Commission on Cancer Accreditation affirms commitment to patient-centered care
Ephraim McDowell Regional Medical Center and Ephraim McDowell Commonwealth Cancer Center

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Ephraim McDowell Commonwealth Cancer Center

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Responding to a member’s request, McDowell Wellness Center is now offering a PWR!Moves program for individuals with Parkinson’s Disease. The program coordinates and integrates medical/rehabilitation goals with community-based exercise programming to improve a patient’s quality of life and functional abilities.

“The program uses exercise as a physiological tool to optimize brain function and health,” said Karla Curtsinger, a Wellness Center counselor and personal trainer who completed training to become a certified PWR!Moves instructor. “Research suggests that exercise can improve a Parkinson’s Disease patient’s mobility, which improves their thinking and memory while also reducing their risk of falls.”

Parkinson’s Disease is a neurodegenerative disorder affecting the nerve cells in the brain that produce dopamine. It is characterized by tremors, muscle stiffness and changes in speech and gait. According to the Parkinson’s Foundation, exercise is a vital component to helping individuals with Parkinson’s Disease to maintain their balance, mobility and daily living activities.

With the PWR!Moves program at McDowell Wellness Center, participants are provided personalized coaching and wellness education to overcome non-motor symptoms, stress and the inactivity that interferes with physical capacity and quality of life. The PWR!Moves exercises are performed with large amplitude, high effort and attention to action in multiple postures that specifically target antigravity extension, weight shifting, axial mobility and transitional movements … skills shown by research to interfere with mobility in people with Parkinson’s Disease.

Curtsinger noted that the classes may incorporate various equipment, music, dance, boxing, pole walking, cycling, chair and/or floor exercises as well as aquatic training sessions. Classes meet for 45 minutes each Tuesday and Thursday at 11 a.m. and continue for six weeks. The cost is $30 for the six-week session. Participants must be referred for the program, and referrals may be requested through the outpatient rehabilitation services provided at McDowell Wellness Center.

A care partner is encouraged to attend several sessions to learn the exercise techniques and provide support at home and/or during class as needed. The exercises take into account each individual’s current ability level and goals for enhanced mobility and communication.

“For people with Parkinson’s Disease, we highly encourage exercise as medicine, and we offer this program as a building block for everyday movement, to better address all the motor, cognitive and emotional symptoms of Parkinson’s Disease for living well,” Curtsinger said.
A year ago, 88-year-old William Hawkins was locking up his basement for the night when he fell and broke his hip. It took three hours for him to get up the stairs to call for help.

Following surgery at Ephraim McDowell Regional Medical Center and a stay in the Swing Bed Unit at Ephraim McDowell Fort Logan Hospital, Hawkins was ready to get home. Thanks to the care he received from Ephraim McDowell Home Health, Hawkins was able to return home to the activities he enjoyed before his fall. And the entire experience brought some new friends into the life of this Burgin resident.

Reflecting on his stay at Fort Logan Hospital, Hawkins said the nursing staff was very compassionate and very competent, as were the two therapists – Tammie Jo Moore and Kathy Gastineau – who provided care to him while he was on the Swing Bed Unit.

“They came in every morning to show me the exercises I needed to do, and I woke up at 5 a.m. each morning to do them,” Hawkins said. “I was progressing along and decided it was time to go home.”

Once discharged, Hawkins received care from therapists provided by Ephraim McDowell Home Health, including Jessica Wiersma, an occupational therapist.

“What I liked about Jessica was that she would go through her routine (of therapeutic exercises) and then she would sit down and say, ‘Now what do you want to do?’,” Hawkins recalled, noting that he would share a goal he wished to attain and Jessica would point out the challenges he faced with reaching that goal but they then worked together in order to meet the goal.

“My goal was to get outside,” Hawkins said. Before he could do that, he needed handrails installed on the steps outside the side door at his home. After Jessica encouraged the handrails be added, Hawkins’ son-in-law installed them. Another goal he had was to go to the barn behind his house, and Jessica helped him to achieve that goal as well.

Hawkins has maintained close ties to all of the caregivers who were a part of his recovery from the fall that broke his hip. He has returned to Fort Logan Hospital to visit the nurses and therapists, and his home health therapists have returned to his home to visit him.

“Jessica is not just a therapist,” he said. “She’s a human being … and you’ve got the cream of the crop.”

Despite living alone, Hawkins is grateful that he can live as independently as possible. Last summer, he mowed his yard and raised a garden.

“I’m not an invalid,” he said. “I recommend home health to anybody. The care I got helps me to stay at home.”

For more information about Ephraim McDowell Home Health, please call (859) 236-8946.
Ephraim McDowell Health has invested in new technology that assists the nursing staff in locating a patient's veins, which is especially useful in those situations of poor venous access. The VeinViewer® Vision2 by Christie is now available at both Ephraim McDowell Regional Medical Center and Ephraim McDowell Fort Logan Hospital.

“Our primary goal with purchasing this equipment was to enhance the patient’s satisfaction and safety,” said Carla Reynolds, BSN, RN, CRNI, VA-BC, CPUI, CAPA, who oversees the Vascular Access Team for the health system. “With some patients, due to their compromised health or vein structure, our staff can find it difficult to locate a vein, resulting in those patients being stuck multiple times. This equipment is designed to aid the nurse in vein assessment and IV catheter placement.”

The technology uses harmless near-infrared (NIR) light to project a high-definition, real-time image of the patient’s veins directly on their skin. With the device, the clinician can change the color of the projected image, invert or resize the image, enhance the image using the fine detail mode, and increase or decrease the image brightness. These customization features allow the clinician to choose which mode provides the best image to work with while also providing the best image of the patient’s vein.

“The device allows the clinician to see the vein size and quality,” Reynolds said. “It can visualize veins slightly deeper than we can visualize or palpate.”

Ephraim McDowell Health purchased the technology to be compliant with the Infusion Therapy Standards of Practice established by the Infusion Nurses Society. This device will support the standards by providing a clear image of the vein, which will increase first attempt success rates.

The portable unit is taken to a patient’s bedside, and its articulating arm makes it easy to maneuver and position. Reynolds noted that the unit is especially helpful for certain patient populations, such as the elderly, the obese, patients with darker skin tones or who have excessive hair on skin or scars and also those who are dehydrated or have diseases that result in structural vessel changes. The VeinViewer can be used by any clinician who is competent in starting IVs, regardless of years of experience.

Prior to purchasing the VeinViewer Vision2, the health care system used the Accuvein system but it did not offer the same options as what is provided by the new device.
Since 2010, Pet Therapy Volunteers have been actively and proudly serving at Ephraim McDowell Regional Medical Center. Our pet therapy teams are a great source of comfort and care for our patients, families, and Associates. Our EMRMC Volunteer Pet Therapy teams are active in visiting patients on units that benefit from the calming effect offered by the dogs and their handlers. Many studies have focused on the tangible mental and physical benefits of pet therapy visits, including decreasing isolation and depression, lowering anxiety and agitation, providing comfort and reducing boredom, as well as stabilizing blood pressure.

Our pet therapy teams consist of a handler and canine, and are certified by nationally recognized Pet Therapy organizations, such as Alliance of Therapy Dogs, Inc. When they visit the hospital, they are there not only for the patients but also for families and Associates. Many times, families are overjoyed to see pet therapy teams arrive on the patient care floor, as they offer such a welcome distraction from the stresses of supporting a family member through a stay in the hospital. Many times, our pet therapy Volunteer teams have their first visits before they even step foot on a nursing unit.

Two of our pet therapy duos – Valli Harrison and Toby and Donna Samuels and Hunter – are always welcome on the nursing floors and enjoy bringing their own special cheer to the patients on the floors. It’s not uncommon to see them dressed up for Halloween (the pooches, not the people) and the pooches also pass out personalized Christmas cards during the holiday season.

But more than that, the calmness and comfort that the canines bring to patients and families is beyond measure. Patients who have canines at home respond particularly well to having a visit by a pet therapy team.

Samuels recalled a particular visit in which Hunter was able to calm and comfort a patient who otherwise would not talk or even acknowledge their human caregivers. Hunter was able to lie beside the patient (in bed), and then the patient began talking to Hunter in a way they had not even talked to a human being the entire time they had been in the hospital.

"It was just incredible to see Hunter have that immediate connection and be able to help this patient. The patients’ demeanor completely changed," Samuels said.

All pet therapy teams that visit at Ephraim McDowell Regional Medical Center are certified through national pet therapy organizations that certify canines that have passed rigorous screenings for temperament, supervision, and behavior.

"It was just incredible to see Hunter have that immediate connection and be able to help this patient. The patients’ demeanor completely changed."

— Donna Samuels
Pet Therapy Volunteer
When it comes to cancer, no community is immune to this feared disease. For many years, patients had the notion that the best cancer care could only be obtained in larger cities. That mindset seems to be changing, and the quality care provided through Ephraim McDowell Commonwealth Cancer Center may be part of the reason. That quality care was recently recognized as the center and Ephraim McDowell Regional Medical Center jointly earned the highly sought after Commission on Cancer (CoC) Center accreditation.

“This accreditation will make our patients much more comfortable that they are getting the standard of care and standard treatment that will be offered at a larger hospital,” said Dr. Nicola Jabbour, a board-certified hematology/oncology physician who was instrumental in helping to achieve the CoC accreditation. “This achievement means we are up-to-date with the standards of care, and it is great news for our community.”

Jabbour pointed out that oncology care is complex and challenging, but the CoC accreditation will ensure that the Cancer Center stays current with new medicines, new changes in standards of care and new treatments. The accreditation establishes programs to make oncology care comprehensive through screening, diagnoses, choosing the right treatment, palliative care and genetic counseling, he said.

According to Jabbour, established patients who have been receiving treatments at the Cancer Center for years will definitely notice some changes as a result of the CoC accreditation.

“We have to establish new programs like genetic screening and have already identified a couple of patients who may be candidates

CONTINUED ON PAGE 10
Karen Taylor’s world changed on Friday, June 13, 2014. The night before, she and her husband had gone out to eat with their neighbors – something they did every Thursday night. As Taylor was getting into bed, though, she felt a shooting pain under her arm.

“I knew what it was immediately,” said Taylor, a 60-year-old Boyle County resident. She performed a self-exam of her breast and was shocked to find two lumps behind her nipple. “I had not noticed anything at all up until this point other than being a bit more tired than usual.”

Taylor, the daughter of the retired family practitioner Dr. Samuel Reid, suspected the lumps were breast cancer and knew she needed to get medical attention as soon as possible. The following morning she was seen by her physician assistant, Elizabeth Ramsey, who also felt the lumps and gave her an order for a mammogram and ultrasound of her breast.

“I insisted on an ultrasound even though, due to insurance, I had to have a mammogram first,” she noted. The exams concluded that she had suspicious lesions that would need to be biopsied, and that was scheduled the following day with Dr. Paul DeLuca, a general surgeon.

The biopsy showed that Taylor had an aggressive form of breast cancer, and she underwent a double mastectomy one week later. That was followed by six months of chemotherapy at Ephraim

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MEET OUR PHYSICIAN | NICOLA JABBOUR, M.D.

Nicola Jabbour, M.D. is a native of Syria who received his medical degree in 2001 from Tishreen University in Latakia, Syria.

“Toward the end of my education, I found myself interested in blood disorders and oncology care, and I decided to come to the United States because it was the leading country in research in this field,” he said.

He completed an internal medicine residency at the University of Illinois at Chicago in 2007 and then completed a hematology/oncology fellowship at the University of Connecticut in 2010. He established a major cancer program with the Appalachian Regional Hospital system in Hazard and also helped it to achieve CoC accreditation.

In July 2014, he was recruited by Dr. Thomas Baeker, a long-time physician who developed cancer care services in the community, to practice at Ephraim McDowell Commonwealth Cancer Center.
for genetic testing,” Jabbour explained. “Another noticeable difference is the clinical trials, as the accreditation requires that we enroll a certain percentage of our patients in clinical trials. Patients notice these differences and appreciate the enhanced care we are providing.”

Another requirement of the CoC accreditation is that the Cancer Center must do quality improvement studies each year. One study under way is examining the time between a patient’s consultation with a radiation oncologist and the date they actually begin radiation treatment, to ensure that the time is consistent with the standard recommended as a CoC accredited facility. Another study involved the fact that breast cancer patients were developing lymphedema in their upper extremity following breast cancer surgery.

“Now, every patient who has breast cancer surgery is evaluated by a physical therapy team that deals with this problem and immediately seen after surgery to prevent or delay this problem,” Jabbour said. “Our goal is to have meaningful studies about real problems and concerns. Those studies will always add an improvement to the standard of care provided.”

Looking to the future, Jabbour anticipates more improvements in terms of screening programs offered to the community, education of the care team (nurses, physicians, and therapists), diagnoses and treatment.

“One program I want to promote more is the lung cancer CT screening available at Ephraim McDowell Regional Medical Center,” Jabbour said. “It’s important to make our community more aware of these services, given the higher incidence of smoking and lung cancer rates in this area.”

Jabbour said patients who seek treatment at Ephraim McDowell Commonwealth Cancer Center appreciate the convenience of receiving treatment “basically at home”.

“Many times when patients go far away for treatment they tell us that they feel like they are a number, not a person or a patient,” he explained. “Being treated at home by a staff from the same area as you and that you may even know can make a huge difference when fighting such a disease as cancer. We are proud of the care we provide and know that it is the same care that our patients would receive at any other cancer center.”

Besides Jabbour, other board-certified hematology/oncology physicians practicing at Ephraim McDowell Commonwealth Cancer Center are Drs. Emmanuel Nidhiry and Aruna Arekapudi.
Ephraim McDowell James B. Haggin Hospital joins family

The Ephraim McDowell Health system expanded the number of its hospitals from two to three with the addition of Ephraim McDowell James B. Haggin Hospital into the Ephraim McDowell family of health care services. The 25-bed critical access hospital, located in Harrodsburg, joined the health system effective December 1.

Along with the Harrodsburg hospital, the acquisition also added three primary care clinics into the Ephraim McDowell Health family. Those clinics are Ephraim McDowell Dedman Primary Care, Ephraim McDowell Haggin Primary Care and Ephraim McDowell Mercer Pediatrics. The hospital also offers a Weekend Walk-in Clinic on Saturdays and Sundays.

Due to the ever changing health care reimbursements, government regulations and the cost of providing care, it is becoming more difficult for independent hospitals to operate. By joining the EMH system, the Harrodsburg hospital can take advantage of the strength of a system that now includes three hospitals and more than 50 non-hospital facilities that include clinical practices, diagnostics, rehabilitation, medical equipment stores, home health, child care, wellness facilities, and an independent/assisted living center.

TAYLOR (from page 8)

McDowell Commonwealth Cancer Center.

Taylor admits that she was terrified when she started the chemotherapy treatments, but said the physicians and staff were fantastic as they provided care to her. She specifically praised Debbie Allen, Jessie Cocanougher and Jada Brady, all of whom are certified oncology nurses.

“They explained every step of the treatment,” said Taylor, who has two grown children and two granddaughters. “All the staff were wonderful, seasoned nurses who knew what they were doing and they knew exactly what to say. Plus they are very spiritual-oriented in the care provided.”

Taylor never thought twice about seeking treatment at Ephraim McDowell Commonwealth Cancer Center, as she knew going to Lexington or a larger city would be a nightmare.

“The Cancer Center is just 10 minutes away from my home, so the convenience alone was a big help,” she said. “Parking is great, the bathrooms are accessible, there’s food to eat, and there’s always hats to wear when you get cold.” She also complimented the décor of the facility, which includes exterior walls of windows and stone along with a stone fireplace in the lobby, all of which were planned by the retired Dr. Thomas Baeker, a long-time hematologist/oncologist in the community.

Taylor admits that, before her cancer experience, she missed having a mammogram because her first granddaughter had just been born and she wanted only to focus on that. However, she stresses to other women the importance of having regular mammograms as well as being advocates for their care.

“Every minute is a minute that you can stop it,” she said. “Early detection is what saved my life, and I give God full credit.”

“Being treated at home by a staff from the same area as you and that you may even know can make a huge difference when fighting such a disease as cancer.”

— Dr. Nicola Jabbour
Hematologist/Oncologist
2017 Projects Funded
- da Vinci Surgical System ($1 million)
- EMRMC neoBlue blanket, for jaundiced babies ($3,377)
- McDowell Wellness Center pool lift ($500)
- Camp Can Do ($10,880)
- Camp Healthy Kids ($2,840)

Ephraim McDowell Health Care Foundation Funds

The **Good Works Fund** allows the Foundation to meet the immediate health needs of the communities we serve. This general fund supports projects in the areas of cancer care, cardiac care, and women’s health, among others. The fund also supports developing credentialed resident experts within clinical service lines.

The **Capital Pledges Fund** provides resources for capital projects throughout the Ephraim McDowell Health system.

The **Cardiac Initiatives Fund** will ensure Ephraim McDowell Health facilities continue to be equipped with state-of-the-art equipment and innovative technologies in the treatment of cardiac health issues.

The **Chaplain’s Fund** benefits our patients who cannot afford vital prescriptions and durable medical goods (walkers, crutches, etc.). This fund may also be used for our Associates who are in great need of financial assistance due to a dire situation.

Other monies received include grant funding and resources for scholarships and education, the Hope Clinic and Pharmacy (which benefits patients who are unable to afford care or medicine for chronic illnesses), Kids Can Do, Camp Can Do, and cancer education, prevention, early screening and detection, and state-of-the-art diagnostic equipment.

Total funding in 2017

$1,017,597
Ephraim McDowell Auxilians give big to da Vinci Robot

The EMRMC Auxiliary generously donated $100,000 towards the purchase of the da Vinci Surgical System this year. The Auxiliary has made significant contributions to the Foundation in the past, helping support large projects such as digital mammography and white boards in patient rooms. The Foundation appreciates the continuing support of the Auxiliary!

HAPPY HEART LUNCHEON: The Ephraim McDowell Health Care Foundation held its annual Happy Heart Luncheon on February 9. The event, aimed at raising awareness of women’s heart disease, featured a presentation on heart health from Dr. Sharat Koul, a glimpse into the life of Maria Montgomery, Miss Kentucky USA – 2009 (above) and finished with a splash as the McDowell Wellness Center Associates and members put on an aquatic fitness skit. The luncheon raised $23,351 for the cardiac initiatives fund.

LUMINOSITY 2017: On August 19, we raised a glass to Kentucky at Luminosity 2017, Celebrating the Bluegrass!

With a color scheme of blue and white, along with some mint julep rose centerpieces mixed in, the room looked festive and made it easy for our attendees to get in the spirit.

They danced along to the Straight Whiskey Band, enjoyed an open bar and a three-course meal, and bid on a variety of outstanding auction items, ultimately raising $44,925 for the Good Works Fund.
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Stronger together.

Not just a bigger health system. A better one.

Ephraim McDowell
James B. Haggin Hospital