Hutchinson Bone Marrow Transplant Program at SCCA please visit: [www.seattlecca.org/diseases/bone-marrow-transplant-overview.cfm](http://www.seattlecca.org/diseases/bone-marrow-transplant-overview.cfm).

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**About Us**

Seattle Cancer Care Alliance brings together the leading research teams and cancer specialists from Fred Hutch, Seattle Children’s, and UW Medicine. One extraordinary group whose sole purpose is the pursuit of better, longer, richer lives of our patients. Based in Seattle’s South Lake Union region, SCCA has six clinical care sites, including a medical oncology clinic at EvergreenHealth in Kirkland, Washington; medical and radiation oncology at UW Medicine/Northwest Hospital & Medical Center in Seattle, Washington, as well as network affiliation with hospitals in five states. For more information about SCCA, visit [www.seattlecca.org](http://www.seattlecca.org).