

SUMMER 2004

Colorado's leading cancer research program

Bringing Hope through Research

“Because RMCC is committed to providing the best available cancer care to our patients, research is our foundation as we strive to improve our patients’ outcomes through clinical trials,” explained Allen Cohn M.D., and RMCC’s Research Committee Chair. “We are able to consistently offer the newest therapies to our patients, giving them options that they otherwise may not have access to.”

As the leading cancer researcher in Colorado, RMCC has a comprehensive research program which provides new and exciting therapeutics to patients with cancer. RMCC’s research department currently supports 17 full-time employees, including 12 experienced research nurses. RMCC participates in numerous clinical trials each year and has approximately 55 trials going on at any one time. Since 1999, more than 1000 of our patients have been involved in some type of clinical research study. Approximately 300 patients a year participate in some type of research trial.

RMCC works with US Oncology, Colorado Cancer Research Program (CCRP) and the University of Colorado Health Sciences Center to ensure access to a large variety of trials for our patients. Trials available include industry (drug company) sponsored trials as well as investigator or physician initiated trials. The RMCC research program has access to trials for most therapeutic areas. RMCC’s affiliation with other research groups enables us to provide many novel investigational agents that are restricted to study in limited areas because they have not yet been approved by the Food and Drug Administration. Many of RMCC’s clinical trials involve researching ways to increase the effectiveness of treatments while decreasing side effects.

“Traditionally, we have used chemotherapy to treat cancer patients,” explained Dr. Cohn. “But chemotherapy is not a ‘smart-bomb.’ It destroys good as well as bad cells. We are continually looking at new ways to treat cancer more specifically.”

The following are a few of the trials RMCC is currently recruiting patients for, including trials for studying novel therapies.

- A phase three trial for metastatic breast cancer looks at novel BMS-247550 (an Epothilone), a drug similar to Taxane.
- A trial for metastatic colorectal cancer studies a new monoclonal antibody ABX-EGF. This targeted therapy treats the tumor’s cancerous cells, hopefully without causing the side effects that result from many traditional treatment options.

The other two trials that are currently recruiting patients are being done in partnership with other organizations.

- One of the trials, “Overcoming Advanced Age as a Barrier to Accrual on Early Phase Clinical Trials of Novel Agents,” is being conducted with the University of Colorado Health Sciences Center. This trial will conduct face-to-face interviews with up to 400 patients, age 65 and older, who are currently being treated with chemotherapy to determine why few older adults participate in clinical trials. The results of the survey will then be used to design interventions in hopes of overcoming the barriers that keep some seniors from participating in early phase clinical trials.
- The other trial, “Use of Weekly Topotecan as Second Line Therapy in Small Cell Lung Cancer, “ is being conducted with Dr. Robert Chapman of Henry Ford Hospital in Detroit, MI. This trial looks at changing how the drug, Topotecan, is administered to patients with small cell lung cancer so that patients are able to better tolerate the treatment.

For more information regarding the above study or any other research opportunities, please contact Joni Newmann at 303-388-4876.

A Letter from the President

RMCC's Commitment to Cancer Research

Since the inception of its research department in 1997, RMCC has become the leading researcher in Colorado, participating in all phases of clinical trials. Because RMCC is committed to providing the best available care to all of our patients, research is and will continue to be the cornerstone of our organization.

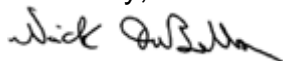
Through our affiliation with US Oncology, Colorado Cancer Research Program (CCRP) and the University of Colorado Health Sciences Center, RMCC has access to numerous clinical trials and the ability to bring these clinical trials to our patients.

Participating in clinical research requires special dedication on the part of our doctors, research staff, nurses, scheduling and business staffs. RMCC has participated in many of the pivotal clinical trials that have led to the approval of many of the new cancer treatments seen in your clinics today. Participating in these state-of-the-art trials requires extensive education and commitment on the part of our staff and doctors. Many of them spend countless hours learning new protocols and therapies each year.

Generally, research is not a source of profits for RMCC. Our research program strives to cover the salaries of our research staff and their related expenses. RMCC is committed to these clinical trials because they result in better patient care -- these protocols typically represent state-of-the-art treatment. Participation in clinical research enables us to provide therapeutic options for our patients that would otherwise not be available.

Participating in clinical research trials exemplifies our staffs' dedication to improving the quality of care and therapeutic options for our patients.

Sincerely,



Nicholas DiBella, M.D., RMCC President



RMCC Welcomes our new Executive Director, Jeff Poe

We are pleased to introduce Rocky Mountain Cancer Center's new executive director, Jeff Poe. A veteran of Denver's health care industry, Jeff joined RMCC on April 19, 2004.

Prior to joining RMCC, Jeff served as Diversified Radiology of Colorado's chief operating officer. A graduate of the University of Northern Colorado, Jeff earned his masters of business administration at the University of Denver's Daniels College of Business.

An active member of the community, Jeff has served on several boards including Behavioral Healthcare, Inc., South Santa Fe Development Corporation and the Arapahoe Douglas Mental Health Center. He currently serves on the board of Madison Street Surgery Center.

Jeff is excited to be the executive director of RMCC and looks forward to working with everyone to make RMCC strong.

RMCC is also pleased to introduce Karyn Gonzales as our new Director of Contracting and Marketing

Karyn joined RMCC on June 28, 2004.

Karyn brings a vast background in health care experience to RMCC including local and national payor contract management and marketing experience with McKesson Health Solutions, where she worked for nearly 9 years. Prior to working at McKesson, Karyn worked with Sutter Health and a multi specialty physician practice in Northern California, as well as at the state and federal level in healthcare public policy.



Karyn earned a master's degree in health administration from the University of Southern California; and completed her undergraduate work at the University of California, Davis. She has served on several boards of directors including the Regents Advisory Council for ACHE and the Colorado Women's Forum in Health Administration, and is also involved in the United Way. Karyn lives in Centennial, CO, with her husband and two children, Abby and Ben.

Karyn is very happy to be working with RMCC and is looking forward to making a positive difference for our physicians, patients and the CO community.

In remembrance of Maria Standish, 1943 to 2004

On May 14th, Maria Standish passed away of gastric cancer—a battle which she had fought for more than four years.

Throughout her life, Maria made a difference – touching not only the lives of her family, friends and co-workers but also the lives of the numerous patients that she cared for over the years.

Born in New York State on May 31st, 1943, Maria served in the Navy from 1965 to 1968 before becoming a registered nurse in 1980. In 1990, Maria began her work in oncology care. She

worked with a children's BMT program in St. Petersburg, Fl., and later managed an oncology floor at a hospital in Stuart, Fl. Upon moving to Colorado, she worked in the oncology department at Aurora Presbyterian before joining RMCC in 1998.



An accomplished nurse whose IV skills were unequaled, Maria was an active member of the local ONS, serving on the organization's program committee. She was nominated for the USON Betsy York Memorial OCN Award in 2001 and the Florence Nightingale Award in 2003.

During her six years at RMCC's Aurora location, Maria was a tireless volunteer who went above and beyond to serve her patients as well as her co-workers. Maria volunteered at health fairs, assisted Project Cure in collecting supplies, organized the collection of quilt squares for the commemorative quilt and created a puzzle table for the patients. Maria also organized social events for the Aurora office.

A supportive and empathetic caregiver, Maria always had a hug and a word of encouragement for patients and their families as well as her co-workers. An upbeat and happy lady who knew how to get things done, Maria was always positive as she looked for the next challenge.

Known to those of us at Aurora as the Fox Lady, Maria kept a set of binoculars and a camera at her desk so that she could keep track of the fox families that lived behind the Aurora office.

We will truly miss Maria – the foxy lady with a heart of gold.

Kudos

- In an ASCO poster presentation entitled, "Activity of Cetuximab in Patients with Colorectal Refractory to both Irinotecan and Oxaliplatin," RMCC is listed as the 5th author. Congratulations to everyone involved in this project.
- Recently, Colorado Springs RMCC was honored by the National Committee of Employer Support for the Guard and Reserve. Colorado Springs received this recognition for its support of an employee who is in the reserves.
- Julie Candia, PRN, RN, had a poster accepted for presentation at The Western Institute of Nursing Conference in Portland, OR. The poster presented Julie's research on "Symptom/Psychological Distress in Melanoma Patients Undergoing Biochemotherapy."
- Drs. Charles Leonard and Ruth Oratz and Phyllis Henkenberns spoke at Day of Caring in May.

Updates

Community Events

- Look Good...Feel Better – In cooperation with the American Cancer Society, RMCC is hosting these events at all network locations in 2004.
- Skin Cancer Screenings – RMCC hosted a series of skin cancer screenings at four

facilities, Aurora, Littleton, Rose and Thornton in May. We screened over 120 people.

- Day of Caring – RMCC is a sponsor of the Denver event on Saturday, May 8.
- Colorado Cancer Conference – RMCC is a sponsor of this statewide conference to be held on August 9th and 10th in Denver. The conference will focus on quality of life and palliative care, prevention and intervention strategies, science and information, insurability, clinical skill building, health disparities and tobacco control. The intended audience is physicians, community outreach specialists, public health educators, nurses, social workers and other individuals and organizations with an interest in cancer prevention and control. For more information, visit <http://www.cdphe.state.co.us/pp/ccpc/cancerconference.html>.

RMCC Foundation Update



The 5th Annual Spirit Sprint was held on Sunday, June 27 in City Park to benefit the RMCC Foundation. The event was a success with 370 registered runners and walkers. Thank you to all our employees who participated and sponsored this event. 101 out of the 370 participants were RMCC employees plus numerous volunteers, with a majority of clinics represented. The event raised over \$60,000. The largest portion of which was from our corporate sponsors at \$47,000.

Individuals were encouraged to participate in the pledge drive which raised over \$1,700. The winners of the employee pledge drive are Cindy Chavez, Karen Robin and Kym Birks.

The committee also presented a new program called "Spirit Shoes" which were sold in each clinic in honor of individuals who donated. The shoes raised over \$1,100. Overall, the race was a success and the committee is already planning for next year. If you are interested in helping the planning committee please email Dana McCroskey, the awesome committee chair, at dana.mccroskey@USOncology.com.

All the money raised by the Spirit Sprint goes directly to the RMCC Foundation. The Foundation provides funds to current cancer patients in financial need. In 2003, more than \$95,000 was distributed to 230 cancer patients throughout Colorado to cover expenses such as housing, food, utilities, medical supplies and insurance. So far this year the Foundation has distributed over \$75,000 to 150 cancer patients.

RMCC employees can now donate directly to the RMCC Foundation through a payroll deduction program. This program can start and stop at the employee's request, it can also be a one time donation or an ongoing donation. Please contact Nancy Hopkins, RMCC payroll manager, at nancy.hopkins@usoncology.com for more information.

News from the Field

AURORA

One of our volunteers, Marilyn Daves, was nominated and named "7News Hero." She was featured on 7News in May.

Julie Candia, PRN, RN, is currently working on becoming a nurse practitioner at the University of Colorado.

Janette Stalemo, RN, will be leaving our clinic after 11 and ½ years for a new research position in the Lakewood office.

We continue to make and sell hand stamped greeting cards in our waiting room as a way to benefit the Foundation. They are kept in a basket along side a donation jar with a suggested amount. This is a very easy way to support the Foundation. If any other clinics are interested, please email Janette Stalemo at Janette.Stalemo@usoncology.com.

AURORA RADIATION

Congratulations to Linda Berry who will be a grandma for the first time.

Congratulations to Sarah Kusterer on passing her national registry. She is now a radiation therapist.

Congratulations to all who completed the dosimetry course.

COLORADO SPRINGS RADIATION

We extend a warm welcome to our newest family members: Radiation Therapists, Rosalind Sansom and Carol Plymell and Patient Financial Counselor Heather Knapp.

LAKWOOD AND THORNTON

We welcome Janette Stalemo, research nurse, who comes to us from Aurora where she worked for 12 years. We feel very fortunate to have Janette as part of our team. While Janette misses her friends and colleagues in Aurora, she "is ready for the challenge here."

Due to staff changes at Thornton, Linda Ramsey, infusion nurse, is on loan to the Thornton office. The Lakewood staff all miss Linda's infectious sense of humor and look forward to her coming "home".

Joey Roth from Thornton has been chosen as Lakewood and Thornton's "IDX super user. " She is undergoing further training and we are fortunate to have her expertise.

Practice Administrator Keith Olsson has a busy summer ahead. Keith and his wife are the proud parents of 3 sons who are very involved in sports. One of Keith's sons, Chad, will be going to Israel this summer.

THORNTON RADIATION

We welcomed Dr. Robert LaPorte in February. He joins us from New Mexico.

On June 14, Drs. Robert LaPorte and Allen Cohn gave a talk entitled, "The Evolving Role for Multi-Modality Staging and Therapy for Esophageal and Rectal Cancers," at the Omni Interlocken Resort. They were joined in the discussion by local surgeons and GI ultrasound specialists.

LITTLETON

We welcome Ariel Soriano, MD. Dr. Soriano started on June 1. Joining him are Jo Hayden, scheduler; and Jeannie Taylor, medical records. We also welcome Laura Armstrong, medical records.

On June 4 we hosted a special Survivor Day picnic. More than 250 burgers and hot dogs were

barbequed. Desserts were the highlight of the event and a reporter Rocky Mt. News showed up for a news story.

LITTLETON RADIATION

We welcome Jill Sterndorf, radiation therapist. Jill will be a float radiation therapist for the network.

ROSE

Alan S. Feiner, MD, will join our practice July first. Joining Dr. Feiner will bring Ruth Lewis, office manager, and Julie Setser, medical assistant/lab.

We welcome Scott Haataja, administrative tech; RaNae Kragerud, medical assistant, and Kathy Albert, nurse practitioner. Kathy will cover both the Rose and Midtown offices while Joslynn Axinn, RN, will work 3 days a week at Rose.

The Rose location will now have three offices – the administrative office, the main office and Dr. Feiner's office.

RMCC In the News

- On Feb. 13, the Intermountain Jewish News ran a story about RMCC's mobile PET/CT.
- On April 15, the Denver Business Journal ran a blurb about Dr. Robert LaPorte.
- On May 6, The Villager ran a brief about RMCC's free skin cancer screenings.
- On May 12, Dr. Ruth Oratz was quoted in a Denver Post article entitled, "Health proposal touted." This article talked about John Kerry's plan for health care reform.
- On May 13, The Herald Dispatch ran a brief about RMCC's free skin cancer screenings.
- On May 14, 16 and 19, RMCC volunteer, Marilyn Daves, was featured on 7News, everyday hero.
- The Spirit Sprint was listed several times:
 - May 31 and June 4, The Denver Post ran a blurb about Spirit Sprint.
 - June 3 and 17, The Villager ran a spot
 - June 16, The Farmer and Miner, the Fort Lupton Herald and the Lasalle Leader ran a spot
 - June 21, The Denver Post ran a calendar listing
 - June 23, The Lavoiz Hispana De Colorado ran a spot

Questions or Comments

How do you like the newsletter? Your feedback is important. We are always looking for story ideas, as well as suggestions on how to make the newsletter better. If you have any ideas, suggestions, comments or questions, please contact Erin Hought at Erin.Hought@USOncology.com or Karyn Gonzales at Karyn.Gonzales@USOncology.com