



# Oncology Report to the Community

Northwestern Medicine Central DuPage Hospital  
and Northwestern Medicine Delnor Hospital



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# Letter from leadership

**December 2016**

Northwestern Medicine Cancer Center Warrenville and Northwestern Medicine Cancer Center Delnor are dedicated to providing access to world-class care and services. To accomplish this goal, we utilize the most advanced technologies, treatments and medicine as well as a multidisciplinary, patient-centered approach. Our team of expert physicians, nurses and care teams offer personalized care, and constantly strive to achieve better outcomes for our patients.

When it comes to healthcare, quality is always top of mind for patients and providers. Cancer care is no exception. As an accredited cancer program by the American College of Surgeons Commission on Cancer, we are driven to meet and exceed national standards that ensure quality care is being delivered to our patients. Using the Cancer Program Practice Profile Report, we maintain computerized data to track our progress against key quality measures as well as compare our outcomes to the data of other cancer programs, locally and nationally.

The data collected through these and other reporting tools help us to achieve and maintain the highest level of care needed to diagnose, treat and support our patients. Looking at the specific measures, we can show that we have met or exceeded the benchmarks established.

This report highlights some of our cancer program initiatives for 2016, a pivotal year in which we furthered our efforts to implement a highly effective cancer survivorship program. We hope you enjoy reading about our services, including an inspirational story about Tamara Taber, a breast cancer survivor who received care at Northwestern Cancer Center Delnor.

On behalf of the entire staff, we thank you for your support and look forward to our continued partnership to ensure quality care is being delivered to patients with cancer. Together, we can make a difference in the road to cancer survivorship.

In good health,

Christy Kesslering, MD  
*Medical Director of Radiation Oncology  
Cancer Liaison Physician*

Margo Shoup, MD, FACS  
*Medical Leader Cancer Program  
Director, Surgical Oncology Northwestern Medicine Regional Medical Group*

# Survivorship: Life after cancer treatment

There are 13 million cancer survivors living in the United States today, and about two-thirds of people with cancer are expected to live at least five years after diagnosis. To address this growing need, Northwestern Medicine Regional Medical Group has implemented a special program to provide patients with a customized survivorship care plan based on their type of cancer and unique needs. This past year, more than half of patients completing treatment at our cancer centers scheduled their survivorship visit, far surpassing the nationally set goal by the Commission on Cancer.

Survivorship is considered to be a distinct phase of cancer care that is embedded within the patient's existing plan.

Beginning at the time of diagnosis, patients collaborate with the attending oncologist and advanced practice provider to outline a multidisciplinary approach that addresses medical, psychosocial, emotional and spiritual needs.

"With the growing number of patients with cancer, our efforts to help patients navigate survivorship will become more and more impactful. After patients complete treatment, they often experience the feeling of a huge void. Our cancer survivorship program provides the guidance patients need to move forward in managing their health

and getting the appropriate follow-up care in a seamless, coordinated way," says Christopher George, MD, medical oncologist and Medical Director of Medical Oncology.

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## A personalized survivorship care plan may include:

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A treatment summary

The name and frequency of recommended follow-up tests

Signs and symptoms to watch for and who to call with new symptoms or concerns

A discussion of common family issues that may occur and ways to cope

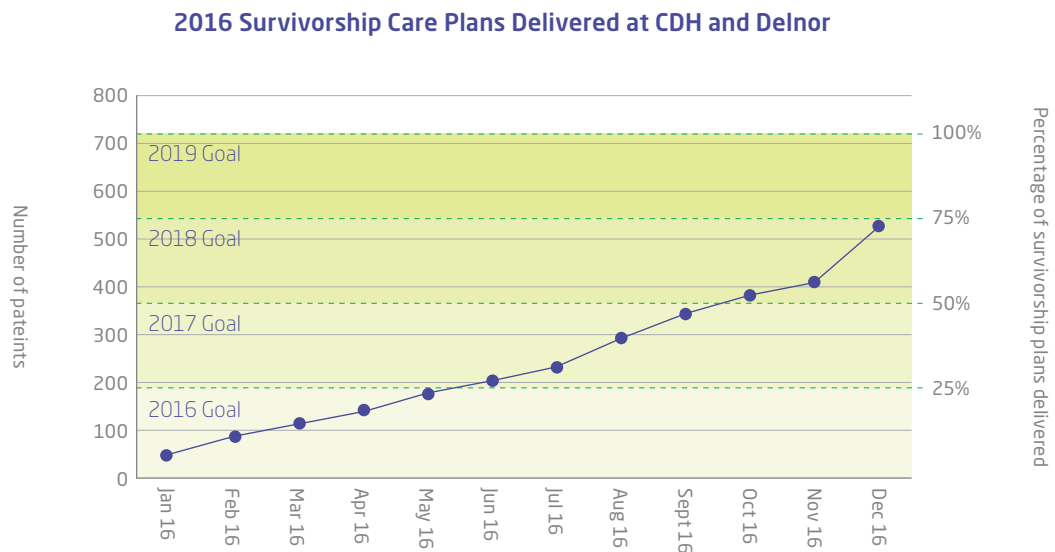
Guidelines for a healthy lifestyle, including diet, exercise, smoking cessation and more

Information on adjusting to physical and emotional changes after cancer treatment

Tips on coping with the fear of recurrence

Community and national resources for additional support and information

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The graph above shows the number of patients who received a survivorship care plan (SCP) after completing curative intent treatment at CDH and Delnor. The Commission on Cancer has set forth annual goals for nationally accredited cancer programs for the delivery of SCPs. It can clearly be seen that in 2016 the survivorship program far exceeded the 2016 goals by delivering SCPS to more than 70% of patients that completed curative intent treatment.

## Being better begins with data

The American Cancer Society and the American College of Surgeons are joint sponsors of the National Cancer Data Base (NCDB) which contains clinical data from accredited cancer programs across the country. This tool is used to ensure that patients receive the appropriate types of care for their particular diagnosis, stage and other factors, based on national care guidelines.

The table on the following page demonstrates how Northwestern Medicine Central DuPage Hospital and Northwestern Medicine Delnor Hospital perform for some of these measures, and shows that our facilities exceed the expected benchmark rates, as well as perform better than hospitals within Illinois and nationally (data for calendar year 2015).

Breast Measure/Type	Northwestern Medicine Central DuPage Hospital	Northwestern Medicine Delnor Hospital	NCDB Benchmark	State	National
Breast conservation surgery rate for women with AJCC clinical stage 0, 1, or II breast cancer	73.4%	72%	None established	66.3%	64.4%
Image or palpation-guided needle biopsy (core or FNA) of the primary site is performed to establish diagnosis of breast cancer	96.7%	92.4%	80%	91.0%	89.8%
Tamoxifen or third generation aromatase inhibitor is considered or administered within 1 year (365 days) of diagnosis for women with AJCC T1c or stage IIB-III hormone receptor positive breast cancer	96.5%	100%	90%	91.6%	89.8%
Radiation therapy is considered or administered following any mastectomy within 1 year (365) days of diagnosis of breast cancer for women with greater than or equal to 4 positive regional lymph nodes	100%	100%	90%	84.6%	82.9%
Radiation is administered within 1 year (365 days) of diagnosis for women under the age of 70 receiving breast conservation surgery for breast cancer	96.4%	100%	90%	92.3%	90.6%
Combination chemotherapy is considered or administered within 4 months (120 days) of diagnosis for women under 70 with AJCC T1cN0, or stage IIB-III hormone receptor negative breast cancer	100%	100%	None established	92.6%	91.6%

Colorectal Measure/Type	Northwestern Medicine Central DuPage Hospital	Northwestern Medicine Delnor Hospital	NCDB Benchmark	State	National
Adjuvant chemotherapy is considered or administered within 4 months (120 days) of diagnosis for patients under the age of 80 with AJCC stage III (lymph node positive) colon cancer	100%	100%	None established	89%	87%
At least 12 regional lymph nodes are removed and pathologically examined for resected colon cancer	97.7%	94.1%	85%	91.4%	90.9%
Radiation therapy is considered or administered within 6 months (180 days) of diagnosis for patients under 80 with clinical or pathologic AJCC stage T4N0M0 or stage III rectal cancer receiving surgical resection	92.3%	100%	85%	87%	85.7%



# Making the data work for our patients

Dedicated physicians and advanced practice providers at the Warrenville and Delnor Cancer Centers are taking advantage of a new tool that helps ensure the right care is delivered at the right time for cancer patients. They using Rapid Reporting, a voluntary program from the American College of Surgeons that monitors cancer treatment in real time rather than data from previous years. Every month, the team analyzes measures from the Commission on Cancer to ensure that patients are scheduling follow-up appointments, hormone treatment and other care that help to decrease readmissions, address modifiable lifestyle factors and improve a patient's chances of remaining cancer-free.

"When it comes to national standards of care, our window of opportunity to deliver cancer treatment is often very small. Rapid Reporting helps us comply with national guidelines and ensure patients are getting the treatment they need within the time frame they need it," explains Heather Augustyniak, MSN, FNP-C, nurse practitioner, gynecologic oncology and survivorship.

Currently, Rapid Reporting metrics is being used for breast and colorectal cancer patients, and plans are in place to expand the program to other cancers in the future. Physicians receive monthly reports so they can identify areas for improvement, and the Cancer Committee for Northwestern Medicine Central DuPage Hospital and Delnor Hospital reviews the cancer survivorship plan on an annual basis.

"This approach creates a lifetime connection to our survivors resulting in strong patient relationships, and it fosters and builds relationships with the primary care physicians and other physicians outside of oncology," says Augustyniak.

## A patient story:

# "I feel so fortunate for the care I received."

Waiting a few extra months to schedule her routine mammogram was not a major concern for Tamara Taber. After all, her yearly check-up was normal, and she hadn't noticed any lumps or other troublesome changes. Like so many women, Tamara was busy, and keeping up with her two children filled her calendar.

Months later, a mammogram along with a breast ultrasound and MRI told a different story: Tamara was diagnosed with invasive lobular carcinoma at age 50. Within a week, Tamara met with a team of specialists at Northwestern Medicine Delnor Cancer Center, who moved quickly to get her started on her cancer treatment journey. Even though this form of breast cancer is very common among women, and it was detected in Tamara at an early stage, she was completely devastated by the news.

"My maternal aunt died of breast cancer at 39, so when I was told I had breast cancer, I thought I had my death sentence handed to me, right there. But, I couldn't have felt more loved or more important than I did at Northwestern Medicine. I feel so fortunate for the care I received," Tamara says.

Her treatment included two lumpectomies and six weeks of radiation followed by hormone therapy, during which Tamara felt informed and encouraged by her medical team.

"My physicians kept telling me I was going to beat the cancer. From that point, my cup was always half-full and I never looked back. It's inspiring to have medical people encourage you like this," Tamara says.

Patients like Tamara have access to Northwestern Medicine's cancer survivorship program that focuses on what to expect after finishing treatment for cancer, including information about adjusting to physical and emotional changes, tips on coping with the fear of recurrence, and signs and symptoms to watch for.

There is also a notification system to ensure patients are getting post-care treatment appointments in the time frame they need to receive it.

As a cancer survivor, Tamara feels especially grateful for the support of her husband of 35 years along with her Northwestern Medicine care team. She is following guidelines for a healthy lifestyle, which includes modifying risk factors and eating right. Missing appointments is no longer a viable option.

"Cancer doesn't define who I am, but it will always be a part of me. Being a cancer survivor means staying vigilant with my healthcare and realizing it can happen to anybody. You never know what tomorrow holds, so don't put off your health," she says.

## Our approach to cancer care

In the fight against cancer, you are never alone with Northwestern Medicine. From diagnosis to treatment to recovery, you are surrounded by a team of highly skilled physicians who consider listening among their most powerful tools. Your dedicated team is committed to finding the answers to the hardest questions through state-of-the-art diagnostics, treatments, advanced academic research and clinical trials.

Wherever you are in your cancer journey, there's a team of specialized physicians and clinical staff ready to collaborate with you to navigate the sophisticated world of cancer care.

Our compassionate staff will get you an appointment quickly and create a personalized treatment plan that fits your needs.

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### Our approach to cancer includes:

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Specialized physicians and surgeons with expertise in specific tumor types who collaborate in a team approach

State-of-the-art cancer care facilities designed with your convenience and continuity of care in mind

A nurse navigator to guide you and your family through treatment by working closely with your physicians to coordinate your care, answering questions about your diagnosis and care plan and connecting you to beneficial support services

Minimally invasive robotics-assisted da Vinci® Surgery for greater precision with faster healing and less pain

Gamma Knife® radiosurgery, which delivers a single, large dose of radiation to a specific target with surgical precision, minimizing damage to surrounding tissue, discomfort and the risk of bleeding and infection

Advanced radiation therapy, including proton therapy, which targets tumors and cancer cells more precisely, reducing the risk of damage to surrounding tissue and minimizing side effects

National Accreditation Program for Breast Centers recognition from the American College of Surgeons for Northwestern Medicine Central DuPage Hospital and Northwestern Medicine Delnor Hospital

Free support programs and services at your local Northwestern Medicine affiliate and at the LivingWell Cancer Resource Center

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