



Dear Colleagues:

The world of cancer care is always evolving. At Northwestern Medicine and the Robert H. Lurie Comprehensive Cancer Center of Northwestern University, we are constantly striving to find new ways to impact our patients' lives. As we look forward with anticipation to new opportunities in the prevention, diagnosis, research and treatment of cancer, I'd like to take a moment to reflect on our exceptional growth and accomplishments we realized in 2015.

Every day, we renew our dedication to discovering new therapeutic approaches by translating our interdisciplinary clinical research into superb personalized, patient-centered care. Lurie Cancer Center, one of only two National Cancer Institute (NCI)-designated Comprehensive Cancer Centers in Illinois, has experienced an increase in ranking over the past year. We're proud that the cancer program in Lurie Cancer Center's clinical home, Northwestern Memorial Hospital, was once again ranked first in Illinois and Chicago by *U.S. News & World Report's* ranking of "America's Best Hospitals."

The growth of Northwestern Medicine over the past year has been a catalyst for these achievements and helped to fuel the efforts of our physicians and scientists, spanning our mission areas of education, research, patient care and outreach to the communities we serve. Under the leadership of Eric Neilson, MD, Dean of Northwestern University Feinberg School of Medicine, and Dean Harrison, President and Chief Executive Officer of Northwestern Memorial HealthCare, Northwestern Medicine continues to thrive. This shared vision is focused on improving how care is provided, accelerating breakthrough research and fostering an environment of academic excellence that supports the training of outstanding caregivers. Through the Clinical Cancer Center Executive Council, Lurie Cancer Center is leading efforts to increase collaboration and maximize impact across the expanding health system.

We are grateful for the support of our institutional partners and congratulate our faculty and staff on their compelling accomplishments this past year. Every researcher, physician and healthcare provider at Lurie Cancer Center shares our commitment to continuous improvement and a sense of urgency to achieve the best possible outcomes for our patients.

Sincerely,

Leonidas C. Platanius, MD, PhD

Director, Robert H. Lurie Comprehensive Cancer Center

Jesse, Sara, Andrew, Abigail, Benjamin and Elizabeth Lurie Professor of Oncology

CENTER HIGHLIGHTS

Annually, the Robert H. Lurie Comprehensive Cancer Center of Northwestern University has more than 5,000 inpatient admissions at Northwestern Memorial Hospital, and provides comprehensive care in state-of-the-art facilities that include the following:

- More than 32,000 infusion treatments were delivered to more than 2,400 patients
- 90 inpatient beds for hematology/oncology patients with a dedicated unit for stem cell transplantation in Northwestern Memorial Hospital's Prentice Women's Hospital
- 30 dedicated inpatient surgical oncology beds in the Feinberg Pavilion
- 18 dedicated inpatient surgical oncology beds in Prentice Women's Hospital

Comprehensive radiation oncology facilities in Northwestern Memorial's Galter Pavilion and Prentice Women's Hospital, Grayslake and Northwestern Medicine Lake Forest Hospital include seven linear accelerators, Gamma Knife Perfexion, brachytherapy, intraoperative radiation therapy, brain and body radiosurgery, image-guided radiation therapy (IGRT), intensity-modulated radiation therapy (IMRT), high dose rate (HDR), deep inspiratory breath hold (DIBH), volumetric modulated arc therapy (VMAT), 3-D treatment planning and hyperthermia capabilities.

Comprehensive, patient-centered care and services are provided in the Lurie Cancer Center's three leading-edge outpatient locations in Galter Pavilion, Olson Pavilion and the Maggie Daley Center for Women's Cancer Care in Prentice Women's Hospital, serving nearly 15,000 new patients annually.

Outpatient centers are supported by on-site pharmacy and lab services, and provide a full-range of specialty cancer services. The [Supportive Oncology Program](#) offers emotional and practical support for patients and families coping with the challenges of diagnosis, treatment and recovery. Supportive oncology team members include clinical psychologists, fertility preservation program navigators, social workers, psychiatrists, nurse navigators, health educators, cancer rehabilitation and integrative medicine specialists and registered dietitians.

Regular multidisciplinary conferences provided prospective treatment planning for patients in the following areas:

- Breast cancer
- Brain tumor and Neuro-oncology
- Gynecologic oncology
- Genitourinary cancers
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- Hematologic diseases
 - Head and neck cancers
 - Melanoma and skin cancers
 - OncoSET Molecular Tumor Board
 - Cancer survivorship
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A wide-range of education, support and outreach programs include the following:

Professional education programs:

- 17th annual Lynn Sage Breast Cancer Symposium
- 18th annual Oncology Nursing Conference
- 10th Annual Pain and Palliative Care Conference
- Annual programs in basic sciences and lymphoma
- Reviews providing comprehensive summaries of the American Society of Clinical Oncology (ASCO) and American Society of Hematology (ASH) annual meetings

A full complement of patient education and services were offered, including support groups, inpatient case management and extensive outpatient supportive oncology services. In addition, the Cancer Connections program, held three times each year, provided patients and families with the opportunity to learn about strategies and services to improve health and wellness during and after cancer treatment. Cancer Connections also introduces patients and families to a variety of local support organizations.

The Cancer Survivorship Institute at the Lurie Cancer Center offered a wide-range of programs to help survivors lead healthy, active and fulfilling lives after treatment. Survivorship programs include the STAR (Survivors Taking Action and Responsibility) Program providing long-term follow-up care for adult survivors of pediatric cancer; adult survivorship clinics, including the Lynn Sage Breast Cancer Survivorship Program, creating individually tailored survivorship care plans and the Adolescent and Young Adult Oncology Program to meet the unique needs of young people diagnosed with cancer between the ages of 15 – 39.

Community education and outreach programs included the 22nd Annual Cancer Survivors' Celebration Walk and 5K. The Lurie Cancer Center's signature event brought nearly 4,500 cancer survivors, families and friends together in Chicago's Grant Park on National Cancer Survivors Day. "The Art of Survivorship," an event for young adult cancer survivors at the Museum of Contemporary Art in Chicago, focused on the role of creative arts in healing.

A few disease-specific community education programs were held, including the 15th Annual Lynn Sage Breast Cancer Town Hall Meeting, preceded by a Spanish language breast cancer community forum.

The Lurie Cancer Center's Office of Equity and Minority Health (OEMH), under the direction of Associate Director Alexis Thompson, MD, PhD, sponsored and helped facilitate community programs dedicated to understanding and reducing cancer health disparities, including the annual State of the Cancer Union Town Hall Forum, focused on health inequities among Chicago

communities; the Fifth Annual Diversity, Inclusion and Life Sciences Symposium; and the 142nd American Public Health Association (APHA) Annual Meeting and Congress, focused on health in policy in Chicago.

The Illinois Department of Public Health (IDPH) recognized OEMH for its prostate and testicular cancer screening, education, and awareness program. OEMH Administrative Director, Shaan Trotter, MSc, chairs the Illinois Cancer Partnership (ICP)/State Comprehensive Cancer Control Plan, working in partnership with IDPH on developing the ICP's public education and cancer screening initiatives for minority and medically underserved populations.

Community navigators worked with uninsured Spanish-speaking women in DuPage County to obtain timely follow-up care after an abnormal breast or cervical cancer screening result. Led by Melissa Simon, MD, MPH, co-leader of the Lurie Cancer Center's Cancer Control and Survivorship Program, the project is part of an ongoing series of studies focusing on patient navigation and barriers to care across a variety of populations in the Chicagoland area and Illinois.

The Division of Hematology / Oncology received a new three-year certification in 2015 from the Quality Oncology Practice Initiative (QOPI) Certification Program, an affiliate of the American Society of Clinical Oncology (ASCO). QOPI certification is only given to outpatient hematology –oncology practices that meet the highest standards for quality.

The QOPI certification is achieved by practices that undergo a voluntary, comprehensive on-site and documentation assessment using evidence-based quality care standards. The evaluation verifies practices meet core standards that are consistent with national guidelines for treatment, including treatment planning, staff training and education, chemotherapy orders and drug preparation, patient consent and education, safe chemotherapy administration, and monitoring and assessment of patient well-being.

The Northwestern Medicine Cancer Quality Committee is a multidisciplinary team of caregivers who represent all of the oncology departments in Northwestern Medicine. The goal of this committee is to review data and processes and develop projects to improve care for the cancer patient at Northwestern Medicine.

In 2015, this committee recognized that a significant percentage of patients seen within the Maggie Daley Center for Women's Cancer Care are seeking a second opinion related to a new diagnosis of breast cancer. All second opinions require patients to have their breast imaging studies and pathology slides sent to the Lynn Sage Comprehensive Breast Center for review prior to their consultation. By identifying potential drivers of error, the Lynn Sage Outside Imaging Improvement Project team identified an opportunity to improve the second opinion process, and reduce frustration for both patients and staff.

The project team identified specific goals to decrease errors and staff time spent overseeing the second opinion process. Analyzing and measuring the results will result in opportunities to improve other second opinion programs throughout Northwestern Medicine.

The Lynn Sage Comprehensive Breast Center was recognized by the National Accreditation Program for Breast Centers (NAPBC) in 2015 for its “firm commitment to offer its patients every significant advantage in their battle against breast disease.” The center received a three year accreditation renewal from the NAPBC, given to those centers that have voluntarily committed to provide the highest level of quality breast care and undergo a rigorous evaluation and performance review.

In October 2014, Leonidas Plataniias, MD, PhD, was appointed director of the Robert H. Lurie Comprehensive Cancer Center of Northwestern University. In 2015, some of the top minds in cancer research and treatment were recruited and joined the Lurie Cancer Center, including:

Jennifer Choi, MD
Chief, Division of OncoDermatology

Massimo Cristofanilli, MD
Associate Director for Translational Research and Precision Medicine
Director, Lurie Cancer Center OncoSET

Maciej (Matt) Lesniak, MD
Chair, Department of Neurological Surgery
Head of Neuro-Oncology

Barbara Pro
Director, Developmental Therapeutics Institute’s Fellowship Program

Sandeep Samant, MD
Chief, Division of Head and Neck Surgery

Edward Schaeffer, MD, PhD
Chair, Department of Urology
Head of Genitourinary Oncology

Shohreh Shahabi, MD
Chief, Division of Gynecologic Oncology

Ali Shilatifard, PhD
Chair, Department of Biochemistry and Molecular Genetics

In 2015, Lurie Cancer Center launched OncoSET, an important new program to provide a more personalized, precise option for cancer patients by combining oncology with genomics. OncoSET (Sequence, Evaluate, Treat) will initially focus on patients with any type of cancer that is unresponsive to traditional therapies. OncoSET personalizes cancer care by sequencing the individual genetic profile of a tumor, known as genomic profiling, and by evaluating the results to provide the treatments or clinical trials that will be most beneficial to the patient.

“OncoSET is an unprecedented initiative to deliver personalized, effective cancer treatments to

patients who currently have very limited options. Advanced molecular testing to evaluate a tumor's genetic profile will increase our understanding of the disease, and our ability to offer individually tailored therapies," said Massimo Cristofanilli, MD, director, OncoSET.

The Clinical Research Office (CRO) was galvanized in 2015 by new leadership and structure. Mark Agulnik, MD, a leader in the field of medical oncology, was appointed as the director of the CRO. The Developmental Therapeutics Institute, established in 2013, is accelerating the translation of pre-clinical science breakthroughs that can lead to better cancer therapies. Physicians affiliated with Lurie Cancer Center and Northwestern Medicine play leading roles in national cooperative group studies, and are working to develop, test and expedite access to new treatments. The Lurie Cancer Center has more than 300 clinical trials underway at any given time.

Head and neck cancers often affect swallowing, speech and hearing, and can have a major impact on quality of life. Led by Sandeep Samant, MD, the Head and Neck Cancer Program manages complex head and neck cancers. The program's multidisciplinary team of experts uses minimally invasive techniques and recent advances in drug therapies to achieve the best possible outcomes.

Lurie Cancer Center launched the Clinical Cancer Center Executive Council to facilitate collaboration across Northwestern Medicine's rapidly growing healthcare system. Comprised of administrative and medical leadership in oncology, the council meets quarterly to discuss strategic concerns and opportunities. Topics included integration across academic and community settings to further align the delivery of cancer care while ensuring consistent, high levels of quality and exceptional patient experiences.

Four major grants from the National Cancer Institute (NCI) will tackle cancer in Chicago's lower-income and minority neighborhoods, accelerate prostate cancer research and use nanotechnology to develop leading edge treatments.

- ChicagoCHEC: A \$17.4 million grant will help three Chicago universities work together with many of the city's underserved communities to foster meaningful cancer research, education, training and outreach. The five-year grant is led by Principal Investigator Melissa Simon, MD, co-leader of the Lurie Cancer Center's Cancer Control and Survivorship Program, in collaboration with the University of Illinois at Chicago (UIC) and Northeastern Illinois University.
- The Lurie Cancer Center has been awarded a new \$11 million, five-year competitive grant from the NCI for its continued leadership of Specialized Programs of Research Excellence (SPORE) in prostate cancer, one of only eight in the country. "The whole philosophy of a SPORE grant is that you have to take basic science from the research bench and move it to

the patient's bedside in five years," says William Catalona, MD, principal investigator of the program and director of the Lurie Cancer Center's Clinical Prostate Program.

- A five-year, \$11.7 million grant will support the new Northwestern University Center for Cancer Nanotechnology Excellence (Northwestern CCNE). Under the direction of principal investigators Chad Mirkin, PhD, and Leonidas Plataniias, MD, PhD, the Northwestern CCNE will use nucleic-acid-based nanoconstructs called spherical nucleic acids (SNAs) to gain access to intracellular environments, discover new aspects of cancer biology and create effective cancer treatment options.
- A five-year, 9.6 million grant from the NCI for the new Chicago Region Physical Sciences Oncology Center (CR-PSOC) unites researchers from Lurie Cancer Center, University of Chicago and UIC to translate breakthroughs in the physical sciences to cancer research. Led by Thomas O'Halloran, PhD, the CR-PSOC is one of only four such centers funded this year.

About Robert H. Lurie Comprehensive Cancer Center of Northwestern University

The cancer center was established in 1974 at Northwestern University. In 1991, the center was dedicated as the Robert H. Lurie Cancer Center of Northwestern University through a gift of endowment from Ann and Robert H. Lurie. The center's title was modified in 1997, when it was awarded the **National Cancer Institute's (NCI)** highly competitive "comprehensive" designation — reflecting the Lurie Cancer Center's dedication to the highest standards of cancer research, patient care, education and community outreach.

Today, Lurie Cancer Center is one of only 47 NCI-designated comprehensive cancer centers in the nation. In addition, Lurie Cancer Center is a founding member of the National Comprehensive Cancer Network (NCCN), an alliance of 27 of the world's leading cancer centers dedicated to quality, effectiveness and efficiency of cancer care so that patients can live better lives. It also participates in the Big Ten Cancer Research Consortium, a network of academic institutions working together on highly translational clinical trials using the expertise of Big Ten universities.

CENTER HIGHLIGHTS

Northwestern Medicine now extends from downtown Chicago into the northern most part of Illinois and incorporates large outpatient centers in Glenview and Grayslake. As you may know, a new, state-of-the-art hospital is under construction in Lake Forest that will be a destination for health, wellness and civic enjoyment for our community for generations to come. Patients will continue to have access to the best care in Lake County as well as a seamless pathway to downtown Northwestern Medicine specialty care.

There are many features of our cancer program that set us apart. Our affiliation with the world-renowned Robert H. Lurie Comprehensive Cancer Center at Northwestern Medicine, the highest ranked cancer program in the state and one of the best in the country means patients receive the very best in cancer care. As part of the integrated Northwestern Medicine healthcare system, patients have access to many convenient facilities and leading-edge research, including the Chicago Proton Center. Our clinical trial program extended with a new location at Northwestern Medicine Lake Forest, led by director of clinical research, Valerie Nelson, MD. We are developing integrated tumor boards that allow our cancer cases to have multidisciplinary review by many of Northwestern Medicine's subspecialists, and we offer an OncoSET clinic that looks at a tumor's genomic make-up to identify driver mutations, allowing us to provide the most advanced targeted anti-cancer therapies.

Cancer care is more than providing innovative treatment. It should also involve care for the patient and family. That's why our team of oncology nurses, nurse navigators, advance practice clinicians, social workers, dieticians and patient service representatives are dedicated to helping your patients every step along the way. We are committed to collaborating with referring physicians to achieve the best outcomes for the patient.

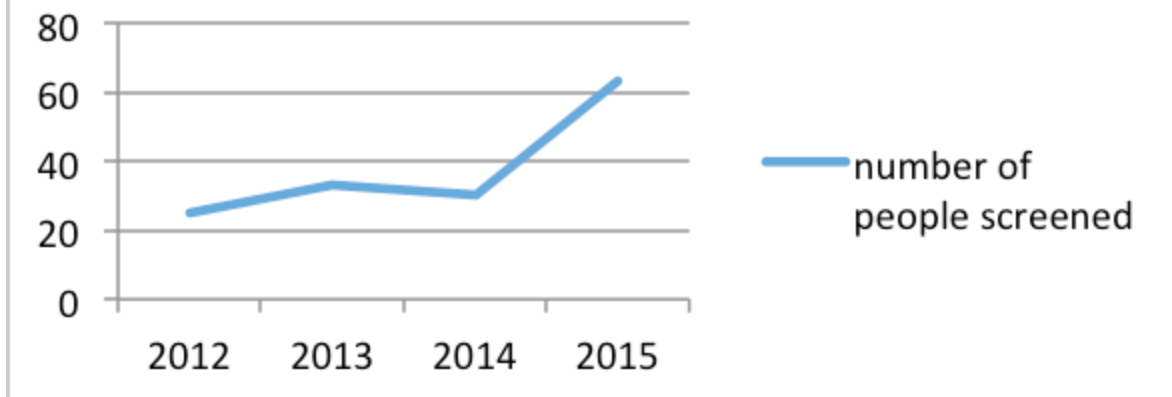
At Northwestern Medicine Lake Forest Hospital, our affiliated team provides everything patients need as they receive the most advanced, comprehensive and compassionate treatment available.

Northwestern Medicine Lake Forest Hospital is committed to providing education and health resources to the community. In 2015, physicians and nurses from Lake Forest Hospital hosted a variety of educational programs including a variety of corporate presentations at Baxter Corporation, Quill Corporation and the Northwestern Medicine Lake Forest Fitness Center as a means of educating the workforce on breast cancer prevention/screening and treatment options. We continue to be active in community walks. We had a team at the American Cancer Society Strides event in Libertyville as well as representation at the Lynn Sage Walk and Robert H. Lurie Comprehensive Cancer Center Survivorship walk/celebration in June.

In 2015, program participation rate totaled almost 1,500 participants. This is a 34 percent increase over 2014, and a 218 percent increase since 2012.

Skin cancer screenings remain a topic of interest in Lake County. In affiliation with the American Academy of dermatology's awareness campaign, Lake Forest Hospital provided free skin screenings in Lake Forest and Glenview this year.

Skin Screenings 2012-2015

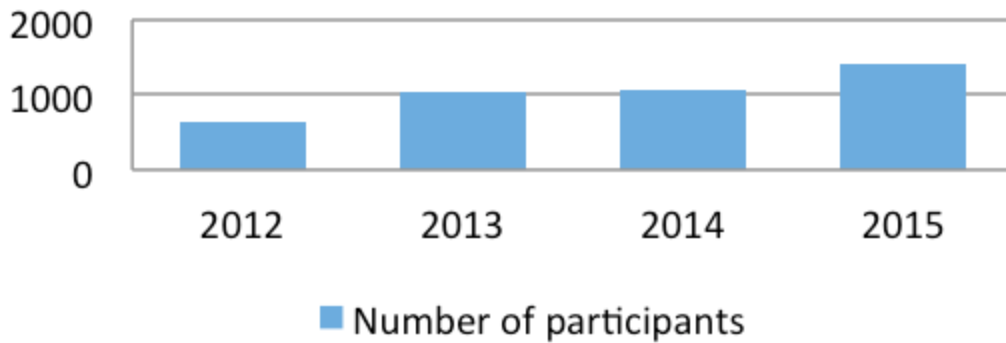


60 percent increase in skin screening since 2012-2015
>50 percent increase from previous screening year

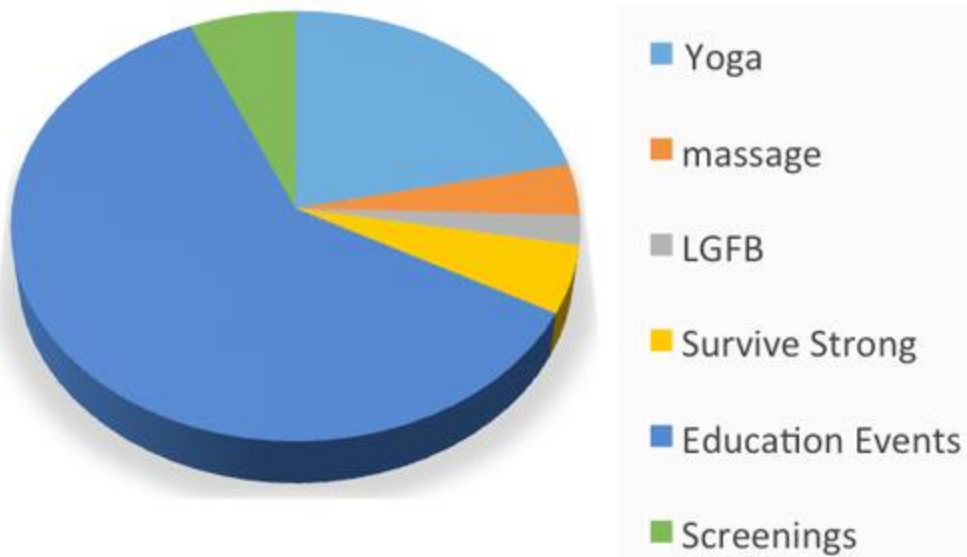
Community Outreach

- Hosted our first Steppin' Out for Women's Health fair at Northwestern Medicine Glenview Outpatient Center. Drs. Christensen, Garb, and Kim spoke to 25 community members about women's health topics including breast, gynecological and heart health.
- Hosted Steppin' Out for Women's Health on October 8th with Dr. Gradishar and Olivia Hess speaking to 42 community women regarding cancer prevention, detection and treatment as well as genetic risks.
- Robert H. Lurie Comprehensive Cancer Center held its first Stop Smoking, Start Living Program. Thirteen smokers attended the program to learn about smoking cessation techniques and resource support.

Community Outreach Participants 2012-2015



2015 Community Programming Participation



PROGRAM HIGHLIGHT

Breast Cancer

The Breast Cancer program at Northwestern Medicine offers highly specialized comprehensive care for the treatment of both early and advanced stage breast cancer. The cornerstone of the program is its experienced multidisciplinary team of caregivers, which includes specialists in Medical Oncology, Surgical Oncology, Radiation Oncology, Interventional Radiology, as well as dedicated pathologists, advance practice and infusion nurses, genetic specialist, fertility specialist and dedicated nurse navigators. This team – comprised of some of the country’s leading breast cancer experts – who meet to review patient cases, discuss complications and determine the most effective courses of treatment.

In partnership with the Robert H. Lurie Comprehensive Cancer Center of Northwestern University, Northwestern Memorial Hospital is proud to be ranked as one of the top 15 cancer programs in the country by *U.S. News & World Report*.

With dedicated breast cancer centers such as the Lynn Sage Comprehensive Breast Center and Posy Krehbiel Breast Cancer Center, patients have access to world-class care and breast cancer experts all dedicated to serving patients and having the best outcomes.

Detection and Treatment

In addition to nationally recognized experts and multidisciplinary collaboration; Northwestern Medicine offers some of the most advanced detection methods and treatment protocols. Our advanced imaging techniques exceed industry standards and improve detection rates and decrease the number of false positives with digital breast tomosynthesis (tomo), also known as 3D mammography. This FDA- approved advanced screening technology is able to capture high resolution images of the breast from multiple angles- allowing physicians to view the breast tissue in greater detail, making breast cancer easier to diagnose and in earlier stages.

For the treatment of breast cancer, our multidisciplinary team considers more than just a procedure or treatment; they work together to develop a plan of treatment that’s best for both the patient as well as the disease. Northwestern Medicine offers a comprehensive surgical program that includes a team of board-certified surgical oncologists experienced in complex breast cancer cases, coupled with world-class medial oncologist and researchers who develop personalized care plans to for each patient.

Advanced Surgical Options

Oncoplastic Surgery, a technique used during breast lumpectomy procedure to minimize contour deformities such as depressions and indentations. This leaves the breast as close to its natural appearance as possible, as well as nipple-sparing mastectomy,

Nipple-sparing mastectomy, sometimes referred to as a “no visible scar mastectomy” is best for those patients with smaller size breast and a cancer that is not too close to the nipple. This technique is a preferred method for prophylactic mastectomies in those patients at a high risk for breast cancer, such as those who are **BRCA** positive.

Advanced Therapies

For patients whose cancer is not responsive to traditional therapies such as chemo or radiation, the Lurie Cancer Center and Northwestern Medicine launched Northwestern OncoSET. This dedicated team of specialist combines genomic sequencing and sophisticated molecular analysis to develop targeted treatments that will benefit the individual patient.

To evaluate and discuss the best treatment options for each patient, OncoSET created the Lurie Cancer Center's Molecular Tumor Board, which brings together a group of experts to review every tumor's genomic profile. The board is comprised of a wide spectrum of cancer specialists, including pathologists, medical, surgical and radiation oncologists, as well as cancer geneticists, genome biologists, molecular scientists, bio-ethicists and bioinformaticists.

"OncoSET is an unprecedented initiative to deliver personalized, effective cancer treatments to patients who currently have very limited options. Advanced molecular testing to evaluate a tumor's genetic profile will increase our understanding of the disease, and our ability to offer individually tailored therapeutic agents," said **Massimo Cristofanilli, MD**, Associate Director for Translational Research and Precision Medicine at the Lurie Cancer Center, and Director of the OncoSET program.

Research and Support

Combining clinical practice with ground breaking research, the Lurie Cancer Center is one of only 47 National Cancer Institutes (NCI)-designated Comprehensive Cancer Centers in the nation, dedicated to the nation's cancer research efforts to fight cancer and find a cure. Lurie Cancer Center is also a founding member of the National Comprehensive Cancer Network (NCCN), an alliance of 27 of the world's leading cancer centers dedicated to quality, effectiveness, and efficiency of cancer care so that patients can live better lives.

Research plays a significant role in treatment of patients facing breast cancer; examining new breast cancer therapies are critical.

A combination of the drugs palbociclib and fulvestrant provides an effective and well-tolerated therapy for patients with recurrent metastatic breast cancer who are resistant to endocrine therapy, according to a new Northwestern Medicine study.

This phase III clinical trial, published in *Lancet Oncology*, followed up an initial analysis and focused on the various aspects of endocrine resistance in hormone receptor-positive metastatic breast cancer, which relies on estrogen to grow and progress. The paper also included clinical and safety endpoints.

"We learned the drug continues to be effective and saw significant progression for survival," said first author Massimo Cristofanilli, MD, professor of Medicine in the Division of Hematology/Oncology. Dr. Cristofanilli is also the associate director for Precision Medicine and Translational Research at the Robert H. Lurie Comprehensive Cancer Center at Northwestern University. "Palbociclib represents an alternative to chemotherapy for a patient that may have developed endocrine resistance, and it is certainly less toxic."

The breast cancer program also provides resources to address each patient's unique quality-of-life concerns. In addition to a complete complement of financial, nutritional, psychological and

alternative therapeutic services, we offer fertility experts to assist patients and their families during treatment; we also provide survivorship and palliative care to extend support after treatment has ended.

The level of care we provide at Northwestern Medicine goes beyond oncology. It's individualized care that encompasses physical, emotional and social needs, all in an effort to provide the best quality of care and the best quality of life."

Impacting Every Day

Our nationally recognized team of breast cancer experts is doing more than writing the book on breast cancer, they are intimately involved in developing international standards for treatment regimens, pioneering advances in targeted therapies, conducting research and designing clinical trials for new treatment regimens, and providing ongoing care that extends beyond the scope of clinical treatment. Our goal is not only to advance knowledge across the spectrum of care but to provide patients like Mary with the most advanced detection methods, the most effective treatment options and the most comprehensive support services available to help make every day feel everyday again.

When Mary went for her annual mammogram with Nadim Khoury, MD, a recently retired Northwestern Medicine physician and her primary care provider for 25 years, he asked her to return for further testing. Her following visits included a diagnostic mammogram, MRI and biopsy. The biopsy confirmed a diagnosis of breast cancer – non-invasive ductal carcinoma in situ – and her care team referred her to Kevin Bethke, MD, a breast cancer surgeon with Robert H. Lurie Comprehensive Cancer Center at Northwestern University. Dr. Bethke removed Mary's tumor, but surgery revealed additional signs of cancer. An outpatient lumpectomy – 45 minutes with twilight anesthesia – would treat that too.

After diagnosis, it was important to Mary that her care would allow her to maintain her everyday life, and she expressed as much to Lurie Cancer Center team members David R. Gius, MD, PhD, radiation oncologist, and Claudia Tellez, MD, a medical oncologist, when they evaluated her for radiation and medication, respectively. Ultimately, her care team did not recommend radiation, and because of her low risk for recurrence, they developed a plan that did not require medication, which freed Mary from any potential side effects.

This treatment plan allowed Mary to make a simple but strong assertion about how cancer would impact her everyday. Namely, that it wouldn't: "I'm not letting it bother me," Mary said. "I'm going to live the rest of my life in a calm and happy way."

Her approach – and that of her care team – also allowed Mary to run the Shamrock Shuffle, one of Chicago's most-loved races, less than two weeks after her surgery. A small part in her range of interests, running in the race was a nod to her good health, an indicator that she could resume her life with gusto.

With a customized care plan, informed by recent research that suggests less treatment may be more beneficial for certain patients, Mary can keep doing all the things she loves. Whether that's getting involved with new projects, running when she wants or spending time with her many friends, Mary's everyday is upbeat, active and happy.

Source <http://news.feinberg.northwestern.edu/2016/03/examining-new-breast-cancer-therapy/>