

Cancer Initiatives and Activities in 2018

The Ephraim McDowell Regional Medical Center Cancer Committee has been very active throughout 2018. It is our second year since our program got accredited by the American College of Surgeons.

Of the many important programs our committee worked on this year, we would like to highlight and elaborate on a couple of them:

Prevention & Screening Program

As part of our commitment to our community, the Cancer Committee provided several prevention and screening programs throughout the year. Partnering with the Boyle County Health Department, two eight-week smoking cessation classes were offered in January and September. For the convenience of the patients, these classes were offered at 8 a.m. and 5:30 p.m. Also, a presentation about the importance of breast cancer screening was made at the Senior Citizens Center in October with about 50 people in attendance.

A monthly Cancer Support Group is available to anyone whose life has been touched by cancer. Average monthly attendance is 15 people. In addition, 26 screening fair events were provided in 2018, all including a colorectal cancer screening. At these events, we distributed 137 fecal occult blood test kits with 10 of 90 kits returned showing positive tests.

Program Goals

Each year, the Cancer Committee establishes clinical and programmatic goals. The Clinical Goal for 2018 is about making sure that our patients are taking their oral chemotherapy properly. One of our pharmacy staff members calls each patient starting new oral therapy 72 hours after starting the medicine to make sure that the patient understands how the medicine should be taken and to cover any concerns or questions the patient might have. Our patients find this program very helpful and supportive.

The Programmatic Goal is to establish a policy in our pathology department in order to run important panels of molecular and genetic tests automatically for certain tumors. The purpose of this program is to have all the data needed for the medical oncologist ready when they see the patient for the initial visit, so the treatment plan can be made as soon as possible.

Quality Improvement Studies

One of our quality improvement studies is to shorten the time interval between identification of an abnormal mammogram (BIRAD 4 or 5) and biopsy. Our goal is to make this time 14 days or less. The purpose of this study is to minimize the stress caused by an abnormal mammogram as much as possible and to establish the diagnosis much earlier.

Our goal is to continue working on these and many other programs in order to sustain the rapid growth of our cancer program at Ephraim McDowell Health. If you have any questions about Ephraim McDowell Health's cancer care programs, please contact us at (859) 236-2203.