



Commonwealth Hematology-Oncology
"Caring for the Whole Person"

**COMMONWEALTH HEMATOLOGY-ONCOLOGY
EXPANDS
TO WORCESTER & CONCORD**

Affirms Lead as State's Largest Cancer Care Group

Quincy, Mass.— Commonwealth Hematology-Oncology (CHO), the largest private cancer care network in Massachusetts, has significantly expanded its service area by adding two new group practices and several hospital affiliations. The new offices, in Concord and Worcester, specialize in community-based care of patients with cancer and blood disorders. The additional hospital affiliations include Emerson Hospital, St. Vincent's Hospital, and U-Mass Memorial Hospital.

According to Walt Kagan, M.D., Ph.D., president of CHO, the group continues to expand as a way to provide patients in local communities with high-quality cancer care that is close to home. Recently, the group also opened two new private offices in Lawrence. This year, Dr. Kagan expects CHO's patient volume to increase by 25 percent.

Recently, three medical oncologists-hematologists from Emerson Hospital in Concord merged their practice with CHO. The Emerson Hospital physicians, including Jon Dubois, M.D., Ewa Niemierko, M.D., and Susan Sajer, M.D., were formerly with Emerson Practice Associates, a subsidiary of Emerson Hospital. The physicians will continue to see patients at the John Cuming Building /Bethke Cancer Center at Emerson Hospital.

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In addition, Susan Donohue, M.D., and David Shepro, M.D., two Worcester-area-based oncologists recently opened a new private office as part of the CHO cancer care network. Previously, the two physicians were with U-Mass Memorial Hospital and Fallon Community Health. They will see patients at their interim office location at 291 Lincoln Street in Worcester.

CHO currently has nine private office locations and clinical affiliations at 15 hospitals throughout Massachusetts and Southern New Hampshire. The growing network has 18 board-certified physicians, supported by a team of 10 oncology nurses, and 8 lab technicians.

Economies of Scale Reduce Cost of Care

As the largest cancer care group in the state; CHO serves as a model for health care practices by demonstrating the economies of scale that can be realized. "Because of our size, we have greater ability to negotiate with insurers and other providers, and we have more resources in place such as state-of-the-art quality controls, operating systems, support groups and staff," explains Dr. Kagan. "We also realize greater efficiencies through central purchasing and other shared resources, which translate directly to lower costs for health care and better services for our patients."

CHO provides local residents with comprehensive cancer services using a community-based, cost-effective approach. Services include cancer screening and diagnostic evaluation, chemotherapy, coordination of radiation therapy, biological treatments and planning of treatment with other medical and surgical specialists. The group also focuses on patient and family education and support group services. CHO doctors can also provide access to new drugs in clinical trials for patients when appropriate.

CHO started as a local practice for cancer treatment in 1981. Despite the group's continued growth, its vision remains unchanged, according to Dr. Kagan. "We are committed to providing the highest quality care. Our patients should expect both personalized care and medical excellence. This is central to our approach," he says.

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Last year, the group accommodated more than 100,000 patient visits and treatments, a number comparable to some of the region's larger medical centers. At the same time, visitors to CHO's offices are impressed by the calm, quiet atmosphere and the individualized care they receive. "Our patients tell us that they know we really care about them because of the time we take with them and our personal approach to their care," observes Dr. Kagan. "Patients and their families work closely with care providers to develop and fulfill personalized care plans."

Leadership in the Medical Community

In the medical community, CHO is known for its leadership in establishing practice guidelines for breast, colon, rectal, lung, esophageal, stomach, and prostate cancers. In addition, the group monitors quality on a regular basis and has been featured in national professional magazines for its ability to maintain and document quality standards. Among the group's most recent quality efforts is its leading-edge chemotherapy dosage software program. Called Intellidose, the program dictates acceptable dose levels and appropriate drugs used in chemotherapy treatment. "This is a valuable tool in assuring that patients receive the correct prescriptions," says Dr. Kagan. "Intellidose is a breakthrough for administering chemotherapy because it is extremely sophisticated yet user-friendly."

CHO has its headquarters at 10 Willard Street in Quincy. For more information about CHO, visit the web site at www.chomed.com or call 617 479-3550.

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