



HEMATOLOGY/ONCOLOGY ASSOCIATES  
OF CENTRAL NEW YORK

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Our  
Connection  
to You

2012– Volume 4  
Newsletter

***Our Mission** is to provide the highest level of quality care in a healing environment for the mind, body and spirit of patients dealing with cancer and blood disorders.*

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## Hematology-Oncology Associates Expands to Auburn!



Dr. Margaret Boufal

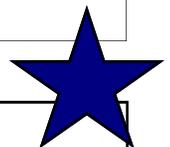
Serving the Auburn community for almost eight (8) years, we are pleased to announce that Dr. Margaret Boufal has joined Hematology-Oncology Associates (HOA).

HOA is pleased to serve the community and hopes to expand the Auburn practice to include access to state of the art Radiation, CyberKnife, Pharmacy, Laboratory and other ancillary and support services. The practice is currently located at 17 E. Gene-see Street, Auburn and the number to call is (315) 472-7504.

**Quote for  
the Quarters**

Strength does not come from physical capacity. It comes from an indomitable will.

Mohandas Gandhi



# The Oncology Medical Home Model

*(Reprinted from the Community Oncology Alliance)*

## ***Background***

The cost of health care has become part of the national dialogue on the fiscal health of the United States. Regardless of political ideology, there is a common belief that the federal government — the single largest purchaser of health care — needs to accomplish two things concurrently: purchase quality and efficient health care. The two operative words are “quality” and “efficient,” the later referring specifically to cost. And private payers have adopted a similar quest in terms of ensuring quality health care delivery in a cost-contained environment.

This is certainly true of cancer care, where costs have increased substantially with new therapies. Attempts by Medicare and private payers to contain costs by cutting provider reimbursement have had the unintended consequence of consolidating the cancer care delivery market. This consolidation is creating patient access issues, and is increasing costs for both patients and payers.

The medical home model of cancer care provides elements that all primary stakeholders — patients, payers (both primary and secondary), and providers — want in ensuring quality, efficient cancer care delivery. We know this because that is exactly what the stakeholders have communicated to us.

## ***What is a “Medical Home?”***

In basic terms, the patient has a “medical home” that is the central “coordinator” or “gatekeeper” of their medical care, and as importantly becomes a source of hope and comfort. Typically, the medical home is a primary care physician who becomes the point person for coordinating the patient’s total care, including both primary and specialty care. The theory is that the medical home model of patient-centered care results in important positive outcomes relating to the quality, efficiency, and cost of patient care by optimizing care coordination. The medical home model has been around for over 40 years and has been evolved and piloted since its introduction.

## ***What is the Logic of an *Oncology-Specific Medical Home?****

At first glance, it would appear that the concept of an oncology-specific medical home flies in the face of reason by defeating the purpose of a medical home managed by the primary care physician. However, the rationale is seen in the complexity and severity of cancer treatment. When a person is diagnosed with cancer, in the majority of cases, the treatment of the cancer becomes the primary focus of medical care. Other medical care needs to be coordinated in the context of the primary goal of treating the cancer. In many cases, the patient receives highly specialized treatment, such as chemotherapy and radiation. Chemotherapy and other types of cancer drugs are potentially toxic and require administration at the site of care by specially trained oncology nurses. These drugs can cause serious side effects that need to be treated in the context of the patient’s overall cancer care. (Continued on page 3)



**CancerConnects** is pleased to continue their work to facilitate connections for everyone throughout Central New York who has been diagnosed with cancer. If you are interested in connecting with a cancer survivor mentor or if you're interested in becoming a mentor to cancer patients, please contact CancerConnects.

**[www.cancerconnects.org](http://www.cancerconnects.org) or (315) 634-5004**

### ***What is the Logic of an **Oncology-Specific Medical Home?** (Cont. from page 2)***

Few primary care physicians have the expertise and facilities to administer cancer treatment. Additionally, primary care physicians are not trained or comfortable with the intensity of symptom management (e.g., related to pain, nausea/vomiting, neuropathy, and blood count management) typically required in providing cancer treatment. As such, because treating the cancer becomes the medical priority, in most cases the oncologist functions as the patient's primary medical caregiver during the phase of active cancer treatment and follow-up care.

As the medical home for the cancer patient, the oncologist is in the best position to ensure that treatment is optimized and that adverse events are minimized — with a goal of eliminating them based on process improvements. These events include treatment side effects that require additional care and, in cases, can lead to emergency room (ER) visits and/or hospitalizations, which can be detrimental to patient outcomes and substantially increase the cost of patient care.

### ***What is the Oncology Medical Home Model? \*\****

The Oncology Medical Home model is about delivering, ensuring, and measuring quality cancer care. In short, it is a patient-focused system of delivering quality cancer care that is coordinated, and efficient. As such, it will be designed to meet the needs of patients, payers, and providers. Some of the key aspects of the Oncology Medical Home model are:

- Cancer care that is coordinated with the central focus on the patient and their entire medical condition
- Cancer care that is optimized based on evidence-based medicine to produce quality outcomes
- Cancer care that is accessible and efficient, with treatment provided in the highest quality, lowest cost setting for the patient
- Cancer care that is delivered in a patient-centric, caring environment that optimizes patient satisfaction
- Cancer care that is continuously improved by measuring and benchmarking results against other facilities providing care so that best practices "raise the bar" in delivering care

**\*\* Hematology-Oncology Associates' goal is to be the first Certified Oncology Medical Home in New York State in 2013. \*\***

**For the Mind and Spirit**  
**More Support for our Patients \* Free to All !!**

**Support Group for Recurrent & Metastatic Disease**

This support group is dedicated to providing guidance to those cancer patients with recurrent and metastatic disease. The unique aspects of this journey are explored with patients who are experiencing similar challenges. This group meets the 1st & 3rd Monday of each month from 4-5:30 pm at Brittonfield in the 3rd floor conference room and is facilitated by Gussie Sorensen, LCSW-R and Beth Connelly, RN, NP.

*Look Good... Feel Better*

*Cosmetology professionals will help you with make-up application, dry skin, discolored nails, choice and care of a wig, scarves, turbans and hats.*

**American Cancer Society**

6725 Lyons St., East Syracuse

Call 1-800-227-2345

1st Monday of the Month at 5:30pm—June 4th, July 2nd, Aug 6th, Oct 1st, Nov 5th and Dec 3rd

Last Monday of the month at noon: June 25th, July 30th, Aug 27th, Sept. 24th, Oct 29th, and Nov 26th

**Caregivers Support Group**

This group provides support for caregivers of cancer patients and provides a place for discussion regarding ongoing challenges that are encountered with the caregiver role. The group meets the 1st Monday of each month from 4-5:30pm in the 3rd Floor Boardroom located at our Brittonfield Office. The group is facilitated by Kate Flannery, LCSW and Kathy Snyder, RN, NP.



The mission of the KATS (Kids Adjusting Through Support) program is to help children and their families cope with serious illness by intervening with group support and education. *Call Gussie Sorensen at 315.472.7504 x 1119 or Belinda Tamoutselis at 315.472.7504 for information.*

Hematology-Oncology Proud to be ...



**Presenting Sponsor**

**Presenting Sponsor**



**Gold Sponsor**



**Platinum Sponsor**

# Clinical Research Department

## “Vitamin D and Breast Cancer Biomarkers”

A Research Study- Sponsored by The National Cancer Institute



- ◆ Are you premenopausal (and age 55 or younger)?
- ◆ Do you get regular mammograms?
- ◆ Are you willing to be assigned to take a Vitamin D supplement or a placebo pill daily for 1 year?
- ◆ Have you been informed that you have dense/fibrous breasts?

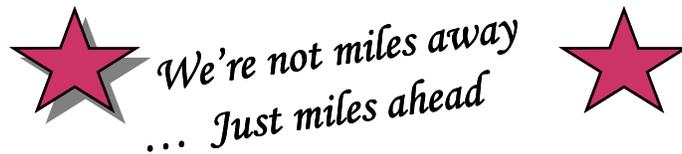
*You may be eligible for a research study comparing the effects of Vitamin D supplementation on breast density and blood biomarkers, to explore the prevention of breast cancer.*

For more information, please call our Research Department  
(315) 472-7504 ext. 7 - 2493

### What is a CCOP?

A Community Clinical Oncology Program allows a medical practice to work with the National Cancer Institute to formally access clinical research trials and cancer control and prevention studies for patient participation. Through our CCOP, our staff and patients have had the opportunity to contribute to the improvement of cancer care and prevention since 1986! There are about 50 CCOPs in the United States and only 2 in New York State—Hematology-Oncology Associates and a practice on Long Island. We're so proud of that fact! HOACNY is the only CCOP in the country not affiliated with a large cancer center or university—a well kept secret!

This National Cancer Institute partnership allows our practice to bring cutting edge clinical trials and cancer control and prevention studies to Syracuse, New York. We can offer investigational drug therapies and cutting edge treatments to our patients—and they don't need to travel to Philadelphia, Buffalo, Rochester, Texas, Boston, Minnesota or New York City!



# The Wellness Center



A beautiful and healing atmosphere is provided as a haven of opportunity for the mind, body and spirit. Check out the Wellness Center's schedule of classes and services on the web!

[www.hoacny.com](http://www.hoacny.com) — Wellness Center

## Hematology-Oncology Associates Receives Recognition for Cancer Care from the Largest Oncology Society in United States!

Hematology-Oncology Associates has been recognized by the Quality Oncology Practice Initiative (QOPI®) Certification Program, an affiliate of the American Society of Clinical Oncology (ASCO). The QOPI® Certification Program provides certification for outpatient hematology-oncology practices that meet the highest standards for quality cancer care.

The QOPI Certification Program (QCP) was launched in January 2010. This certification for outpatient oncology practices is the first program of its kind for oncology in the United States. Oncologists can achieve certification by demonstrating practice consistent with the highest standards of care. The QCP seal designates those practices that not only scored high on the key QOPI quality measures, but meet rigorous safety measures established by ASCO and the Oncology Nursing Society (ONS). Hematology-Oncology Associates is one of 98 cancer practices in the country and one of 6 in New York State who have received certification. **HOA is the only QOPI certified cancer center in Central New York.**

### Hematology-Oncology Associates Comprehensive Outpatient Treatment and Support Services

- ◇ Chemotherapy and Radiation
- ◇ Clinical Research
- ◇ CyberKnife®
- ◇ Clinical Laboratory
- ◇ Pharmacy
- ◇ CT and Other Diagnostic Testing
- ◇ Patient and Family Counseling and Support Group Services
- ◇ Nutritional Counseling
- ◇ Integrative/Complementary Therapy
- ◇ Art Therapy
- ◇ Community Educational Programs

#### ***Amenities***

- ◇ State of the Art Facilities
- ◇ Imaging Services
- ◇ Boutique at Brittonfield
- ◇ Flat Screen TV's in Infusion
- ◇ Patient Internet Access in Infusion
- ◇ Free Parking
- ◇ Patient Education Area
- ◇ Electronic Medical Record

## Integrative Medicine—Wellness Programs

**Integrative or Complementary Therapies** are services that support your current medical treatment and are never intended to replace it. They are for patients who are seeking wellness or well being of not only the physical body, but of the mind, body and spirit.

Massage \* Reiki \* Healing Touch \* Yoga \* CranioSacral Therapy \* Foot Reflexology  
Light Therapy \* Meditation \* Acupuncture \* Tai-Chi \* Zumba \* and more

*Offered at our Brittonfield Office &/or The Wellness Center at Medical Center West*

*—Please visit our website or call Anne at 234-4673 for details or to set up an appointment —*

*Second Sunday Spiritual Gathering at 10am at the Wellness Center*

## 2011 Hospice's Anita Award Recipient and Hematology-Oncology Associates' Spirit Award Winner



Congratulations to  
Dr. Benny Wong and Joshua Sweet

**Dr. Benny Wong** was the recipient of the 2011 Anita Award from Hospice. This award recognizes a doctor for excellence in the care of patients with life-threatening illness. The award was created by friends of a previous Hospice patient. The letter written in support of Dr. Wong's recognition was heartfelt and underscored his compassionate nature, his love for his patients and his dedication to cancer care.

**Joshua Sweet**, our beloved Clinical Assistant, was the recipient of the 2011 Hematology-Oncology Spirit Award. This award is one of the greatest honors an employee can receive in our practice. Nominated by his peers, Josh was awarded this honor because he consistently demonstrates an exemplary team spirit, passion for excellence and commitment to our mission. We are grateful to Josh for all the gifts he brings to our practice! His positive outlook and vibrant energy is contagious and we salute his commitment to our practice and his compassion for our patients.

# Medicare and the Payor Circuit

Congresswoman Ann Marie Buerkle 423-5657

Senator Kirsten Gillibrand 448-0470

Senator Charles Schumer 423-5471

The Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) released 2 reports recently regarding Medicare's financial state. The 2012 Medicare Board of Trustees report provides detailed information on past and estimated future financial operations of the Hospital Insurance Trust Fund for Medicare Part A and the Supplementary Medical Insurance Trust Fund for Medicare Part B and Part D. The CMS Office of the Actuary report provides an overview of short- and long-term savings and quality improvements enacted by the Affordable Care Act (ACA) through 2016.

**Medicare Trustee Report.** The trustees estimate that the Hospital Insurance Trust Fund will remain solvent through 2024, the same as predicted last year; however, financing over the next 10 years will be inadequate. Without the ACA's provisions, the insolvency date would have been 8 years earlier, in 2016. On the other hand, the report estimates that the Supplemental Medical Insurance Trust Fund is adequately financed for the next decade and beyond, because beneficiary premiums and general revenue income for Part B and Part D are reset each year to match expected costs. However, the projections assume that, as required by current law, CMS will reduce Medicare payment rates for physician services by more than 30% at the start of 2013, due to the **sustainable growth rate formula**, an action the trustees were "virtually certain" would not occur. If this does occur and the government reduces physician reimbursement by the planned 30%, unfathomable numbers of physician offices in the United States will either close their doors or stop accepting Medicare! Call your representative and tell them to fix and permanently eliminate the SGR—Sustainable Growth Rate formula!

**Important Note to Patients: Please DO NOT change your Medicare plan before you call us ... (315) 234-2812**

**It appears that there are sales representatives from Medicare Advantage Plans and Medicare Replacement Plans working diligently to convince older adults to transition from the traditional Medicare program to these Managed Medicare plans. They convince people that the premium savings make the decision simple. In truth, however, two significant issues result. One is that some plans offer few to zero participating doctors and hospitals in Onondaga County. The other significant issue arises when a person gets sick and needs expensive medical treatment. The out of pocket costs far exceed any premium savings. Be wise and check into all the aspects of a new plan and please call our office as we are happy to assist you. We're in this together!**

Difficult decisions regarding access to care have been precipitated by legislative changes. Insurance companies would like to emulate the Medicare changes that continue to challenge and stress our patient services. **Together**, we can prevent this. The need to critically assess every insurance company's reimbursement is now mandated by medical practices. We can no longer participate with every insurance company. We will not allow the level of care or expertise you have come to expect and trust be diminished. Please stay connected and support our decisions to fight for you—our valued patients. When open enrollment comes to your employer— please make sure you sign up for an insurance we participate with—taking care of **you** is very important to us!