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PHILADELPHIA INTERNATIONAL MEDICINE® NEWS BUREAU

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For immediate release:

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Editors note: Research, new techniques and improved facilities by Philadelphia International Medicine hospitals and physicians may lead to new ways to treat some of our most challenging diseases. Below are just some examples from our hospitals.

Fox Chase Cancer Center Publishes Clinical Outcomes for Patient Use

PHILADELPHIA—Fox Chase Cancer Center, one of the leading cancer research and treatment institutions in the US, announced the posting of clinical outcomes data to its website as a tool to assist newly-diagnosed patients in deciding where to seek cancer care. This initiative follows a survey Fox Chase commissioned in the fall of 2010, in which non-diagnosed adults ranked success rates as the factor that would be the *most* important in choosing a hospital if they were told that they or a family member required cancer treatment.

“We are committed to helping the public become more informed when making decisions about their health care.” said Michael V. Seiden, MD, PhD, president and CEO of Fox Chase Cancer Center. “While individual outcomes cannot be predicted, we hope this data will enable patients to make choices that are right for them, ensuring that they receive the best care possible.”

While the movement toward greater medical transparency and patient empowerment grows nationally, only a handful of cancer institutions currently publish outcomes data, in which survival rates are measured. The figures Fox Chase has released describe five-year survival rates for patients diagnosed at the different stages of breast, colorectal, lung, and prostate cancers, the most common cancers in the United States. These numbers are charted on Fox Chase's website in comparison to patient survival data from both small and large community hospitals across the country, using statistics from the National Cancer Data Base (NCDB), maintained by the American College of Surgeons.

“In these charts, people will see that patients receiving care at Fox Chase Cancer Center have superior outcomes compared to individuals treated for the major cancers in community hospitals,” Dr. Seiden said. “We have always believed that our singular focus on understanding, preventing and treating cancer leads to a higher overall standard of care, and the figures, on the whole, bear that out.”

One of the main reasons for the distinction, Dr. Seiden says, lies in Fox Chase’s patient volume and its exclusive focus on cancer. Fox Chase, one of only a few dozen National Cancer Institute-designated Comprehensive Cancer Centers in the country, treats more than 32,000 oncology patients a year, including 7,600 new patients, and has active research and clinical trials programs.

“We know that our patients aren’t just numbers, and we show it in the personal care that our oncologists and nursing staff deliver every day,” said Dr. Seiden. “But we believe that where patients first seek care can greatly influence their outcomes, and you can see some of those differences when comparing the outcomes of an institution such as Fox Chase, which has a sole focus on cancer care, informed by in-house research and clinical experience.”

Jefferson Surgeon Performs First Robotic-Assisted Liver Resection at Hospital

Cataldo Doria, MD, PhD, Nicoletti Family Professor of Transplant Surgery at Jefferson Medical College of Thomas Jefferson University; director of the Division of Transplantation; and co-director of the liver tumor program at Thomas Jefferson University Hospital, is the first surgeon at Jefferson to perform a robotically-assisted liver resection. He is only one of a handful of surgeons across the country certified to do so.

Liver resection involves the partial removal of the liver. For many individuals diagnosed with liver cancer, this treatment option offers the best chance for long-term survival or cure. Surgery to remove a tumor is the surest method of eliminating the cancer—and preventing its spread to other parts of the body—but the traditional open procedure can take as much as six hours with a four or five day hospital stay. Now, eligible patients have an alternative to traditional liver resection that utilizes the latest robotic system to assist the surgeon in performing this delicate operation.

Using the da Vinci® robot system, Dr. Doria is able to perform this complex surgical procedure with improved precision and ergonomics as well as a three-dimensional view of the surgical site. Similar to a human hand, the robotic instruments translate the natural movements of a surgeon’s hand into precise movements inside the abdominal cavity. The three-dimensional view of the operative field, along with a greater degree of freedom and tremor filtration, provides a surgeon with full dexterity to perform delicate dissection and precise suturing.

“A robotically-assisted liver resection is a viable alternative for eligible patients to more traditional open or laparoscopic surgery,” said Dr. Doria. “The patient will benefit as a result of improved cosmetic results, shorter hospitalization times and less postoperative pain.”

Paula D. Ryan, MD, PhD, Joins Fox Chase's Department of Medical Oncology

Paula D. Ryan, MD, PhD, has joined Fox Chase Cancer Center as an attending physician for the department of medical oncology. She specializes in treating patients with all stages of breast cancer, with a focus on breast cancers that are locally advanced and metastatic. Dr. Ryan has particular interest in coordinating the management of patients requiring complex care. In addition, she is committed to clinical research with a special interest in developing novel strategies and agents for the treatment of metastatic breast cancer.

“For me, it is a privilege to care for patients with breast cancer, and I am excited to join the staff at Fox Chase,” Dr. Ryan says. “My goal is to provide each of my patients with individualized, compassionate, state-of-the-art care.”

Dr. Ryan comes to Fox Chase from Massachusetts General Hospital Cancer Center and Dana Farber/Harvard Cancer Center in Boston, where she practiced in the breast oncology group for 10 years. She also served as medical director of the Breast and Ovarian Cancer Genetics and Risk Assessment Program at Massachusetts General and assistant professor of medicine at Harvard Medical School.

Practicing in the Women’s Cancer Center at Fox Chase Dr. Ryan says, “I feel the best care for patients with breast cancer is achieved with a multidisciplinary team that works together to develop an individualized, comprehensive treatment plan conducted in a supportive environment for patients and their loved ones. The Women’s Cancer Center provides the ideal environment to achieve this goal.”

Dr. Ryan earned a PhD in biochemistry at the University of Rochester Medical Center in Rochester, NY, where she later received her MD. She completed her residency in internal medicine, serving as chief resident in her final year, as well as a fellowship in medical oncology at Duke University Medical Center in Durham, NC.

A member of the American Society of Clinical Oncology, Ryan also serves on the breast cancer risk reduction panel of the National Comprehensive Cancer Network. In addition, she serves as an ad-hoc reviewer for various professional journals, including The New England Journal of Medicine, The Oncologist, and the Journal of Clinical Oncology.

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