



Cancer Care Times Three

Over the past twenty years, Tracey Ottaviano of Port Colborne received care at Juravinski Hospital and Cancer Centre for three different types of cancer.

“I was impressed by the compassionate care I received each time,” says Tracey. “Receiving treatment for three different kinds of cancer over the years demonstrates the wide range of their expertise.”

Tracey’s journey began when she was diagnosed with breast cancer in 2001.

(Continued on page 2)

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(Continued from page 1) “I was shocked to receive the diagnosis, especially since there was no history of it in my family,” recalls Tracey. “I underwent chemotherapy and radiation treatment at Juravinski Hospital and Cancer Centre, which proved successful.”

Tracey was diagnosed with breast cancer once again in 2009. This was not a reoccurrence, but a completely different form of breast cancer.

“I underwent chemo once again, but luckily I didn’t need radiation,” says Tracey. “This time, I also had a double mastectomy and I underwent reconstructive surgeries. Unfortunately though, that wasn’t the end of my cancer journey.”

Fast-forward to 2017, when Tracey began to experience severe stomach cramps in the middle of the night. She felt nauseous and became extremely pale. Her family physician ordered a pelvic ultrasound, which revealed an unusual thickening of her uterus.

“After a biopsy, I was diagnosed with a rare form of endometrial cancer that spread to the right ovary,” explains Tracey. “I underwent surgery at Juravinski Hospital and Cancer Centre.”

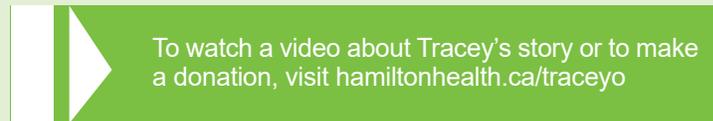
The procedure had its shares of risks, and when Tracey lost consciousness due to internal bleeding, she needed three blood transfusions.



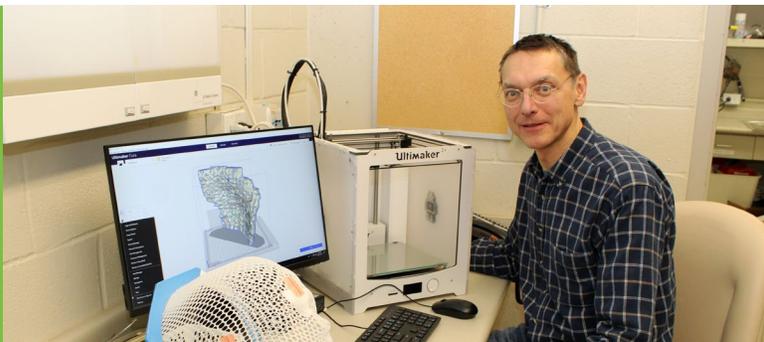
The operation was successful, and that was followed by chemotherapy and radiation. “Luckily, I was able to attend my daughter’s wedding during a brief gap between radiation and my second round of chemo.”

Tracey continues to visit Juravinski Hospital and Cancer Centre every six months for follow-up care.

“I’m doing extremely well nowadays,” she says. “Thanks to the amazing doctors, nurses and specialists who took care of me, I’m back to an active life that includes yoga, Pilates and lots of quality time with my family. I see every day as a gift.”



Targeting Treatment with Radiation



Radiation can be a powerful tool for killing cancer cells when administered to the right areas at the appropriate doses.

Proceeds from our 2020 gala, *Reel Rhapsody*, are funding a new research project that will enhance the care of patients with head and neck cancers at Juravinski Hospital and Cancer Centre.

“Our study involves using a 3D printer to automate the design and fabrication of a material called bolus,” says Dr. Orest Ostapiak, Senior Medical Physicist. “Made

of plant-based starches, bolus is custom-made for each patient and is placed over areas of the skin that require full doses of radiation.”

Bolus helps radiation interact with skin more efficiently. The required size, shape and thickness of each patient’s bolus can be produced with extreme accuracy and consistency using the 3D printer.

To ensure appropriate radiation doses, the treatment area is geometrically mapped during the radiation-planning stage. Translating that geometry to a bolus has traditionally been a manual process, which can result in imprecise coverage. The use of the 3D printer will ensure patient safety and maximize effectiveness of treatment by targeting radiation specifically where needed.

Research will be conducted to refine bolus design, which will improve patient comfort, workflow efficiency and placement accuracy. Based on the outcome of this work, the team will explore other novel applications of 3D printing in radiation therapy.

Unique Nurse Practitioner Fellowship

Juravinski Hospital and Cancer Centre launched a Nurse Practitioner (NP) Fellowship Program in Complex Malignant Hematology (CMH), the first of its kind in Canada, thanks to a \$1.5-million endowment gift by the late Ron Clark and his wife Nancy. This fellowship is another chapter in Hamilton Health Sciences' accomplished history and continued leadership in blood-cancer care.

Jessica Rebeiro, NP, has been granted the very first *Ron & Nancy Clark Nurse Practitioner Fellowship* in Hematology. In this year-long role, she will make a vital difference in the field of CMH, which incorporates the diagnosis, treatment and care of patients who are diagnosed with leukemia, lymphoma, aplastic anemia or multiple myeloma.

Fellowships enable physicians to undertake additional medical training. Jessica will spend her term advancing knowledge, skills and competence as an NP in CMH. She will also lead an initiative aimed at improving patient care and processes in CMH.

"This fellowship means I have the opportunity to increase my expertise as an NP in order to provide the best care that I can to patients with blood cancers," says Jessica.



The fellowship project team: Denise Bryant-Lukosius RN PhD, Clinician Scientist and Director of the Canadian Centre of Excellence in Oncology APN (OAPN); Kim Alvarado, Director of Oncology, Critical Care & Palliative Care Program; Margaret Forbes NP, *Ron & Nancy Clark NP Fellowship* Program Lead; Jessica Rebeiro NP, the inaugural NP Fellow of the *Ron & Nancy Clark NP Fellowship*; Kari Kolm NP in Hematology and NP Fellow Mentor; and Jennifer Lounsbury, Chief of Interprofessional Practice

Supporting Glioblastoma Patients

There is nothing straightforward about glioblastoma, the most common type of brain cancer.

Glioblastoma is aggressive and treatment options are limited. Surgery increases the risk of damage to other areas of the brain, while many medications are unable to break the brain/blood barrier to reach the tumour.

Juravinski Hospital and Cancer Centre is amongst a handful of cancer centres in Ontario currently treating glioblastoma. Care is provided for four to five new patients each week, resulting in more than 260 new patients a year.

"Every patient is cared for not by a single physician, but by the entire multidisciplinary team," says

Dr. Crystal Hann, Chair of the Disease Site Team for brain cancers.

The integrated care team includes oncologists, radiation oncologists, surgeons and other specialists. They collaborate weekly to ensure patients receive optimal care plans. Patients undergoing treatment for glioblastoma are typically treated with a combination of chemotherapy and radiation.

As one of the top research hospitals in Canada, teams at the site are also leading the way with ground-breaking research. Two innovative clinical trials related to glioblastoma are currently underway at Juravinski Hospital and Cancer Centre.





Juravinski Hospital
and Cancer Centre
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Friday, October 2 Dyment's Farm

416 Fallsview Rd E, Dundas

A walk to shine a light on cancer

hamiltonhealth.ca/illuminight



Register and fundraise in support of the Cancer Program at Juravinski Hospital and Cancer Centre!

Urgent Cancer Care When Needed Most

Pain, nausea and vomiting are an unpleasant reality for many cancer patients. Sometimes these symptoms and side effects don't require a visit to an emergency department, but they do need to be managed before a patient's next scheduled appointment.

The Rapid Evaluation and Symptom Support Cancer Unit (RESSCU) is an urgent care centre at Juravinski Hospital and Cancer Centre that sees about 100 patients every month. Patient volumes have been increasing significantly since its opening in 2015.

"RESSCU provides the right care at the right place at the right time," says Georgia Georgiou, Director of the Integrated Cancer Treatment Services Program. "Under the leadership of our nurse practitioners, a specialized care team in RESSCU provides tailored care on an outpatient basis. This helps to reduce visits to the Emergency Department, and reduce avoidable hospital admissions."

Going to RESSCU is more convenient for patients and it ensures they are seen by cancer specialists. "The service was recognized as a Leading Practice by Accreditation Canada in 2019 for improving outcomes and accessibility for patients," says Georgia.

RESSCU helps manage patient concerns or symptoms in an environment that includes clinical areas and remote monitoring. Support by phone is also available, which eliminates travel and provides immediate connection with a clinician.

"We're grateful that proceeds from 2019's *Illuminight* are enabling us to expand the clinical space, helping us provide better care for the increasing number of patients."



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