

Mercy Cancer Center was selected by the National Cancer Institute (NCI) to help lead the rapid delivery of evidence-based cancer care and research close to home.

As an NCI Community Cancer Centers Program (NCCCP) site our charge has been to participate in a national network of community hospitals to expand cancer research and deliver the latest, most advanced cancer care to more Americans in their home communities.

NCI established the NCCCP as recognition of the essential role that community hospitals play in the health of the American public. The NCCCP seeks to extend NCI science and patient support services to community hospitals – many of which are located in small towns, and rural and urban areas – where most patients live and get their care. Because the majority of U.S. patients are treated at community hospitals, integrating the latest scientific advances and patient support resources into the community is expected to improve cancer outcomes among diverse populations.

Since the 1970s, NCI has supported research and patient treatment programs at NCI-designated Cancer Centers, generally the largest academic research institutions located in the major U.S. cities. NCI estimates that 15 percent of U.S. cancer patients receive cancer care at these centers; the other 85 percent were initially diagnosed, and receive at least their first course of treatment, at community hospital centers.

For many years, **Mercy Cancer Center** has provided patients with comprehensive cancer screening, prevention, treatment, and palliative care. Patients diagnosed with cancer receive coordinated medical, surgical, and radiation oncology services here. Since our affiliation with NCI, patients now have expanded options for their cancer care, including:

- *Mercy Cancer Center* is making it easier for rural, elderly and other medically underserved communities to receive cancer prevention and treatment services. We are increasing the number of free cancer screening events we offer at public places and educating more area residents about the importance of cancer prevention and early detection.
- *Mercy Cancer Center* patients are assigned a Patient Navigator – a specially trained nurse or other expert who provides personal assistance arranging financial support, transportation, records coordination, and other cancer care services and helps identify clinical trials that might be appropriate for patients. We are also enhancing our symptom management, end-of-life care, and survivorship support.
- *Mercy Cancer Center* patients have more options for participating in cancer clinical trials. Volunteers may benefit from trials by receiving the very latest prevention and treatment advances before they are available to the general public.

NCI brings together basic and clinical researchers, patients, physicians, caregivers, policymakers, and others in a common cause: to reduce the worldwide burden of cancer through innovative research and the development of ever better interventions to prevent and treat cancer.

Together, **Mercy Cancer Center** in collaboration with the NCI is working to create a new future for Americans with cancer so they can receive quality care close to home.