NMMC Cancer Center Receives Accreditation by CoC

The Commission on Cancer (CoC) of the American College of Surgeons (ACoS) has granted Three-Year Accreditation with Commendation to the Cancer Program at North Mississippi Medical Center in Tupelo. NMMC is one of only two cancer treatment facilities in north Mississippi to have this accreditation.

The NMMC Cancer Center received this accreditation after an on-site evaluation was completed by a physician surveyor. Accredited facilities demonstrate compliance with standards that represent the full scope of a cancer program, including cancer committee leadership, cancer data management, clinical services, research, community outreach and quality improvement.

Established in 1922 by the American College of Surgeons, the CoC is a consortium of professional organizations dedicated to improving survival rates and quality of life for cancer patients through standard-setting, prevention, research, education and the monitoring of comprehensive, quality care. Its membership includes Fellows of the American College of Surgeons and 42 national organizations that reflect the full spectrum of cancer care.

Accreditation by the CoC is given only to those facilities that have voluntarily committed to providing the highest level of quality cancer care and that undergo a rigorous evaluation process and review of their performance. To maintain accreditation, facilities must undergo an on-site review every three years.

Receiving care at a CoC-accredited cancer program ensures that a patient will have access to:
- Comprehensive care, including a range of state-of-the-art services and equipment
- A multispecialty team approach to coordinate the best treatment options
- Information about ongoing clinical trials and new treatment options
- Access to cancer-related information, education and support
- A cancer registry that collects data on type and stage of cancer and treatment results and offers lifelong patient follow-up
- Ongoing monitoring and improvement of care.

For more information about the Commission on Cancer, visit www.facs.org/cancer/index.html. For more information on the NMMC Cancer Center, visit www.nmhs.net/cancer_center, or call (662) 377-4077.

NMMC and Urology Professional Association to Offer Free Prostate Screenings

In an effort to promote the importance of men’s health, NMMC and Urology Professional Association will offer free prostate screenings on Saturdays, Sept. 18 and 25.

The free screenings will be available by appointment beginning at 8 a.m. at the NMMC Cancer Center, located at 990 S. Madison St. Interested individuals are asked to make an appointment for the free prostate screenings by calling (662) 377-7100. Limited appointments are available for each Saturday screening. This screening is for men who do not see a urologist on a regular basis.

Screenings will consist of a prostate exam by a urologist and a prostate specific antigen or PSA test. The test requires drawing blood to measure the body’s level of prostate specific antigen. PSA is a protein produced by prostate cells that can be elevated in the blood of men with prostate cancer.
New guidelines from the American Urological Association now recommend that men be offered an initial screening PSA and rectal exam at age 40. Physicians associated with Urology Professional Association will conduct the screenings.

Test results will be mailed to participants. Urology Professional Association will contact individuals who need to seek follow-up care. The screenings are free, but individuals or their insurance carriers will be responsible for covering the cost of any follow-up office visits and treatment.

For more information on the free prostate screenings, call (662) 377-7100 or 1-800-THE DESK (1-800-843-3375).

**Tupelo Pulmonologist Elected Board Chairman of State Medical Association**

*James A. Rish, M.D.*, of Tupelo was elected chair of the Board of Trustees for the Mississippi State Medical Association (MSMA) at the organization’s 142nd Annual Session, held in Natchez. Dr. Rish was also selected by the group as a delegate to the American Medical Association.

Dr. Rish graduated magna cum laude with a bachelor's degree from the University of Mississippi in Oxford in 1983. He received his medical degree from the University of Mississippi School of Medicine in Jackson in 1989 and completed residency training at the University of Arkansas for Medical Sciences in 1992. He completed his fellowship training in the division of Pulmonary and Critical Medicine at the University of Arkansas for Medical Sciences in 1995.

Dr. Rish has been in private practice with Pulmonary Consultants since 1995. He is a Diplomate of the American Board of Internal Medicine, and holds certificates in internal medicine, pulmonary diseases and critical care medicine. Dr. Rish is a member of the American Thoracic Society, the American Medical Association, the Southern Medical Association and the Mississippi State Medical Association. He is past president of the Northeast Mississippi Medical Society. He is currently on the board of trustees of the Mississippi State Medical Association. He is also on the board of trustees and executive committee of the Mississippi Physician Care Network.

**Calhoun County Medical Clinic Welcomes New Doctor**

Calhoun County Medical Clinic welcomes new family practice physician *Ava Stegall, D.O.*

Dr. Stegall joins Paola Suarez, M.D., at the clinic. Prior to beginning her practice in Calhoun City, Dr. Stegall was a staff physician with the Florida Department of Health in the Florida Keys.

Dr. Stegall earned a bachelor's degree in microbiology from Mississippi State University in Starkville, and completed her medical training at the University of Health Sciences in Kansas City, Mo., in 1985. She went on to complete a rotating internship at Humana Hospital of the Palm Beaches in West Palm Beach, Fla.

She is board certified in family medicine, and is a member of the American Osteopathic Association and the American College of Osteopathic Family Practice.

**Pontotoc Medical Clinic Welcomes New Doctor**

Pontotoc Medical Clinic is pleased to announce that *Steven N. Dirmeyer, M.D.*, is joining the clinic for the practice of family medicine.

Dr. Dirmeyer joins Drs. Stephen Montgomery, Andrea Warren and Dale Wing at the clinic.

Dr. Dirmeyer earned a bachelor's degree in biology from Mississippi College in Clinton. He received his medical training at the University of Mississippi Medical Center School of Medicine in Jackson, and he completed his internship and residency in family medicine at the University of Alabama at Tuscaloosa.

**Menopause Topic of September Lunchtime Learning**

Menopause will be the topic of *A Woman's Place Lunchtime Learning Series* at noon Tuesday, Sept. 21, at First Baptist Church Fellowship Hall. Brandy Patterson, M.D., of Obstetrics-Gynecology Associates, P.A. will be the featured speaker.

Advance registration is required for the lunchtime program, which is sponsored by the Health Care Foundation of North Mississippi. Lunch will be provided for $5 for those who pre-register by Wednesday, Sept. 15. To register or to learn more about upcoming lunchtime learning programs, call 1-800-THE DESK (1-800-843-3375). This program is offered as part of the Live Well community health initiative.
NICU Reunion Planned

The North Mississippi Medical Center Women’s Hospital invites all Neonatal Intensive Care Unit “graduates” to a reunion Saturday, Sept. 25. Children who were treated in the NICU, as well as their families, are invited to join the fun from 10 a.m. to noon at the Women’s Hospital, 4566 S. Eason Blvd. The free event offers refreshments games and prizes, but the main draw is to see the progress these children have made.

The 34-bed intensive care nursery treats patients born at the Women’s Hospital as well as those transferred in from other area hospitals by NMMC’s mobile intensive care unit, an ambulance specially equipped for neonatal transport. More than 300 infants are admitted to the NICU annually, and more than one-fourth of them are transported to Tupelo from area hospitals. The neonatal transport team includes registered nurses who specialize in neonatal intensive care as well as respiratory therapists.

For more information on the NICU Reunion, call 1-800-THE DESK (1-800-843-3375).

IRB Approves, Renews Studies

The NMHS Institutional Review Board (IRB) currently oversees more than 90 biomedical and behavioral studies. The IRB meets monthly and the following studies were approved at the August meeting.

New Studies
Study: A Phase III, Open-label, Randomized, Multicenter Study of the Effects of Leukocyte Interleukin, Injection (Multikine) plus Standard of Care (Surgery plus Radiotherapy or Surgery plus Concurrent Chemoradiotherapy) in Subjects with Advanced Primary Squamous Cell Carcinoma of the Oral Cavity/Soft Palate versus Standard of Care Only (CS001P3)
Investigators: Julian Hill, M.D. (PI); Hematology and Oncology Associates; Ear, Nose and Throat Physicians of North Mississippi, P.A.
Summary: The primary purpose of this study is to determine whether Leukocyte Interleukin Injection (LI) in combination with Cyclophosphamide, Indomethacin and nutritional supplementation with multivitamins plus zinc, given prior to standard of care therapy, will increase the overall survival of subjects beyond that currently achieved with standard of care alone.

Study: A Randomized, Double-blind, Placebo-controlled Study to Evaluate the Long-term Safety and Efficacy of Darbepoetin Alfa Administered at 500 mg Once-Every-Three-Weeks in Anemic Subjects with Advanced Stage Non-small Cell Lung Cancer Receiving Multi-cycle Chemotherapy (20070782)
Investigators: Christopher Croot, M.D. (PI); Hematology and Oncology Associates
Summary: The purpose of this study is to determine the safety of darbepoetin alfa, including effects on survival and cancer progression, as well as the need for blood transfusions.

Study: A Randomized, Double-blind, Triple-dummy Trial to Compare the Efficacy of Otamixaban with Unfractionated Heparin plus Eptifibatide, in Patients with Unstable Angina/Non ST Segment Elevation Myocardial Infarction Scheduled to Undergo an Early Invasive Strategy (EFC6204)
Investigators: Barry Bertolet, M.D. (PI); Cardiology Associates of North Mississippi
Summary: The purpose of this study is to determine how well an investigational drug, otamixaban, works compared to unfractionated heparin and eptifibatide in addition to aspirin and clopidogrel or another antiplatelet agent.

Study Renewals
Study: A Multicenter, Open-label, Exploratory Study of Bcr-Abl Kinetics in Adult Patients on Nilotinib with Philadelphia Chromosome Positive (Ph+) Chronic Myelogenous Leukemia in Chronic Phase (CML-CP) and a Suboptimal Molecular Response to Imatinib (CAMN107AUS09)
Investigators: Christopher Croot, M.D. (PI); Hematology and Oncology Associates
Summary: The purpose of this study is to investigate the ability of nilotinib to decrease Bcr-Abl levels in blood. Enrollment is open.

Study: A Randomized, Double-blind, Placebo-controlled Trial of Neratinib (HKI-272) after Trastuzumab in Women with Early-stage HER-2/neu Overexpressed/Amplified Breast Cancer (3144A2-3004-WW)
Investigators: Christopher Croot, M.D. (PI); Hematology and Oncology Associates
Summary: The purpose of this study is to investigate whether neratinib can reduce the risk of previously diagnosed HER-2 positive breast cancer from returning after treatment with trastuzumab. Enrollment is open.
Continuing Medical Education

The CME Program is based in the NMMC Education Department and works to provide quality educational programming that will meet general as well as specific professional needs. Please call (662) 377-3826 or the Consult Line at 1-800-952-8101 if you have CME comments and/or suggestions. Select CME programs are by invitation only and are also subject to change. Please RSVP upon receipt of invitation. Visit www.nmhs.net/physicians_portal/cme.php for more information.

September 10
Infection Control Conference
8 a.m., NMMC Education Center
CME/CE credit offered
For more information, call Julie McCord at (662) 377-3603.

September 10
Neuro/Radiology Case Studies
Dr. Robert Becker and Dr. Hunt Bobo
1 p.m., NMMC Education Center Room 7/8

September 16
Medical Ethics Committee
Case Study on Undocumented Residents and Their Care
Bruce Toppin, J.D.
7:30 a.m., NMMC North Education Center

September 17
Geriatric Conference
8 a.m., NMMC North Education Center
For more information, call Tracie Maxey at (662) 377-3826.

September 22-23
ACLS 2-Day Provider Course
8 a.m.-4:30 p.m., NMMC North Education Center
NMMC employees, $25; others $120
Application required to attend; CME credit issued
For more information or to preregister, call (662) 377-3421.

September 23
Fall Cardiovascular Conference
8 a.m., NMMC North Education Center
For more information, call Susan Oliver at (662) 377-3654.