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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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**EXCELA HEALTH CANCER PROGRAM'S ACCREDITATION REAFFIRMED**

*Longstanding Adherence To National Standards Celebrated*

**LATROBE, PA, July 20, 2021** ... The Commission on Cancer (CoC) of the American College of Surgeons (ACoS) once again has granted Three-Year Accreditation to the Cancer Program at Excela Health Latrobe Hospital.

To earn voluntary CoC accreditation, a cancer program must meet or exceed 34 CoC quality care standards, be evaluated every three years through a survey process, and maintain levels of excellence in the delivery of comprehensive patient-centered care.

As a CoC-accredited cancer center, Excela Health takes a multidisciplinary approach to treating cancer as a complex group of diseases that requires consultation among surgeons, medical and radiation oncologists, diagnostic radiologists, pathologists and other cancer specialists. This multidisciplinary partnership results in improved patient care.

Excela Health offers cancer services as a joint venture with UPMC Hillman Cancer Center, through the Arnold Palmer Pavilion's medical and radiation oncology program which began more than 20 years ago. Excela Latrobe Hospital is the site of various cancer testing and treatment modalities, and the home to Excela's Surgical Institute where cancer is a key focus for the

Excelsa surgeons. Heading the Surgical Institute is Excelsa thoracic surgeon Michael Szwerz, MD, FACS, Excelsa's physician liaison to the accreditation program.

The CoC Accreditation Program provides the framework for Excelsa Health to continuously improve its quality of patient care through various cancer-related programs that focus on the full spectrum of cancer care including prevention, early diagnosis, cancer staging, optimal treatment, rehabilitation, lifelong follow-up for recurrent disease, and end-of-life care. When patients receive care at a CoC facility, they also have access to information on clinical trials and new treatments, genetic counseling, and patient centered services including psychosocial support, a patient navigation process, and a survivorship care plan that documents the care each patient receives and seeks to improve cancer survivors' quality of life.

Like all CoC-accredited facilities, Excelsa Health maintains a cancer registry and contributes data to the National Cancer Data Base (NCDB), a joint program of the CoC and American Cancer Society (ACS). This nationwide oncology outcomes database is the largest clinical disease registry in the world. Data on all types of cancer are tracked and analyzed through the NCDB and used to explore trends in cancer care. CoC-accredited cancer centers, in turn, have access to information derived from this type of data analysis, which is used to create national, regional, and state benchmark reports. These reports help CoC facilities with their quality improvement efforts.

There are currently more than 1,500 CoC-accredited cancer programs in the United States and Puerto Rico, representing 30 percent of all hospitals. CoC-accredited facilities diagnose and/or treat more than 70 percent of all newly diagnosed cancer patients. When cancer patients choose to seek care locally at a CoC-accredited cancer center, they are gaining access to comprehensive, state-of-the-art cancer care close to home. The CoC provides the public with information on the resources, services, and cancer treatment experience for each CoC-accredited cancer program through the CoC Hospital Locator at <https://www.facs.org/search/cancer-programs>.

Established in 1922 by the American College of Surgeons, the CoC is a consortium of professional organizations dedicated to improving patient

outcomes 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. For more information, visit: [www.facs.org/cancer](http://www.facs.org/cancer)