



UNIVERSITY OF
PENNSYLVANIA
Abramson Cancer Center

2006
Annual
Report



It Takes a Family to Treat Cancer.



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After high fever and other flu-like symptoms, Mary Lau had tests which revealed she had ampulla duct cancer. One of her daughters became the researcher in the family, and found that the top physician for this kind of pancreatic cancer was at Penn. Her husband retired to spend more time with Mary and their family. Both of their daughters came home, one from Dallas and one from New York, during Mary's treatment. Her surgery at Penn was successful, and she has become a volunteer for the Abramson Cancer Center's Person-to-Person program where she is matched with patients who have the same kind of cancer. Mary continues to work full-time at the job she loves, and she learned from her experience that it takes a family to treat cancer.

Abramson Cancer Center Director's Leadership Council

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Letter from the Director



John H. Glick, M.D.

It is my great pleasure to report to you — the generous friends of Penn’s Abramson Cancer Center — that the University of Pennsylvania School of Medicine and Health System have announced the appointment of Craig B. Thompson, M.D., as my successor as Director of the Abramson Cancer Center.

Craig has been a distinguished colleague and scientist with PENN Medicine since 1999, when he joined our faculty as the Scientific Director of The Leonard and Madlyn Abramson Family Cancer Research Institute, Chairman of the Department of Cancer Biology, and the Deputy Director of the Abramson Cancer Center. His service to the Cancer Center in these capacities and his visionary leadership will serve him well in his new role. Craig is the right person at this time to direct the Cancer Center, and I have every confidence in his leadership.

Craig has made major contributions to the cancer research community’s understanding of the genes that regulate cell development and survival. Based on this research, future treatments could be designed to block the ability of cancer cells to survive and thus limit tumor size and prevent cancer from spreading. His scientific achievements earned him a place among our nation’s elite. In 2005, he was selected as a member of the National Academy of Sciences, a prestigious honor bestowed upon only four cancer scientists that year.

I proudly turn the Abramson Cancer Center over to Craig B. Thompson, M.D., and wish him success in his tenure. My days at Penn are far from over and I will continue to be involved with the Abramson Cancer Center as an ambassador and in my favorite role, that of doctor. On behalf of Craig and myself, thank you for your ongoing support of our patient and research programs, which are making a difference in the lives of patients and their families every day.

John H. Glick



Craig B. Thompson, M.D.

Karen Nicholas had a biopsy on a Friday afternoon in 2002 that revealed breast cancer. Over the weekend, Karen called friends and family to share the news. One of her friends told her that she had to see Dr. John Glick because “he was the best.” By Monday afternoon, Karen had spoken with Dr. Glick and was moving forward with a treatment plan. She had a mastectomy and immediate transflap breast reconstruction surgery, which uses the body’s fat to mold the new breast and is then followed by chemotherapy. With Dr. Glick’s ongoing care and expertise over the years, Karen has conquered the challenges of a breast cancer diagnosis and is again leading a healthy and vigorous lifestyle.





Abramson Cancer Center History and Mission

If you or a loved one are diagnosed with cancer, you want the best possible care. What treatments are available to you? What will your future hold? What will give you the best chance for complete recovery? How can you best preserve your quality of life?

Abramson Cancer Center Mission:

Our mission is to create new knowledge through leading edge research and to provide hope to those whose lives have been touched by cancer, through patient care excellence in the prevention, diagnosis, and treatment of cancer.

The Abramson Cancer Center of the University of Pennsylvania is committed to providing each patient with outstanding, personalized care through a comprehensive team approach, compassionate service, education and outreach, and nationally recognized cancer research programs.

Abramson Cancer Center History:

The Abramson Cancer Center of the University of Pennsylvania was established in 1973 as a center of excellence in cancer research, patient care, education and outreach. Today, the Abramson Cancer Center is a premier cancer care and research institution nationally.

The Abramson Cancer Center has one of the largest clinical and research programs in the world with more than 300 researchers and physicians. Designated a Comprehensive Cancer Center by the National Cancer Institute (NCI) for more than 30 years, the Abramson Cancer Center:

- conducts more NCI research than any other institution in Pennsylvania, and is one of the top five recipients of NCI funding in the country;
- established the first breast and ovarian cancer risk evaluation program in the nation;
- is one of only 35 approved training programs in the United States for the gynecologic oncology specialty;
- performs the most stem cell and bone marrow transplants in the region, with a much higher than average survival rate;
- builds upon the unique collaborative close-knit relationship of investigators to create innovative research advances in cancer genetics, cancer vaccines, new surgical and imaging techniques, and targeted therapeutics.

There is no “typical” cancer patient at Penn. Our focus is on the special needs of each individual. We have carefully designed our comprehensive cancer programs to provide the full range of prevention, diagnosis, treatment, and follow-up care. An expert team, consisting of leaders in medical, surgical, and radiation oncology, cancer research, nutrition, psychosocial issues, and patient care coordinators, works together with a patient’s family to help minimize the impact of a cancer diagnosis and the ensuing treatment. These are just some of the reasons why the Abramson Cancer Center has gained a national reputation for providing compassionate, innovative care tailored to the needs of each patient.



Rendering of the Raymond and Ruth Perelman Center for Advanced Medicine.

Research Funding at the Abramson Cancer Center

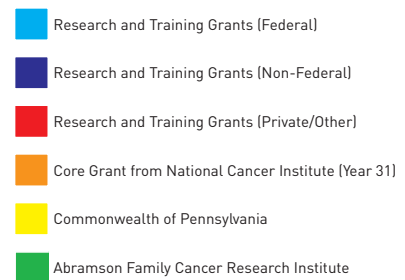
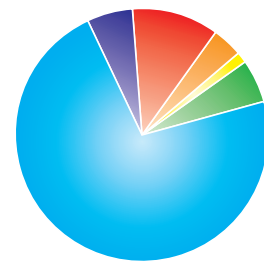
The Abramson Cancer Center of the University of Pennsylvania is a national leader in innovative cancer research. We are one of the top five cancer centers in the country represented by National Cancer Institute (NCI) funding. In fact, the Abramson Cancer Center received more research funding from the National Cancer Institute than all other Philadelphia medical institutions.

The Abramson Cancer Center received more than \$190 million in federal, state, and other external funding in 2005-2006 for basic, translational, clinical and cancer control research. While this illustrates our pre-eminence in research, it fills only a small part of our need to support research and patient care.

The level of advanced research we conduct at Penn, as well as our personalized approach we take to patient care, requires an enormous financial investment that cannot be realized through government grants and insurance reimbursement alone. Especially when both of these sources continue to shrink in terms of overall dollars.

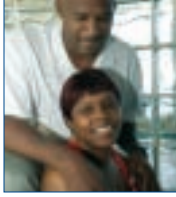
From a patient care perspective, we must rely on private support from individuals, foundations, and other sources to provide the funding necessary to offer a comprehensive range of services, including: support groups, conferences, patient education conferences, patient care coordinators, nutritional counseling, and rehabilitation therapy. We also rely on private support to stimulate campus-wide interest in oncology research and support our efforts to move innovative research from the laboratory to the patient as quickly as possible. Only through private philanthropy will we be able to fill the gaps left by traditional funding.

Fiscal Year 2006



Sources of Funds for Fiscal Year 2006

| | |
|---|----------------------|
| ■ Research and Training Grants (Federal) | \$137,003,691 |
| ■ Research and Training Grants (Non-Federal) | \$11,122,506 |
| ■ Research and Training Grants (Private/Other) | \$21,700,935 |
| ■ Core Grant from National Cancer Institute (Year 31) | \$7,500,000 |
| ■ Commonwealth of Pennsylvania | \$3,062,575 |
| ■ Abramson Family Cancer Research Institute | \$10,053,456 |
| Total | \$190,443,163 |



Patient and Family Services:

EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMS AND SUPPORT GROUPS

At the Abramson Cancer Center, we understand the difficulties cancer patients face and offer an array of services to help patients, families and friends cope with issues that often feel overwhelming. Our goal is to provide encouragement, knowledge, and tools to effectively deal with a cancer diagnosis and the impact of cancer treatments, both physically and emotionally.

We produce customized patient educational materials, including fact sheets and videos, as an initial effort to answer the most common questions raised by patients and their loved ones. We offer support groups that are focused on specific cancers, which offer emotional care and provide important ways of coping with the changes that occur as a result of cancer. In these groups, the participants establish a network of new friends with shared experiences. We recently launched the "Strength for Caring" program, which is for caregivers, and in 2007, we are expanding the program to include a young survivor's support group.

Diagnosed in February 2006 with Non-Hodgkin's Lymphoma, Alice Thomas has an excellent prognosis and has a loving support network. With her husband, a sergeant in the Marines, stationed out of state, her daily support system has been her two sons, her close girlfriends who have all sung together in church for 26 years, and her elementary school students. In fact, the kids organized a "baseball cap day" at school to express their love when she lost her hair during chemotherapy. In June, she and her husband attended the Abramson Cancer Center's Annual Leukemia, Lymphoma & Myeloma Patient Education Conference. The conference provided invaluable information and support for Alice and her husband as she began her cancer journey.

Several times a year, we host informative patient and family education conferences for specific types of cancer. These conferences bring together nationally recognized clinicians, many of whom are Abramson Cancer Center faculty, who discuss the latest advances in treatment. Patient conference attendees also attend workshops on a variety of topics that address quality of life issues, including nutrition, complementary medicine, and psychosocial issues.

In 2005-2006, the Abramson Cancer Center held conferences in such areas as breast cancer, gynecologic cancers, melanoma, complementary medicine, prostate cancer, brain cancer, and hematologic malignancies. In 2007, head and neck, gastrointestinal, and lung cancers will be included in our conference series.

Our patient programming and online resources, www.oncolink.org and www.pennccancer.org, have been recognized by national groups, including the National Cancer Institute's Cancer Patient Education Network. All of these personal services available to patients at the Abramson Cancer Center exist because of generous private philanthropic support.

*Attendees and Volunteers from the Abramson Cancer Center's Annual Leukemia Lymphoma and Myeloma Patient Education Conference
Left to right; Brenda Horn, Nikita Lawrence, Anne Jean Henryhand, Lynn Deminski, Mike Deminski*



Patient and Family Services:

VOLUNTEER PROGRAM

The Abramson Cancer Center has an exceptional group of volunteers who are important members of our patient care team. Perry Rothaus is only one example of a caring person who makes a difference by volunteering.

Pete and Frances Pellegrini, a head and neck cancer survivor and his wife, come to Penn to meet with head and neck cancer patients in person. The impact on them and the patients they visit have been very positive. The Abramson Cancer Center also matches survivors with patients in the areas of breast cancer, testicular cancer, leukemia, gynecologic cancers, gastrointestinal cancers, and prostate cancer. The survivor and current patient speak by phone or in person at least once or twice a month and form a powerful connection.

In the Ambassador program, volunteers tend to the special needs of cancer patients by serving as a friendly visitor. Volunteers greet patients when they arrive for appointments. Others assist in the Abramson Cancer Center Boutique located in the Rena Rowan Breast Center, which sells a variety of products to help patients cope with the effects of their cancer treatment, including books, journals, scarves and awareness pins.

A number of community organizations, law firms, retirement and school groups regularly contribute their talents, creating caps, quilts, and pillows for patients' use during chemotherapy or following surgery. Many of these efforts begin with one grateful patient, and grow due to the support of their friends, families and coworkers. A recent example is a cancer survivor and teacher at the Bunker Hill Middle School who, after she received a pillow from her patient service coordinator, became inspired. The teacher initiated a project for her middle-school students, with nearly 70 students getting involved to make pillows for our patients. In recent months, we have received quilts from the Valley Forge Quilters Guild, Shipley Elementary School, Lockheed Martin, and numerous private donors.

In addition, we receive approximately 2,000 knitted caps each year to distribute to patients. Some of the retirement communities and knitting groups that contribute include the Quadrangle, Brindenwood Retirement Home, Greenhill Apartments, the Penn Knitters, and the American Sewing Guild. Donations come in many forms. Bob O'Boyle, a grateful patient, designs one-of-a-kind beaded jewelry that is sold in our Boutique. All of the proceeds from his jewelry sales go towards the Abramson Cancer Center Special Needs Fund that supports patients who need financial assistance for their cancer care by providing essential items, such as wigs, medications, and transportation expenses.

Everyday, Penn's Abramson Cancer Center provides compassionate patient care, which is truly enhanced by the caring efforts of our wonderful volunteers.

Left to right: Robert O'Boyle, Ph.D., Maxine Cotler, Ernst Schneck, Irene Schrank, Perry Rothaus, Carroll Carter



A ten-year cancer survivor, Perry Rothaus feels that not enough attention is given to caregivers, and he credits his wife, Judi, with his survival. Judi researched his type of cancer and accompanied him on every hospital visit. Now that Perry is retired from his family business, he volunteers every Wednesday at the Abramson Cancer Center. He walks around the unit talking with cancer patients, and enjoys seeing people's faces change as they hear his survival story. They know he was once in their place.





Patient and Family Services:

NUTRITIONAL COUNSELING PROGRAM

A healthy nutrition plan can increase tolerance to treatment and help offset cancer-related fatigue. Following treatment, nutrition is an important agent in aiding recovery. At the Abramson Cancer Center, we provide specialized nutrition information to all of our patients. Patients are questioned on their wellness and nutrition habits after their diagnosis, before treatment begins, and are monitored throughout their treatment. This first stage of questions can affect what treatments and the timing of the treatments a patient should receive and allows nutritionists at the Abramson Cancer Center to develop appropriate dietary plans. Our counselors help patients cope with issues such as weight and strength, enhancing energy levels and improving a patient's overall sense of well-being.

Edith Christmas lives up to the giving spirit of her last name. While caring for her ailing sister, Edith ignored the pain she was experiencing. By the time she went to the doctor, her colonoscopy revealed cancer. In addition to the first-rate medical treatment Edith is receiving at Penn, she is enrolled in a special program of the Abramson Cancer Center, which arranges for prepared meals to be delivered to her home. Edith is so grateful for the specialized service she is receiving that she plans to volunteer once a week after she has completed her treatment.

Edith Christmas is one example of the importance of nutrition in cancer care. Her medical team recognized that she needed nutritional assistance after the first set of treatments led to a total lack of appetite, and her weight dropped nearly 20 percent to under 100 pounds. Edith was a perfect candidate for a pilot project started by Penn's nutritionists to provide meals to cancer patients in the community with MANNA, which until recently focused on meals to HIV/AIDS patients. MANNA's pilot project with the Abramson Cancer Center began in March, and has already enrolled over forty patients. After two months, Edith was no longer malnourished; she regained her appetite, and was physically able to continue treatment.

This year, a key new initiative by the Abramson Cancer Center Nutrition Counseling Program was to create a series of nutritional booklets for each type of cancer. On a regular basis, our program offers workshops and individualized guidance on how to use nutrition to combat some of the common side effects of treatments, such as nausea. The nutritionists are also knowledgeable on alternative and complementary nutrition therapies, including vitamins and herbal supplements. Each nutritionist meets personally with an average of 30 patients a week, helping over 2,400 patients annually in thirteen different cancer specialties.

The Nutrition Counseling Program is an important component of our compassionate, comprehensive patient care services and a proven valuable resource to physicians and patients in cancer care.

Left to right: Katrina Claghorn, MS, RD, LDN and Sherri Cirignano, MS, RD, LDN



Patient and Family Services:

PATIENT SERVICE COORDINATORS

Patient and Family Services Coordinators are a unique and important component of patient care at the Abramson Cancer Center. The coordinators provide a consistent and vital point of contact for patients as they navigate their way through the path of cancer care to reduce the stress of a cancer diagnosis.

Daily, coordinators assist patients by scheduling appointments and tests, facilitating specialized counseling, assisting patients with impediments to treatment such as health insurance or prescription coverage, and providing resources for those in need. Coordinators are also educators about the treatment and recovery process, accompanying patients to appointments and answering their questions on pressing issues. In short, our coordinators provide emotional support and practical assistance to patients so they have the most humanistic and comprehensive medical care possible at Penn.

However, our Patient Service Coordinators go above and beyond these services. For example, one coordinator organizes a bimonthly pancreatic work group meeting to allow all the professionals involved in pancreatic clinical care and research to meet and discuss current clinical trials. They also host patient-focused educational workshops featuring physicians and nurse practitioners who present on their area of expertise. This past year, one patient workshop focused on clinical trials in blood cancers. They also created a multi-disciplinary group to develop a standardized assessment and screening tool for mental health and substance abuse issues in patients being evaluated for bone marrow transplants. This was in response to seeing evidence that these issues impact the ability of patients to get through the transplant smoothly.

Coordinators also work together to increase participation in educational programs such as patient conferences, workshops, and monthly support groups. Patient Service Coordinators fill an important role at the Abramson Cancer Center, and assist more than 5,000 cancer patients each year. Patient satisfaction with this service is very high and a reflection of the professionalism and commitment of our Patient and Family Services Coordinator team.

Left to right: JoAnn Hulnick, M.Ed., Anne Skalko, MSW, LSW, Trish Gambino, MSN, RN, Stefanie Washburn, MSW, LSW, Mindy Weismer, MFT, Sandy Blackburn, B.A.



As a retired Philadelphia police officer, Frank Foley committed many heroic acts in his job. However, he credits his wife, Christine — herself a cancer survivor — with being his guardian angel when he was recovering from complex surgery for tonsil cancer. Frank had dramatic weight loss during his treatment. Through the support of Christine and Faith Mutale, his Patient and Family Services Coordinator who guided him throughout his treatment, Frank persevered. He has been cancer-free for more than two years.

