MercyOne Des Moines Cancer Center earns six-year federal research grant

MercyOne Des Moines Cancer Center patients will continue to benefit from advanced cancer care developed through research performed locally. The National Cancer Institute has awarded a six-year National Community Oncology Research Program (NCORP) grant to the CHI System, including MercyOne Des Moines Cancer Center. The grant will continue current research and begin future studies to improve cancer care delivery.

Cancer Center Medical Director Dr. Richard Deming is the principal investigator for cancer research performed at MercyOne Des Moines and 48 other member locations affiliated with CommonSpirit Health. He says the research being done in Des Moines is important in developing better care and new treatments.

“Most people think that cancer research is only done in laboratories at major universities,” said Dr. Deming. “Eighty-five percent of all cancer patients in the United States receive their treatment at community cancer centers. NCORP was developed to expand clinical trial cancer research to the community setting. This grant is particularly important to Iowa and other states with a large rural population.”

Dr. Deming shared that “cancer research needs to be relevant to all populations and research performed here will help contribute to the understanding of potential unique characteristics of cancer patients in a rural setting.”

In addition to providers, the MercyOne Des Moines Cancer Center research staff includes nurses Jill Wolken, Jessica Ellensohn and Shannon Harden, and clinical research associate Jeanette Stonebraker. The team assists in making patients aware of current research studies and providing care and support during a trial.

“I am extremely proud of our amazing team, and I’m thankful that our patients have given us their trust.”

- Dr. Richard Deming

85% of all cancer patients in the United States receive their treatment at community cancer centers.

Dr. Deming believes studies are vital. “Research is a fundamental part of cancer care that is synonymous with improvement in cancer care,” he said.

For more information on research at MercyOne Des Moines Cancer Center contact Jessica Ellensohn, 515-247-4233.
Facebook Live series reaches patients beyond their television

With increasing engagement among consumers using digital and social platforms, MercyOne Des Moines’ Public Relations and Marketing department has partnered with KCCI Channel 8 to reach patients beyond television. The team is working with various priority service lines to educate consumers through Facebook Live events and a series of new online videos.

The first Facebook Live event in July featured MercyOne Air Med. Viewers got a tour of the helicopter from adult flight nurse Emily Hagen and pediatric transport nurse Molly Denney, as they answered questions in real time about the air ambulance service. Since then, the new pediatrics urgent care clinic, MercyOne Comfort Health Center for Women and MercyOne Grand Avenue Family Medicine Clinic have been featured discussing various health care topics.

The next event will take place on Thursday, Oct. 24, at noon and will feature Breast Cancer Awareness month.

OptumRx – A few things to keep in mind

Oct. 16-Nov. 6: Annual benefit elections

In the new year, MercyOne will transition our pharmacy benefits manager from CVS Caremark to OptumRx. During the next few months, you will receive helpful information so you can feel confident in managing your medications and your health.

Some easy things you can do before Jan. 1, 2020, are:

- Tell your doctor OptumRx will be your new pharmacy benefit manager for refills and future prescriptions.
- Understand your coverage and what you need to do to get your medication.
- Learn more about brand name vs. generic medications and how they affect cost by visiting the Annual Enrollment site on InsideCHI.

Pastoral Care Week

MercyOne Central Iowa is blessed with dedicated chaplains in MercyOne Pastoral Care. The week of Oct. 20-26, we will remember their tireless efforts of service for our patients, families and colleagues. Find the full schedule of events in “News Briefs.”