Cancer…It’s a Journey

The moment a patient receives a cancer diagnosis, they begin a journey like no other. Initially the journey is filled with fear, uncertainty and many questions. **What will we need to do to treat my cancer? How will this impact my life and the lives of my loved ones?** As partners in that cancer journey, the Lourdes Regional Cancer Center and supporting hospital departments step in to provide care, education, compassion and guidance in helping patients through the myriad of concerns that accompany their diagnosis. Each patient is different — no two will experience cancer in the same way; however, throughout the accompanying pages, we invite you to learn how we come together to care for those on their cancer journey. Meet the people who are making a difference to our patients every day.

Lourdes Regional Cancer Center

**Why entrust your care or the care of your loved one to the Lourdes Regional Cancer Center?**

One, we are focused on building a staff of providers aligned in our approach to care.

Two, we are working to better organize the services that we provide through the use of personnel and dedicated associates to our cancer patients throughout the course of their disease.

Three, with the assistance of the Lourdes Foundation, we have embarked on a plan to upgrade equipment related to the diagnosis and treatment of cancer.

Four, we have improved patient and physician access to all services through a dedicated area staffed with experts to help navigate through our system.

Lastly, we are dedicated to providing the most up-to-date, state of art medical and oncology techniques to better serve our community.

Lourdes is aligned with MD Anderson Cancer Center – the most prestigious cancer center in the United States. This makes Lourdes accountable to the highest practical skills in cancer care. MD Anderson has approved and peer reviewed the following physicians as part of a prestigious medical and surgical team in the Southern Tier:

- Dr. Jonathan Kloss, Broome Oncology
- Dr. Shilpa Sambidi, Broome Oncology
- Dr. Madhuri Yalamanchili, Broome Oncology
- Dr. Joseph Readling
- Dr. Ronald Harris
- Dr. Shing Chin, Radiation Oncology
- Dr. Ghassem Mangouri, Breast Surgeon
- Dr. Janet Muhich, Breast Surgeon
- Dr. Nirupama Anne, Breast Surgeon
- Dr. James Steinmetz, Urologist
- Dr. Kathleen McGinley, Urologist
- Dr. Alexandria Lynch, Urologist

Our Breast Care Center is part of the National Accreditation Program for Breast Centers (NAPBC) – which monitors compliance with NAPBC standards to ensure quality care – and undergoes an on-site review every three years. The NAPBC is a branch of the American College of Surgeons whose Commission on Cancer accredits the Lourdes Cancer Program in its entirety. Accreditation by the NAPBC is granted only to those centers that are voluntarily committed to providing the best possible care to patients with diseases of the breast. Each breast center must undergo a rigorous evaluation and review of its performance and compliance with NAPBC standards and demonstrate a multidisciplinary, team approach to coordinate the best care and treatment options available. We are also required to submit data on quality indicators for all sub-specialties involved in breast cancer diagnosis and treatment. In addition, we participate in the National Breast Disease Database to report patterns of care and improve quality. Another important aspect of our breast care center is the ability to provide information about clinical trials and genetic testing.

We are proud of the accomplishments of Lourdes and of all the dedicated staff who care for all our cancer patients at Lourdes. All of our efforts are focused solely on providing excellent care to our patients, and we continually look for ways to improve that care with the best trained, most empathetic staff.
Palliative Medicine

Palliative Medicine, sometimes called Supportive Care, is increasingly recognized as an integral component of cancer treatment. Comprehensive, multidisciplinary care is provided to patients with serious illness by anticipating, preventing, and managing the complex array of symptoms that may be caused by cancer, its treatment, or other medical problems. By supporting patients and their loved ones, palliative medicine promotes the highest possible quality of life.

In addition to the medical management of symptoms, we provide psychological and spiritual support and assist with Advance Care Planning that documents patients’ goals and wishes. We offer guidance and support in making difficult health decisions, so that the treatment plan is aligned as closely as possible with individual patients’ values.

Several research studies have shown improved quality of life (and even improved survival) for cancer patients who have concurrent Palliative Care. Other studies show that the earlier the initiation of Palliative Care, the greater the benefit.

Working closely with the rest of the treatment team, we are ready to serve in any way we can. Appointments are made after referral by a physician, Nurse Practitioner or Physician’s Assistant.

Social Work

The Lourdes Social Work department recognizes the importance of supporting an oncology patient’s journey from diagnosis to survivorship. We are available to cancer patients within our system’s treatment areas to provide initial psycho-social assessment, emotional support, referral to appropriate community providers as needed, and guidance throughout the continuum of care.

Historically, the cancer patient’s experience includes a myriad of emotions as individuals prepare for and undergo cancer treatments. Often this life-changing disease finds patients dealing with both physiological and psychological challenges. Lourdes Social Work is here to meet the needs of our patients through supportive counseling, guided imagery, connection with financial resources, facilitating the involvement of community supports and services, and identifying additional support staff that can be of help.

Throughout the roller-coaster of emotions, we offer ongoing professional intervention to help patients throughout their cancer experience.

Mental Health

Lourdes recognizes the mental health challenges associated with serious health conditions such as cancer. There are multiple studies that demonstrate the value of augmenting cancer care with mental health services. We recently developed the Department of Psychiatry to better coordinate mental health services across Lourdes and more effectively address the mental health needs of our patients.

We believe that hope is a key element in the process of recovering from cancer. Lourdes has a team of mental health professionals who can offer assistance from the time of initial diagnosis through the later stages of treatment. Our social workers are the backbone of this care and are trained to offer a variety of services. This can include short-term psychological counseling as well as referral for longer-term services including medication management. Our work focuses in particular on the inter-relationship between physical issues and mental health. In all cases, care is provided in a confidential manner and encourages the independence of our patients.

Our team is now organized to provide care in a variety of settings, including the primary care office, since we believe this will improve access. We are also providing support with an understanding that a variety of factors (including financial) may need to be addressed in the successful recovery from cancer. We are dedicated to partnering with our patients on this journey.
Healing Garden

As part of our holistic approach to cancer care, Lourdes created a Healing Garden in 2014.

The Lourdes Healing Garden is designed as a retreat and a place of respite for patients, visitors, and staff to be used for their psychosocial and physical needs. It is designed to be a Garden of Life, using mostly native plants that will attract birds, butterflies and various pollinators. An herb garden was added in a raised bed, high enough to be accessible to those in wheelchairs or those not able to bend all the way to the ground. It is a Living Garden, ever changing, and meant to celebrate and recognize the beauty and miracle of God’s gifts here on Earth.

Throughout the past few years, community volunteers have donated countless hours planting and maintaining this peaceful retreat. Master Gardeners have lent their expertise and Eagle Scout candidates have adopted the Healing Garden as their final project.

“I love sitting and praying in the Lourdes Healing garden and I enjoy working in there along with all of the Lourdes medical staff. It is a beautiful garden. Thank you.”

—SYLVIA B.

Pet Therapy

The Pet Therapy program at Lourdes began in 2017. We currently have 6 teams making weekly visits. Some studies have been done regarding pet therapy for people with cancer. In those studies there was some evidence that patients experienced:

- Decreased pain – which may lead to decreased need for pain medication
- Decreased psychological distress
- Decreased fatigue

It has also been found that pet therapy can benefit the entire family, as well as the hospital nursing staff caring for those who are hospitalized. Our pet therapy teams truly enjoy sharing their time and dogs with patients, families, and employees. We hope to continue to bring a little joy to patients and families while they are in the hospital.

Hospice

Lourdes Hospice is the exclusive provider of hospice services in Broome and Tioga County. We also continue to provide compassionate care to patients of all ages in Chenango and Delaware Counties.

Lourdes Hospice works closely with providers from Lourdes, UHS, Guthrie, and beyond to ensure that our patients and their families receive compassionate, evidence-based care. Our goal is to provide support that enables patients to achieve or maintain comfort and peace in their own home.
Lourdes Hospice honors our veterans, and connects them with resources, through a national program called We Honor Veterans. Hospice is the exclusive provider of end of life services at Mercy House of the Southern Tier, a ten-bed shelter for persons nearing the end of life. This shelter accepts persons regardless of ability to pay, as long as the patient qualifies for the Hospice program.

Lourdes Hospice sponsors Camp Hope, a day camp for bereaved children and teens at Camp Sertoma in Kirkwood. The camp provides opportunities for learning, healthy grieving, and healthy living. Campers also participate in Healing Circles, a support group that gives children and teens an opportunity to share their stories, get to know each other, and learn ways of coping.

Nurse Navigators

Lourdes Oncology Nurse Navigators guide patients and their caregivers throughout the continuum of care ensuring a quality, personalized approach toward care management of patients with cancer by:

- Collaborating with the healthcare team to assure patients receive comprehensive care from diagnosis to survivorship:
  - Explaining results, diagnosis, and treatment options
  - Participating in medical decisions, personal care, and treatment
  - Assisting with care coordination and guidance through the healthcare system
  - Communicating with the healthcare team as needed
- Identifying and reducing barriers to care, such as:
  - Transportation
  - Financial
- Educating on the disease process, treatment, and management of side effects
- Providing ongoing emotional support to patients and caregivers
- Facilitating referrals to supportive services at Lourdes and in the community based on patients’ needs, such as:
  - Support Groups/Counseling
  - Billing or financial concerns
  - Nutrition
  - Physical, Occupational, and/or Speech Therapy
- Transitioning from active treatment to survivorship

Lourdes Oncology Nurse Navigators have Bachelor’s degrees and maintain certification in their specialties. The Navigators attend local and national conferences and educational events to keep abreast of treatment modalities, care management, and nursing processes. They attend site specific tumor boards and use clinical research as the scientific foundation for providing evidence-based care that promotes quality health outcomes for patients. Knowledge and expertise are applied to clinical situations for the purpose of developing solutions.

Our Oncology Nurse Navigators strive to be leaders at the bedside, through nursing practice, and in the community by:

- Participating in hospital based committees, including nursing practice councils, departmental/unit committees, and disease specific team meetings
- Mentoring new nurses and individuals interested in the healthcare field
- Developing programs to improve patient outcomes, increasing cancer awareness, and supporting patients and their caregivers
- Participating in local and national professional nursing organizations

Our Navigators recognize the unique value of every human being as demonstrated by reverence for life, compassion for others, support of every patient’s need to find truth for themselves, and respecting all religious traditions. They strive to create an environment of trust and well-being by offering our patients an opportunity to define their own meaning of life and to make rational decisions despite existing in an irrational universe.

Oncology Nurse Navigators base their culture of caring on the
The Breast Care Center at Lourdes Ascension has a rich history of providing comprehensive, multidisciplinary breast care to the community since 1993. Our specialized team of professionals is committed to delivering compassionate, quality care that utilizes the latest technology. Lourdes Breast Care Center is nationally recognized by the American College of Surgeons National Accreditation Program for Breast Centers (NAPBC) for providing exceptional breast care.

MD Anderson Certified Member
As a certified member of MD Anderson Cancer Network our patients benefit from MD Anderson’s world-renowned clinical standards and expertise. This collaboration means our patients have access to the latest in evidence-based care and most advanced treatment plans while remaining close to home and family.

Accreditation
Lourdes Breast Care Center is accredited by the National Accreditation Program for Breast Centers (NAPBC) and the American College of Radiology (ACR). The Regional Cancer Center is accredited by the Commission on Cancer and participates in ongoing monitoring, which means you will always receive the highest level of quality care.

Breast Care Center

“We love it when the doctors come to speak to us. Especially when it is your own doctor! Dr. Muhich was wonderful. Her presentation was understandable and clear. Thank you Lourdes Hospital for providing such a needed and appreciated education opportunity.

—CECELIA B.
Innovative Care
Our Center provides a complete range of on-site digital imaging services, clinical evaluation and on-site diagnostic procedures. We offer comprehensive care for all conditions of the breast including long-term monitoring for women who are at higher risk or have difficult-to-exam breasts.

- State-of-the-art technology, digital and 3D Mammography, and Breast MRI
- Surgeons certified in minimally invasive breast biopsy procedures
- Treatment planning conferences
- Second opinion services
- Genetic testing and counseling
- Clinical trials
- Nurse Navigators
- Social workers
- Psychosocial support groups
- Cancer rehab services
- Lymphedema care

Convenient Care
Lourdes is pleased to offer 2D and 3D digital breast imaging services at convenient locations: at the Lourdes Breast Care Center on the hospital campus, at our Vestal facility, and throughout the community with our Mission In Motion Mobile Mammography Van.

Women’s Health Center

Lourdes offers Women’s Health Services that benefit all women. The Center is modeled after careful data collection, attention to detail, studying several successful consolidated and integrated cancer centers, and most importantly, to serve every woman’s needs.

Women’s Health Center offers imaging services specific to women:
- Screening and Diagnostic Mammography
- Breast Sonography
- Cancer Risk Reduction Counseling
- Genetic Counseling and Genetic Testing
- High Risk Breast Cancer Program
- On-Site Breast Surgical Services
- GYN Services
- Pelvic Sonography
- Sonography of Head, Neck, Abdomen & Extremities
- Bone Density

Lourdes Women’s Health Center offers same day surgical consultations, genetic counseling and on-site testing for patients who qualify for the test based on the national guidelines. Women who are at substantial risk for the development of future breast cancers are offered risk reduction with prophylactic surgery if appropriate. Women who have family history of breast cancer, or have a known cancer gene in the family, such as BRCA 1 and/or BRCA 2, may benefit from this procedure as well.

Lourdes Women’s Health Center offers gynecologic screening services including pap smears.

The team at the Lourdes Women’s Health Center is dedicated to providing high quality person-specific care that exceeds the expectations of our patients.

“I am so grateful to Lourdes and all that they do for us as cancer survivors…the staff and doctors are kind and thoughtful and the volunteers make me laugh, I think that is why I am a survivor.”

—LOUISE N.
Surgical Services

When surgery is an option for cancer treatment, Surgical Services plays a role in the patient’s cancer journey.

DaVinci robotic surgery continues to be a minimally invasive surgical option with many benefits for cancer patients. Robotic surgery allows for a decreased length of stay, fewer blood transfusions, and fewer post-operative infections.

- Dr. Alexandria Lynch and Dr. Kathleen McGinley of Broome Urology at Lourdes are both trained in robotic surgery.
- DaVinci or laparoscopic gynecological procedures are used instead of open procedures with a better outcome for patients.

Dr. Niru Anne and Dr. Janet Muhich perform mastectomies with reconstruction, working collaboratively with plastic surgeons for better outcomes.

Dr. Todd Prier performs laparoscopic thyroidectomies using a minimally invasive approach to reduce infection rates and tissue swelling to prevent respiratory issues and offer better cosmetic results.

Bariatric surgery has had an impact on the community in an effort to fight obesity, however, obesity is often a contributing factor in cancer risk.

Our multi-disciplinary team continues to provide person-centered care that accounts for the physical, mental and spiritual well-being of our cancer patients.

Radiation Oncology

Lourdes Radiation Oncology continues to provide the broadest range of treatment options in the community. We offer external beam treatments on our two linear accelerators. We have the capability to perform Intensity Modulated Radiotherapy, Image Guided Radiotherapy and Stereotactic Radiosurgery. The Department routinely sees 450 patients in consultation each year and we treat 30 patients per day.

We also have the capacity to perform both high-dose and low-dose radioactive implants. Lourdes also continues to offer partial breast brachytherapy. This program, which provides another treatment option for patients with early stage breast cancer, is the only high-dose brachytherapy (implant) program in our area.

New Technology

UroNav Fusion Biopsy

Targeted MRI/Ultrasound Fusion Biopsy

Lourdes is proud to offer a powerful MR solution for analysis, planning, and targeted biopsy of the prostate.

This complete clinical MR solution for the prostate consists of DynaCAD for Prostate and the UroNav fusion biopsy system - a comprehensive solution which offers a cutting edge imaging option for many patients with elevated and/or rising PSA levels.

Targeted MR/ultrasound biopsy is poised to become the new standard in prostate care, and Broome Urology at Lourdes is pleased to be one of the first urology groups in the area to offer this powerful solution to our patients. UroNav fuses pre-biopsy
MR images of the prostate with ultrasound-guided biopsy images in real time for excellent delineation of the prostate and suspicious lesions.

The fusion of the MR and ultrasound images uses electromagnetic tracking, similar to your car’s GPS system; a tiny tracking sensor attached to the trans-rectal ultrasound probe generates a small, localized electromagnetic field that helps determine the location and orientation of the biopsy device. A sophisticated algorithm maintains the fusion of MR and ultrasound images, even when the patient moves.

**SpaceOar – Hydrogel**

Since radiation therapy started to be used to treat prostate cancer, there has been always been a risk of radiation damage to the rectum and bladder. **In 2017, Lourdes decided to do something about that risk and initiated the usage of a hydrogel rectal spacer.**

Hydrogel becomes a jelly substance when mixed and is placed between the prostate and the rectum. The hydrogel is completely absorbable and placed at the same time as fiducial markers under light anesthesia. It is clinically proven to reduce acute and long term rectal injury related to radiation therapy. Although hydrogel is placed specifically for the prevention of rectal injury, it has also been proven to help with erectile dysfunction and urinary incontinence related to radiation therapy.

For patients with a Gleason score equal to or less than 7, the hydrogel is offered. In the short time that Lourdes has been offering this treatment, we have seen a decrease in rectal bleeding, leakage, diarrhea, chronic discomfort, and incontinence of stool. We are also the only providers offering hydrogel in the area.

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**Certified Member of MD Anderson Cancer Network®**

**Lourdes became a certified member of the MD Anderson Cancer Network®, a program of MD Anderson Cancer Center, in August 2016.** The affiliation provides Lourdes Regional Cancer Center’s certified physicians with access to MD Anderson’s world-renowned expertise, offering patients enhanced cancer care close to home.

As a certified member of the MD Anderson Cancer Network, certified physicians now have access to the experts at MD Anderson Cancer Center and an extensive quality assessment program that ensures concordance with MD Anderson’s innovative treatment guidelines. In addition, Lourdes cancer specialists have the opportunity to present especially rare or complex cancer cases and seek consultation with MD Anderson’s Tumor Board. With access to MD Anderson’s specialists and subspecialists, Lourdes certified physicians can now offer patients more treatment options while staying closer to home.

As one of the world’s largest and most respected centers devoted exclusively to cancer patient care, research, prevention, and education, MD Anderson is home to the largest clinical trials program for cancer in the world, and employs more than 21,000 cancer fighters dedicated to ending the disease.

The Lourdes cancer program went through a rigorous evaluation to qualify as a member of the Cancer Network, and exhibited a great commitment to quality, cultural synergy, and clinical compatibility. This collaboration brings a new dimension of care to the region.

MD Anderson’s evidence-based clinical guidelines and best practices are now the best practices for Lourdes, with our oncology team having access to:

- **Routine video conferences with MD Anderson physicians**
- **Participation in MD Anderson’s tumor boards**
- **Consultative physician-to-physician second opinions**
- **Expanded educational opportunities**
- **Collaborative opportunities with other certified members of this national network**
- **Measurement and benchmarking of our care by MD Anderson**

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Statistical Data

Each year the Lourdes Cancer Registry submits data to the National Cancer Database. The data submitted provides tremendous insight into the care of the patients we see at Lourdes. This data is presented to the Lourdes Cancer Committee frequently throughout the year. Our goal each year is to provide excellent care for all of our patients. We have included information showing our results in the areas of breast, colon, and lung cancer as well as patient satisfaction information.

The data from the National Cancer Database reflects our work in the areas of:

- Accountability measures – An accountability measure is the standard of care based on clinical trial evidence.
- Quality Improvement measures – A QI measure is one that demonstrates good practice but is not based on clinical trial evidence.

Breast Cancer

Over the last 20 years the Lourdes Breast Care Center has continually strived to provide increasingly effective types of care to our patients. As technology has developed, radiologists and surgeons have been able to make use of various imaging techniques (especially ultrasound) to guide them in the performance of biopsy procedures. The use of image guided biopsies has, over the years, become the standard of care. The chart below shows how Lourdes compares with several other groups. Our performance on this Quality Improvement measure has been outstanding.

Breast cancer diagnosis using image guided biopsy (Core or FNA)

% BIOPSY

- Lourdes: 96.5%
- My State (NY): 88.9%
- All CoC Approved Programs: 92.6%

Clinical trials have shown that the use of tamoxifen or an aromatase inhibitor reduces the production of estrogen, which is why they can be useful in lowering the risk of breast cancer. The National Cancer Database examines the use of these drugs. The chart below shows how Lourdes measures up on this Accountability measure.

Tamoxifen or a third generation aromatase inhibitor is considered or administered within 1 year of diagnosis for women with AJCC T1c or stage IB-III hormone receptor positive breast cancer

% RECEIVING MEDICATION

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Patient Satisfaction

The Lourdes Oncology service line is based on compassion and caring and the staff is invested in quality, evidence practice. Lourdes strives for excellent care with a goal of 90% or higher in patient satisfaction ranking. Numerous drivers are considered that shape patient satisfaction. An important measure of any program is the willingness of our patients to recommend our service to others. Last year our cancer patients showed a willingness to recommend our services almost 90% of the time. This measure was an important goal for our staff during the last year.

Lourdes Oncology Loyalty Study, Professional Research Loyalty Consultants Inc.–2017

Overall Quality of Care: 86.10%
- Staff’s Courtesy and Friendliness: 87.10%
- Most Involved Staff Member’s Understanding and Caring: 86.20%
- Most Involved Staff Member’s Quality of Care: 86.20%
- Staff’s Respect for Patient’s Privacy: 83.10%
- Total Time Spent: 81.40%
- Likelihood to Recommend: 89.40%

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Radiation therapy is an important treatment for breast cancer patients. It is important that radiation be used or considered in breast cancer patients who have had a mastectomy and have evidence of cancer in 4 or more regional lymph nodes. Again this is an Accountability measure proven in clinical trials. 

**Radiation therapy is considered or administered following any mastectomy within 1 year of diagnosis of breast cancer for women with ≥ 4 positive regional lymph nodes**

Radiation therapy is especially difficult to treat. It is important to use a combination of different chemotherapy drugs when treating these diseases. The Medical Oncologists at Broome Oncology work with Lourdes to provide excellent care and optimal results for this Accountability measure.

**Combination chemotherapy is considered or administered within 4 months of diagnosis for women under 70 with AJCC T1cN0, or stage IB-III hormone receptor negative breast cancer**

Radiation therapy is an important treatment for breast cancer patients. It is important that radiation be used or considered in breast cancer patients who have had a mastectomy and have evidence of cancer in 4 or more regional lymph nodes. Again this is an Accountability measure proven in clinical trials. 

**Colon Cancer**

Chemotherapy is very important in the treatment of colon cancer especially in the later stages where the disease has spread to structures outside the colon. Again, this has been demonstrated in clinical trials and is an Accountability measure.

**Adjuvant chemotherapy is considered or administered within 4 months of diagnosis for patients under the age of 80 with AJCC stage III (lymph node positive) colon cancer**

Lung Cancer

It is important to properly identify the stage of any cancer at diagnosis. The stage of a particular cancer has a major impact on the type of treatment that a patient undergoes. In cases where the cancer has spread into areas close to the original site, but has not moved to distant structures, the best practice is not to perform surgery initially. This is another Quality Improvement measure.

**Surgery is not the first course of treatment for cN2, M0 lung cancer**

Report to the Community 2016–2017  9