



HEMATOLOGY/ONCOLOGY ASSOCIATES
OF CENTRAL NEW YORK

5008 Brittonfield Parkway, Suite 700
E. Syracuse, NY 13057 * 315.472.7504 * www.hoacny.com

Our
Connection
to You

2013– Volume 5
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.

Recognizing our Staff!



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Recognizing Staff Excellence is our newest initiative to recognize the excellence, commitment, and compassion of our employees. Please help us recognize and reward our staff if you feel someone has gone "above & beyond" for you or your family. Share your experience on the card provided and drop into one of these boxes located throughout our offices or place in any US Mailbox. We will share your comments with all physicians and staff and acknowledge all acts of kindness that you share with us!

Quote for
the Quarters

A loving heart is the
truest wisdom.

Charles Dickens

A Special Thank You!



Laurie Mezzalingua was a fighter! After 12 years, she may have dropped out of the race with breast cancer but she will never lose the fight. She made sure of that when she established the St. Agatha Foundation. A foundation whose mission is to help breast cancer patients afford their illness. The Foundation is dedicated to providing support, comfort and care to breast cancer patients. It can help pay for a variety of costs that patients must incur to ensure quality healthcare and quality of life. Hema-

tology-Oncology Associates has built a close working relationship with the St. Agatha Foundation and we are so grateful for the assistance they have provided. The Foundation has helped numerous patients deal with financial and emotional challenges. “Laurie was one of my dear friends,” said HOA CEO, Maryann Rofaro, “The help our patients are receiving is exactly what she would have wanted!” Our staff is well versed in understanding the variety of benefits the foundation can provide and how best to access the funds. For more information, please contact Jennifer St. Andrew, HOA’s Patient Advocate at 315.472.7504 x 1079 or speak to one of our social workers, Gussie or Belinda. Our staff will work with Cancer-Connects, a foundation founded by HOA over 7 years ago whose mission is to facilitate the cancer journey for patients in CNY. For those who knew Laurie, it is nearly impossible to forget her because of her love of people and generosity. For the lives she continues to touch that didn’t know her personally, she will never be forgotten. Hematology-Oncology Associates and the breast cancer patients who have been impacted by Laurie’s dream and generosity are forever grateful.



Laurie Mezzalingua

www.saintagathafoundation.org

(888) 878-7900

CANCER CONNECTS

...for the journey

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 or (315) 634-5004



In early March, our Auburn practice relocated to the Health Central building at 37 West Garden Street, Suite 301. How appropriate, that the back wall in infusion, behind the new studs and dry-wall, will forever read, "Love ... Faithfulness ... is all we need." The wall may be hidden from sight now, but we did not paint over it or remove it. Like many things in life, those words will always be present but unseen. The windows in infusion bring light and hope to our patients and staff. Colors were chosen to make our patients feel warm and comfortable. We hope our patients like our new digs. We honor the school that touched so many lives by hanging

restored black boards and we even kept Locker # 1. We are privileged to serve our patients and hope that this new environment and skilled staff can make a difference.



Don't forget to check out our Patient Portal!

www.hoacny.com MY CHART (bottom right corner)

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.

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.

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

HOA Onondaga Hill: 2/25, 3/25, 4/29, 5/20, 6/24, 7/29, 9/30, 10/28, 11/25—All 4:30 pm-6:30 pm

ACS East Syracuse: 3/4, 4/1, 5/6, 6/3, 7/1, 9/9, 10/7, 11/4—All 5:30-7:30pm; 2/25, 3/25, 4/29, 5/20, 6/24, 7/29, 9/30, 10/28, 11/25—All 12:30-2:30 pm

Auburn Hospital: 3/4, 4/1, 5/6, 6/3, 7/1, 9/9, 10/7, 11/4—All 11am-12:30 pm



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.*



The mission of the Symphoria Community Wellness Initiative is to create partnerships between their musicians and local healthcare and wellness providers, with the intent to bring live therapeutic music to patients, their families, and healthcare staff in CNY. Music has been recognized to have immense benefits for patients through stress and anxiety reduction, lessening the side effects of chemotherapy, and reducing the amount of pain medication needed before and after surgical procedures. We are pleased to offer this to our patients

Symphoria Community Wellness Initiative

Clinical Research Department

Did you know that HOA participates in clinical trials through the National Cancer Institute (NCI)? That's right - last year over 250 of our patients participated in our research studies. These studies look at different treatment regimens (new drugs, different drug combinations), symptom management (preventing nausea, treating cognitive dysfunction after chemotherapy) and cancer prevention. Some of these treatments are only available when participating in a study. Many of these clinical trials are only offered at large cancer centers in big cities. HOA can offer these same studies to our patients without them having to travel to another city or state!

HOA has been participating in NCI studies for over 25 years. Dr. Jeffrey Kirshner is the Principal Investigator for our Research program. Dr. Kirshner is well known in the research field and is a member of several oncology research committees through the NCI. The Research Department here at HOA has a staff of 10 composed of research nurses, Clinical Research Associates and other professionals. The HOA Research program is just one more way HOA offers the very best to our patients and that's why our motto is:

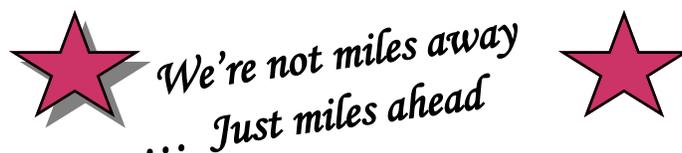
Today's Clinical Trials are Tomorrow's Treatments

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 — 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

2012 Hematology-Oncology Associates Spirit Award



Bobbie Finster (right)
2012 Spirit Award Recipient with
Maryann Roefaro, CEO

Bobbie Finster received the highest honor from HOA in December of 2012, when she became the recipient of the 2012 Spirit Award. The Spirit Award is an award from Hematology-Oncology Associates that is given annually to an employee who consistently demonstrates an exemplary team spirit, passion for excellence and commitment to our mission. Bobbie is the Administrative Assistant Supervisor and has worked at HOA for 5 years. She is loved by many patients and staff. The nominations were filled with praise for Bobbie's commitment to our practice and patients. They exuded love, respect and admiration for Bobbie and the work that she does every day. She goes above & beyond consistently. We are privileged to work with Bobbie and HOA is blessed to have such a hard working, dedicated and compassionate employee. Congratulate Bobbie when you see her!

Medicare and the Payor Circuit

Congressman Dan Maffei 423-5657

Senator Kirsten Gillibrand 448-0470

Senator Charles Schumer 423-5471

Congress passes one-year SGR fix as part of fiscal cliff legislation

Congress passed The American Taxpayer Relief Act of 2012, to avert the "fiscal cliff." In addition to various tax and spending measures, the legislation includes provisions of direct importance to medical group practices.

- ◆ This legislation has postponed the Medicare physician payment (SGR) cut for one year. It eliminates the 27 percent Medicare physician payment cut, which took effect January 1, 2013 and replaces it with a "zero percent update" to the Medicare physician fee schedule conversion factor for 2013. As has occurred with prior temporary extensions of this kind, this is not a fee schedule rate freeze. It means any conversion factor adjustments and RVU changes contained in the final fee schedule rule for 2013 may result in payment rate changes, but the massive SGR cut is nullified for a year.
- ◆ This also turned off the January 2, 2013 sequester for two months. This prevents various defense and other automatic cuts from occurring, including an across the board, two percent cut for all Medicare providers. It's expected Congress will revisit issues related to the sequester in the future.

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 limited 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!