RIVERS CANCER CENTER

2011 Annual Report

RIVERS℠ CANCER CENTER

Affiliated with the Virginia Piper Cancer Institute®

RIVERS CANCER CENTER 2011 ANNUAL REPORT

TABLE OF CONTENTS

From Our Medical Director
page 1

Cancer Care Committee
page 3

Accomplishments and Updates in 2011
page 4

Colorectal Cancer
page 6

Oncology Data Services
page 8

Reducing Cancer's Burden
page 9

Oncology Services Directory
back cover

From Our Medical Director

The Rivers Cancer Center (RCC) is a partnership between the RiverFalls Medical Clinic, the River Falls Area Hospital and Minnesota Oncology. RCC's goal is to offer comprehensive cancer care to patients living in the River Falls area. The model for cancer-related services that has emerged is focused on delivering multidisciplinary specialized care that mobilizes the expertise of medical, surgical, and radiation oncologists while maintaining a central role for the patient and for their family physician in the battle against cancer.

Peter Dahlberg, MD, Ph.D, FACS
Rivers Cancer Center Oncology
Medical Director

While most care and services can be delivered locally, the Rivers Cancer Center also has an affiliation with the Virginia Piper Cancer Institute™ that provides our patients with access to additional surgical expertise, quality of care monitoring tools and patient support services. I am extremely proud to announce that our program was granted approval with commendation to operate as a Community Hospital Cancer Program from the Commission on Cancer (CoC), the national organization that oversees cancer care programs throughout the United States.

There are five essential elements that the CoC has identified as being key to the success of accredited cancer programs:

- That clinical services provide state-of-the-art pre-treatment evaluation, staging, treatment and clinical follow-up for cancer patients seen at the facility.
- That the local cancer committee leadership guide the program through setting goals, monitoring activity, evaluating patient outcomes and improving care.
- That there is a cancer conference to provide a forum for patient consultation and physician education.
- That a robust quality improvement program is the mechanism for evaluating and improving patient outcomes.
- That the cancer registry and database are the basis for monitoring the quality of care.

As a CoC accredited Community Hospital Cancer Program, the Rivers Cancer Center physicians will evaluate 100-200 patients newly diagnosed with cancer each year and will provide them with a full range of diagnostic and treatment services. We now have seven different organ-focused programs, each led by an expert medical director and a nurse coordinator. These teams work together to facilitate the diagnostic process, to consider all available therapeutic options, to establish a care plan and to monitor progress. In this report, we will highlight the gastrointestinal program.

continued on Page 2

From Our Director *continued*

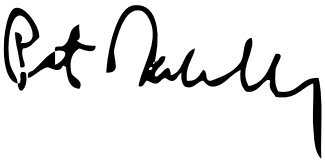
True patient-centered cancer care requires a substantial commitment of resources. The Rivers Cancer Center has "navigated" patient care. The program's nurse navigator meets with patients and their families throughout the evaluation and treatment phases of cancer care. Nurse navigators are also patient educators and advocates whose involvement in the delivery of cancer care greatly enhances patient satisfaction, reduces treatment-related complications, avoids duplication of services and facilitates transfer of information to both patients and their referring physicians.

Over the past year, the Rivers Cancer Center has continued to improve our programs. A few of the highlights are:

- The cancer patient access fund was created to support some of the financial needs of our patients and their families, so patients can focus on what's really important – getting better.
- The hospital rehabilitation and wellness services merged with Sister Kenny Rehabilitation Institute, which has allowed us to expand the spectrum of rehabilitation services we provide to our patients.
- Our surgery center now participates in the American College of Surgeons National Surgical Quality Improvement Program, one of only two critical access hospitals in the nation to voluntarily submit our outcomes to this level of scrutiny.

As I look forward in 2012, I am pleased to announce that robotic surgery will be available in River Falls as will genetic counseling. Our surgeons are already experienced in performing robotic operations for lung, prostate, colon, thyroid, and gynecological cancers. Genetic counselors provide specialized risk assessments for patients concerned about their personal or family risk of cancer, allowing them to make informed choices about testing and prevention.

I am proud of what the program has accomplished for our patients and am equally excited about the future of cancer care in western Wisconsin.



Peter Dahlberg, MD, PhD, FACS
Rivers Cancer Center Medical Director

Rivers Cancer Center
Cancer Committee Membership – 2011

The Rivers Cancer Center is a partnership between River Falls Medical Clinic, the River Falls Area Hospital and Minnesota Oncology. The goal of this partnership is to offer comprehensive cancer care to patients living in the River Falls area. The cancer-care model focuses on delivering multidisciplinary specialized care that mobilizes the expertise of medical, surgical, and radiation oncologists while maintaining a central role for the patient and for their family physician in the battle against cancer.

The following persons are acknowledged for their continued efforts and dedication to Rivers Cancer Center and to reducing the burden of cancer in our community.

Peter Dahlberg, MD, PhD, FACS
General/Thoracic Surgery, Committee Chair

Patrick Sura, MD
Family Medicine, Cancer Liaison Physician

Todd Arsenault, MD
St. Paul Radiology

Matthew Clayton, MD, FACS
General Surgery

Robert Gaertner, MD
Urology

Kevin Hallman, MD
OB/GYN

Thomas J. Johnson, MD
General Surgery

Vladimir Hugec, MD
Medical Oncology

Douglas Ketcham, MD
St. Paul Radiology

Anders Knutzen, MD
St. Paul Radiology

Vic Leingswangwong, MD
Radiation Oncologist

William Platz, MD
Psychiatry

Michael Trump, MD
Pathology

Jeff Agen
Laboratory and Radiology Manager

Mary Boles
River Falls Medical Clinic, Clinical Manager

Holly Gurrero
American Cancer Society

Mary Buss, RN
Oncology Nurse

Amy Cernohous, RN, BSN, OCN
Oncology Nurse Navigator

Cheryl Cloutier, CTR
Certified Tumor Registrar

Julie Ducklow
River Falls Medical Clinic, Health Information and Ancillary Services Manager

Scott Erickson, RPh
Pharmacy Manager

Elizabeth Hilton, RN
Surgical Nurse Coordinator
River Falls Medical Clinic

Kathy Hogberg, MSW
Social Work Services

Jennifer Loesch
Quality/Risk Manager

David Miller
River Falls Area Hospital President

Sue Nelson, RN, BSN
Care Manager

Jon Pedersen
River Falls Medical Clinic Administrator

Allison Peterson
Medical Staff / Cancer Program Coordinator

Jane Peterson
Director of Patient Care, Cancer Program Administrator

Deb Sanders, RD, CD, CDE
Patient Nutrition

Laura Schatz, OT
Rehabilitation Representative, Certified Lymphedema Specialist

Alissa Schoen, RN
Surgical Nurse Coordinator
River Falls Medical Clinic

RIVER FALLS AREA HOSPITAL
Allina Hospitals & Clinics

RIVER FALLS MEDICAL CLINIC

MINNESOTA ONCOLOGY

Summary of Accomplishments in 2011

Cancer Patient Assistance Fund

Focusing on our patient's needs is central to what we do. As the cancer care navigator at River Falls Area Hospital, Amy Cernohous, RN, BSN, OCN noticed many of her patients were worrying not only about their cancer, but also about the bills stacking up at home.

Amy wanted to do more, so she approached Heather Logelin, director of the River Falls Area Hospital Foundation. Logelin connected Cernohous with a local group called the Rhinos, who have a long history of raising funds for cancer patients in our area. The Rhinos made a $10,000 contribution to start a new program called the Cancer Patient Assistance Fund. This money will provide support to cancer patients so they can focus on what's really important – getting better.

Grants from the Cancer Patient Assistance Fund will help pay for prescriptions or medical supplies that aren't covered by insurance or any other hospital discount or charity care programs. Grants can also be used to pay for essential living expenses, including rent, utilities, transportation and day care.

The Cancer Patient Assistance Fund is administered at no cost by the River Falls Area Hospital Foundation. That means 100 percent of donations are used to help patients in need.

Cancer Rehabilitation

The goal of cancer rehabilitation is to minimize the physical effects of treatment and help patients regain control of their lives. This past year, the River Falls Area Hospital Sports and Rehabilitation Center joined the Sister Kenny Rehabilitation Institute (SKRI). By combining the strength of the current therapy team with the rich history and specialty services of SKRI, the rehabilitation services offered to patients have been enhanced and expanded.

Rehabilitation services address problems such as lymphedema, fatigue, skin problems, pain, joint stiffness, weakness, balance problems and swallowing difficulties. Therapies include exercise, pain management, occupational and physical therapy, and even advanced technologies such as computerized speech devices.

Laura Schatz, OT, works with a patient at the Sister Kenny Rehabilitation Institute – River Falls.

Surgical Updates – Robotics and NSQIP certification

Robotics

The newest arrival at the surgical center at the River Falls Area Hospital is the DaVinci™ robotic surgery system which utilizes technology that allows surgeons to perform complex surgical procedures using small incisions. Our surgeons are already exploiting this technology for treatment of prostate, lung, colon, and gynecological cancers.

The robotic unit instruments expand dexterity and range of motion while the imaging system shows a highly magnified truly three-dimensional view of the operative field. The advantages to the patient are smaller incisions, less blood loss, quicker recovery times, minimal scarring, reduced pain, and ultimately greater comfort and safety of the operation.

Peter Dahlberg, MD, operates daVinci™ robot during a surgery.

NSQIP and Quality of Cancer and Surgical Care

Patients face a dizzying array of health care choices. Many hospital systems have cancer care programs that are marketed to the public using superlatives such as "premier," "top-rated," "highest satisfaction," or "the best outcomes." How does a patient recently diagnosed with cancer make a smart and well-informed decision on where they should receive their treatment? There are obvious benefits to receiving care close to home, but will the care be of the highest quality?

Access to navigated care through a Commission on Cancer (CoC) accredited program, such as the Rivers Cancer Center, is the first crucial step in the process. This year, our surgical program has chosen to participate in the American College of Surgeons National Surgical Quality Improvement Program (ACS NSQIP). This program analyzes and validates the quality of surgical care patients receive by an extensive outcomes reporting process. Among the over 600 hospitals nationwide that are enrolled in NSQIP, only 30 participating hospitals have 100 or fewer beds, and only two hospitals are designated critical access hospitals. River Falls Area Hospital is one of them.

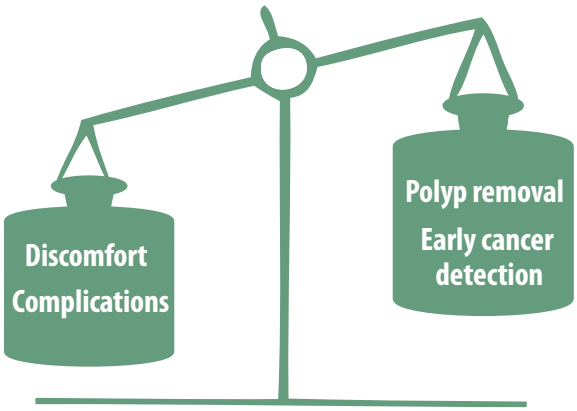
This means that the surgery center at the River Falls Area Hospital compares our results and outcomes with the highest ranked and most prestigious hospitals in the country.

Gastrointestinal Cancer

Colorectal Cancer

Colorectal cancer is one of the most common, and one of the most preventable, cancers affecting patients in the United States. The incidence rates of colorectal cancer have been declining since 1985. The decline has been attributed to increases in the use of screening tests and colonoscopy to remove polyps before they progress to cancers.

Screening and early detection programs must be acceptable to patients so that they will participate in large numbers. In the case of colonoscopy, the procedure must not be uncomfortable, and the risk of serious complications must not exceed the chance of benefit.



An Audit of Our Comfort and Safety

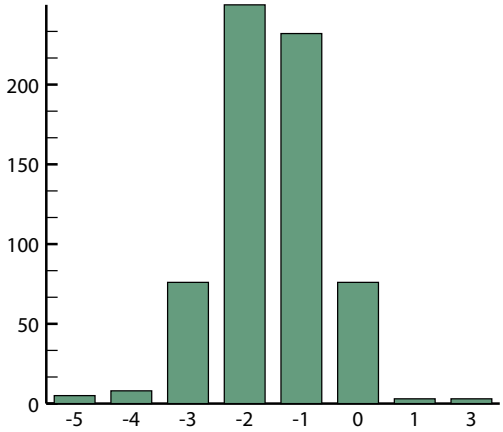
During the past year through an audit of over 800 colonoscopies performed in our screening program, we assessed both the issues of patient comfort during colonoscopy and the safety of the procedure. There were only two (0.2%) serious complications related to the procedure. In contrast, polyp detection and removal rates were greater than 30%.

Recording of objective measures of patient comfort during the procedure showed that less than 2% of patients became highly agitated, and no patients suffered from a sedation-related complication of the procedure.

Overall Sedation Score

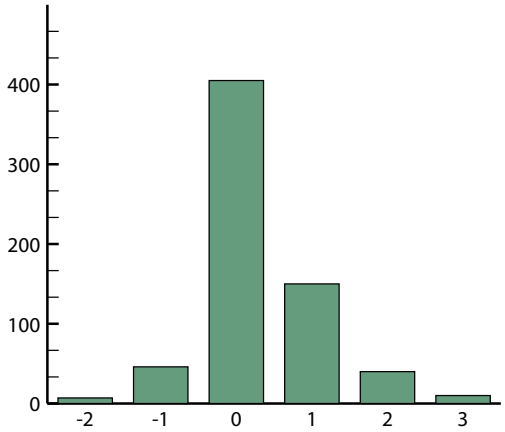
-5	Unarousable
-4	Deeply Sedated
-3	Moderately Sedated
-2	Lightly Sedated
-1	Drowsy
0	Calm
1	Restless
2	Agitated
3	Very Agitated
4	Combative

Overall Colonoscopy Sedation Scores



Ideal sedation score is -3 to 0.

Overall Colonoscopy Discomfort Scores



Ideal comfort level is -2 to 1.

Treatment of Colon and Rectal Cancer

If a colon cancer cannot be prevented, then treatment is based upon the stage of the disease when it is discovered. For early stage tumors, confined to the colon, surgical removal of a portion of the colon is often curative. For patients with more advanced or widespread disease, treatment may involve a combination of surgery, chemotherapy, and radiation. These cases are best managed by a multi-disciplinary team of physicians and nurse specialists. Whenever surgical treatment is involved, our philosophy as a program is to offer procedures that minimize treatment-related disability and facilitate return to normal activities as quickly as possible. Most patients are candidates for a laparoscopic (tiny incision) or even robotic-assisted surgical procedure.

NSQIP – State of the Art Quality and Safety Monitoring

While we push the envelope on surgical approaches, our program has made a similar commitment to monitoring our outcomes by participating in the American College of Surgeons National Surgical Quality Improvement Program (ACS NSQIP), the first nationally validated, risk-adjusted, outcomes-based program to measure and improve the quality of surgical care. The program employs a prospective, validated database to measure 30-day risk-adjusted surgical outcomes, allowing for valid comparison of outcomes among all participating hospitals. The program also provides Rivers Cancer Center surgeons with the tools, reports, analysis, and support necessary to make informed decisions about improving their care quality. Currently, there are only 16 hospitals in Wisconsin and Minnesota that voluntarily submit to such a rigorous analysis of their surgical outcomes.

2010 River Falls Area Hospital Colon Removal Outcomes

NSQIP Comparison n=26521

Average Length of Stay	7 days*
30-day death rate	0%*
Superficial wound infection	16%*
Deep wound infection - abscess	12%*
Pneumonia	8%*
Blood clots	12%*
Transfusion requirements	16%*

*Falls within the expected values of adjusted risk based upon the NSQIP Database

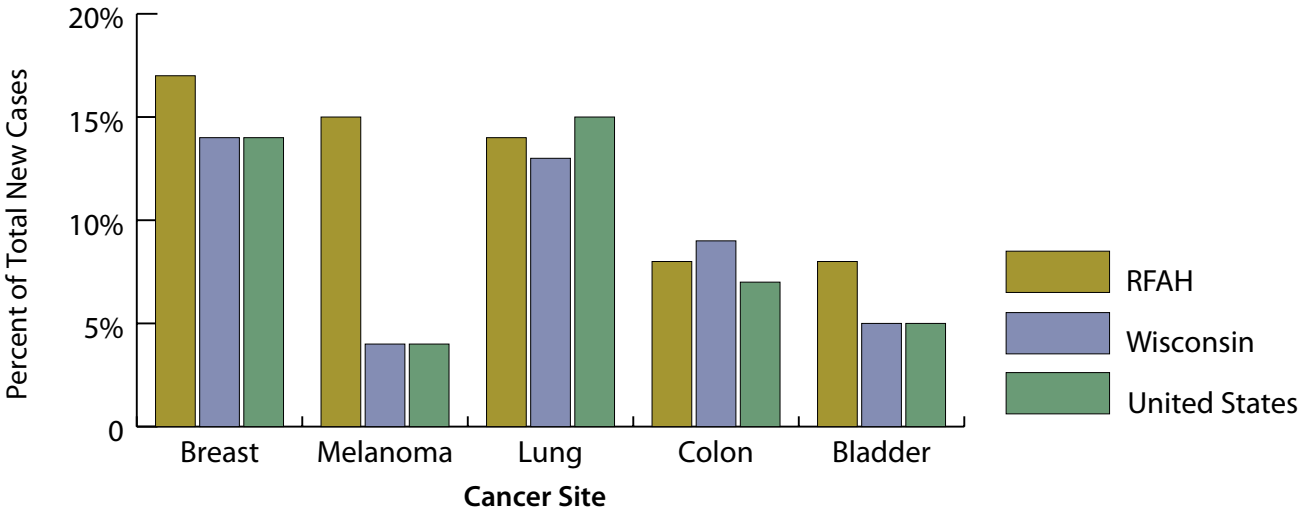
Oncology Data Services

Accurate data collection is an important component of cancer care delivery and quality monitoring.

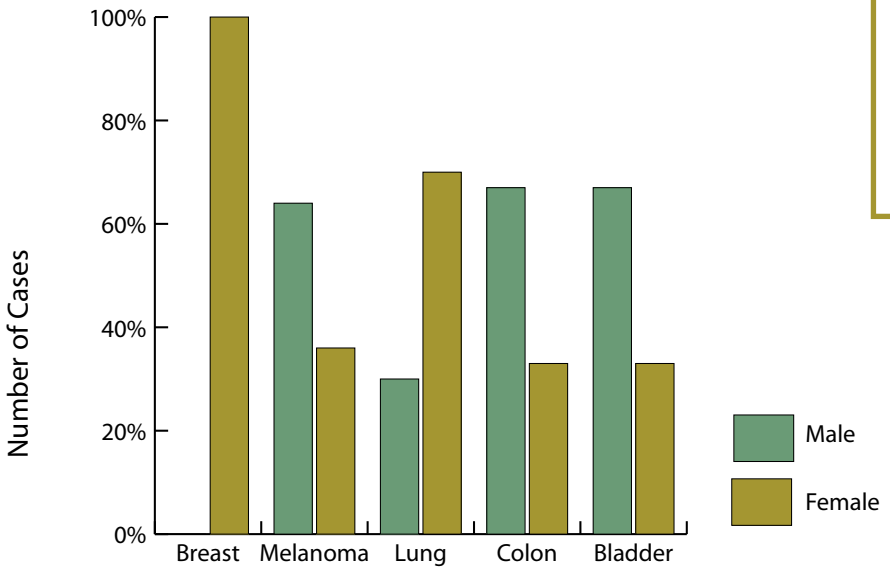
The primary responsibility of the Oncology Data Services is to ensure that complete and accurate data are collected and maintained for all patients diagnosed and/or initially treated for cancer and certain benign tumors at Rivers Cancer Center. Oncology Data Services utilizes computer software designed for the collection, management, analysis and reporting of data on these patients, initially diagnosed and/or treated.

The graphs summarize the oncology data from Rivers Cancer Center in 2010 for our five most commonly treated cancers.

Cancer Incidence Comparison



Cancer Cases by Gender



Total New Cases for 2010

River Falls Area Hospital	72
Wisconsin	29,610
United States	1,529,560

Reducing cancer's burden

Earlier this year, Rivers Cancer Center held an open house and accreditation celebration to honor past and present cancer patients and to educate members of the community about the services available at the River Falls facility.

Attendees of the open house consulted with doctors on prevention and early detection practices, learned about skin cancer detection tools, and toured the Rivers Cancer Center facility. A few of the Rivers Cancer Center patients also shared their thoughts and insights about their battle against cancer.

"The goal of the open house was to focus on cancer as a community disease and to garner our resources in a way that meets the needs of our patients and reduces cancer's burder on our lives", stated Peter Dahlberg, MD, PhD, Medical Director of RCC. It's exciting to have the skill, resources, and expertise available to provide this level of cancer care here in River Falls."

Current and past patients, RCC Nurse Navigator Amy Cernohous, David R. Miller, RFAH resident, and Vladimir Hugec, MD, planted a tree at the event to honor all cancer patients.

Oncology Services Directory

Rivers Cancer Center 715-307-6430

Oncology Nurse Navigator
Amy Cernohous, RN, BSN, OCN 715-307-6440

Rivers Cancer Center
Oncology Clinic 715-307-6430

Chemotherapy and Infusion
Center Appointments 715-307-6432

Chemotherapy and Infusion
Center Nurse Line 715-307-6436

River Falls Area Hospital 715-307-6000

River Falls Medical Clinic 715-425-6701

Ellsworth Medical Clinic 715-273-5041

Spring Valley Medical Clinic 715-778-5591

Minnesota Oncology-Maplewood
Cancer Center. 651-779-7978

Radiology Scheduling 715-307-6400

Social Worker/Patient Representative
Kathy Hogberg, MSW 715-307-6145

Registered Dietitian
Debra Sanders, RD 715-426-3788

Wellness and Fitness Center 715-307-6060

Rehabilitation Department 715-307-6050

Patient Billing 1-800-859-5077

Affiliated with the Virginia Piper Cancer Institute®

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