

TO MEDIA

CONTACT PERSON: Robin Jennings
Director, Communications
Excelsa Health
724-837-1781 TEL
724-516-4483 CELL

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

EXCELA HEALTH LATROBE HOSPITAL COMMENDED AS COMPREHENSIVE CANCER PROGRAM DURING ACCREDITATION SURVEY

LATROBE, PA, July 6, 2010 ... The Commission on Cancer (CoC) of the American College of Surgeons (ACoS) has granted Three-Year Accreditation with Commendation to the Cancer Program at Excelsa Health Latrobe Hospital.

A facility receives accreditation with commendation following the on-site evaluation by a physician surveyor during which the facility demonstrates a level of compliance with one or more standards that represent the full scope of the cancer program. This includes cancer committee leadership, cancer data management, clinical services, research, community outreach and quality improvement. In addition, a facility receives a compliance rating for other services.

“Maintaining accreditation with commendation requires both a demonstrative commitment to quality and vigilant attention to detail,” said Peggy Hayden, president of Excelsa Latrobe. “Working collaboratively with our cancer treatment specialists, we adhere to the highest standards in caring for our community.”

Approval 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 approval, facilities with CoC-approved cancer programs must undergo an on-site review every three years.

The approval is granted to only one in every four cancer programs at hospitals across the United States. It recognizes the quality of comprehensive patient care and commitment to providing access to all of the various medical specialists involved in diagnosing and treating cancer.

Established in 1922 by the ACoS, 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 (FACS) and 42 national organizations that reflect the full spectrum of cancer care.

The core functions of the CoC include setting standards for quality, multidisciplinary cancer patient care; surveying facilities to evaluate compliance with the 36 CoC standards; collecting standardized and quality data from approved facilities; and using the data to develop effective educational interventions to improve cancer care outcomes at the national, state and local level.

The American Cancer Society (ACS) estimates that more than 1.4 million cases of cancer will be diagnosed in 2010. There are currently more than 1,400 CoC-approved cancer programs in the United States and Puerto Rico, representing close to 25 percent of all hospitals. This 25 percent of hospitals diagnose and/or treat 80 percent of newly diagnosed cancer patients each year. In addition, a national network of more than 1,600 volunteer Cancer Liaison Physicians provides leadership and support for the CoC Accreditation Program and other CoC activities at these facilities.

General surgeon Daniel Clark, MD, FACS, in practice with Latrobe Surgical Group, is the Cancer Liaison Physician for Excelsa Health Latrobe Hospital.

Receiving care at a CoC-approved cancer program ensures that patients receive:

- 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 cancers and treatment results and offers lifelong patient follow-up
- Ongoing monitoring and improvement of care

And, most importantly,

- Quality care close to home

Cancer patient data are reported by each CoC-accredited cancer program to the CoC's National Cancer Data Base (NCDB), a joint CoC/American Cancer Society program. The NCDB current contains patient demographics, tumor characteristics, and treatment and outcomes information for more than 18 million cancer patients diagnosed and treated at hospital cancer programs in the United States between 1985 and 2004. These data account for approximately two-thirds of newly diagnosed cancer cases in the U.S. each year.

Through an exclusive partnership with the American Cancer Society, the CoC provides the public with information on the resources, services, and cancer treatment experience for each CoC-approved cancer program. This information is shared with the public on the ACS Web site at www.cancer.org and through its National Cancer Information Center at 1-800-ACS-2345.

For more information about the Commission on Cancer, visit the Web site at www.facs.org/cancer/index.html .