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The Comprehensive Breast Health Center at the Koman Family Outpatient Pavilion

By: Cecilia Kasperick MSN, RN, CNL

For many years oncology nurses have collaborated on patient care at Moores Cancer Center, but for the first time, nurses who specialize in Breast Health will be housed under one roof. The third floor of the Koman Family Outpatient Pavilion (KFOP) has casually been referred to as “a one stop shop” for patients diagnosed with breast cancer, or experiencing breast health issues. The new Comprehensive Breast Health Center (CBHC) will provide services for all dimensions of breast health, including: breast radiology (mammograms, ultrasounds, MRIs, nuclear medicine & breast biopsies), medical and surgical oncology clinics, a dedicated infusion center, same-day surgery operating suites, an in-house pharmacy, and ancillary services, such as social work, genetic counseling, pain management and physical/occupational therapy. Truly, this is a COMPREHENSIVE Breast Health Center.

“(They) are truly amazing - so professional, knowledgeable, terrific bedside manner and topnotch in every way. Could there ever be a better team? Not on my book and I’m glad they’re leading the way on this new journey in my life!”

For the past 3 years, representatives from the cancer center Department of Nursing have been involved with planning this facility; and nurses are excited to play a significant role in this expansion. “Warm,” “beautiful” and “cutting edge” are words they have used to describe the environment. Floor to ceiling windows allow

for natural light and the “open concept” floor plan allows patients to easily transition between treatment areas. The overall feel of the space is inviting, and reflects the care, integrity and professionalism characteristic of oncology nursing.

Most of the nurses working in the Comprehensive Breast Health Center are Oncology Certified and complete annual continuing education. For many years, breast team medical/surgical RN’s have excelled in patient education. They continually create resources to ensure new knowledge and innovations are incorporated, and they teach complex subject matter in a way that is easy for patients to understand. Our Infusion Center nurses have a long history of conducting research, creating process improvement projects, and presenting their results at national conferences. As our work spaces merge, and we interact on a daily basis, we hope to collaborate more, sharing our strengths and

initiating joint projects. Infusion center and clinic staff will share a break room, so undoubtedly new friendships and professional collaborations will emerge.

Nurses in the Outpatient Pavilion

(OP) also have the opportunity to participate in interdisciplinary breast conferences. Once a week, physicians, advanced practice providers, nurses, clinical trial coordinators, genetic counselors and social workers meet to discuss each new patient. National Comprehensive Cancer Network (NCCN) guidelines are reviewed, best practices and “cutting



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edge” treatments are discussed, and individual treatment plans emerge. Collaborative care and “personalized medicine” are deeply embedded in the culture of the CBHC. Sharing space on the third floor will enhance this practice and support cohesive patient care.

Each department affiliated with breast healthcare hold national accreditations. We are recognized as a “center of excellence” by the National Cancer Institute (NCI) and the National Accreditation Program for Breast Centers (NAPBC). We treat not only patient’s physical bodies, but strive to provide holistic care, encompassing the physical,



UCSD CBHC ACS Walk Team

mental and emotional needs of our patients. Patient testimonies, and letters submitted to “We Listen,” assure us we are on the right track. As a matter of fact, every department affiliated with breast care has received compliments, and we strongly believe our move to the OP will enhance patient experience and satisfaction.

Recent patient feedback has included statements such as:

“I just cannot say enough good things about the breast cancer team. The professionalism, thoroughness, kindness, warmth, and friendliness, not to mention the “make things happen” attitude of (this team), has been absolutely remarkable. I can only imagine what good things are ahead!”

“I always expect to feel scared or sad when I come here, but the opposite always happens. I feel hopeful and really lucky that I get to receive my care at UCSD.”

“(They) are truly amazing - so professional, knowledgeable, terrific bedside manner and topnotch in every way. Could there ever be a better team? Not on my book and I’m glad they’re leading the way on this new journey in my life!”

“Kudos and hats off to all who have already touched the hearts of both my husband and I - certainly all of which reflects the compassion, care, and skills of this incredible UCSD group. Thank you for partnering with me on this next chapter of my life’s journey!”

Survivorship care and community outreach are also long standing traditions for the breast team. Annually our interdisciplinary team, along with patient “survivors” & their families, fundraise and participate in the “American Cancer Society walk: Making Strides Against Breast Cancer” and “Padres Pedal the Cause.” Both of these organizations fund breast cancer research and patient services. In 2018, as we “rub elbows” in our new space, we look forward to growing these teams and increasing our CBHC presence in the community.

Nurses who work in the OP breast center where given the opportunity to share thoughts about our move. This is what they said:

“The OP is an ideal environment to collaborate and provide exceptional patient care.” “We are excited to be a part of something bigger than ourselves.” “I look forward to collaborating more closely with other breast oncology nurses;” and “This is a great opportunity to enhance our patient’s experience.”

In summary, opening the Koman Family Outpatient Pavilion- Comprehensive Breast Health Center, enables nurses to embrace the essence of our Nursing Professional Practice Model, where “our focus on developing caring relationships with patients, families, each other and ourselves allows us to create an environment where feeling cared for is an everyday experience.”

2017 UCSD Padres Pedal the Cause CBHC Team

