



# Defining the Future of GU Oncology Care

UNC Multidisciplinary Urologic Oncology Program



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## **Kenneth Harris, Cancer Survivor**

*Ken Harris is from the small town of Hertford, NC. When he found out that he had prostate cancer, he knew he'd have to travel for an operation, but he didn't want just any operation. Doing online research, he became aware of a new robotic procedure for prostate removal at UNC in Chapel Hill that limited recovery time and made blood transfusion unnecessary, factors important to Ken.*

*The day after the operation, Ken was sitting in his hospital bed waiting to be released when both his wheelchair and lunch arrived at the same time. So he had his lunch to go!*

## **The Program**

In the 10 years since its establishment at UNC Lineberger Cancer Center, the Multidisciplinary Genitourinary Oncology program has rapidly developed to become a regional and national leader in the care of patients with prostate, bladder, kidney and testis cancer. The breadth and depth of services has expanded over our first 7000 cases to provide over 1000 new patients each year with:

- *Access to world-renowned cancer specialists in urologic surgery, medical oncology, radiation oncology and clinical trials*
- *Efficient and comprehensive assessment and expert panel discussion of each case, including independent review of pathologic and radiographic studies. After evaluation we will recommend an individualized treatment plan, which may incorporate innovative clinical trials and minimally invasive surgical techniques*
- *Close communication and collaboration with primary care and referring physicians*
- *Comprehensive multidisciplinary support, including nurse navigators, nutritionists, counselors and social workers, as well as educational materials for patients and their families*

By combining state-of-the-art cancer care with cutting-edge scientific research, UNC's Multidisciplinary Urologic Oncology program offers a comprehensive approach to cancer care. This ensures that each patient receives a personalized care plan, informed by the consideration of an expert panel intimately familiar with the patient and all relevant factors in his or her case.

## The Team Approach to Coordinated, Efficient, Patient-Centered Care

The Multidisciplinary Program in GU Oncology is a team of over 25 expert healthcare professionals who have dedicated their careers to fighting urologic cancer.

Our team assembles all relevant records and studies for consideration by the clinicians prior to the initial consultation. Any additional tests are scheduled the day of the visit to promote efficiency, then each of the relevant specialists meets with the patient and family in the same clinic space.

After the visit, all team members convene in our multidisciplinary boardroom for a detailed discussion of each case, including real-time review of pathology and radiology with experts from those specialties to effect timely, tailor-made management recommendations. Finally, the consensus recommendations are communicated to the patient, and all aspects of the treatment plan are scheduled and coordinated by program staff.

## The GU Oncology Team

Physician Staff:

- 4 Dedicated GU Medical Oncologists
- 2 Dedicated GU Radiation Oncologists
- 3 Dedicated Urologic Oncologists (Raj Pruthi, Eric Wallen, Matthew Nielsen)
- Dedicated Senior Radiology and Pathology Faculty

Multidisciplinary Supportive Services Staff:

- Dedicated GU Oncology Nurse Navigators
- Multidisciplinary Cancer Care Coordinators
- Social Workers
- GU Specific Clinical Trial Nurses

In addition, The UNC Lineberger Comprehensive Cancer Support Program provides compassionate and effective programs to help cancer patients and their caregivers cope with diagnosis, treatment, recovery and survivorship. The program includes: Mental Health Services, Cancer Genetics Counseling, Nutrition, Pharmacy and Medication Consultation, Smoking Cessation, and Survivorship Programs and Services.



## A Welcoming Environment for Cancer Patients

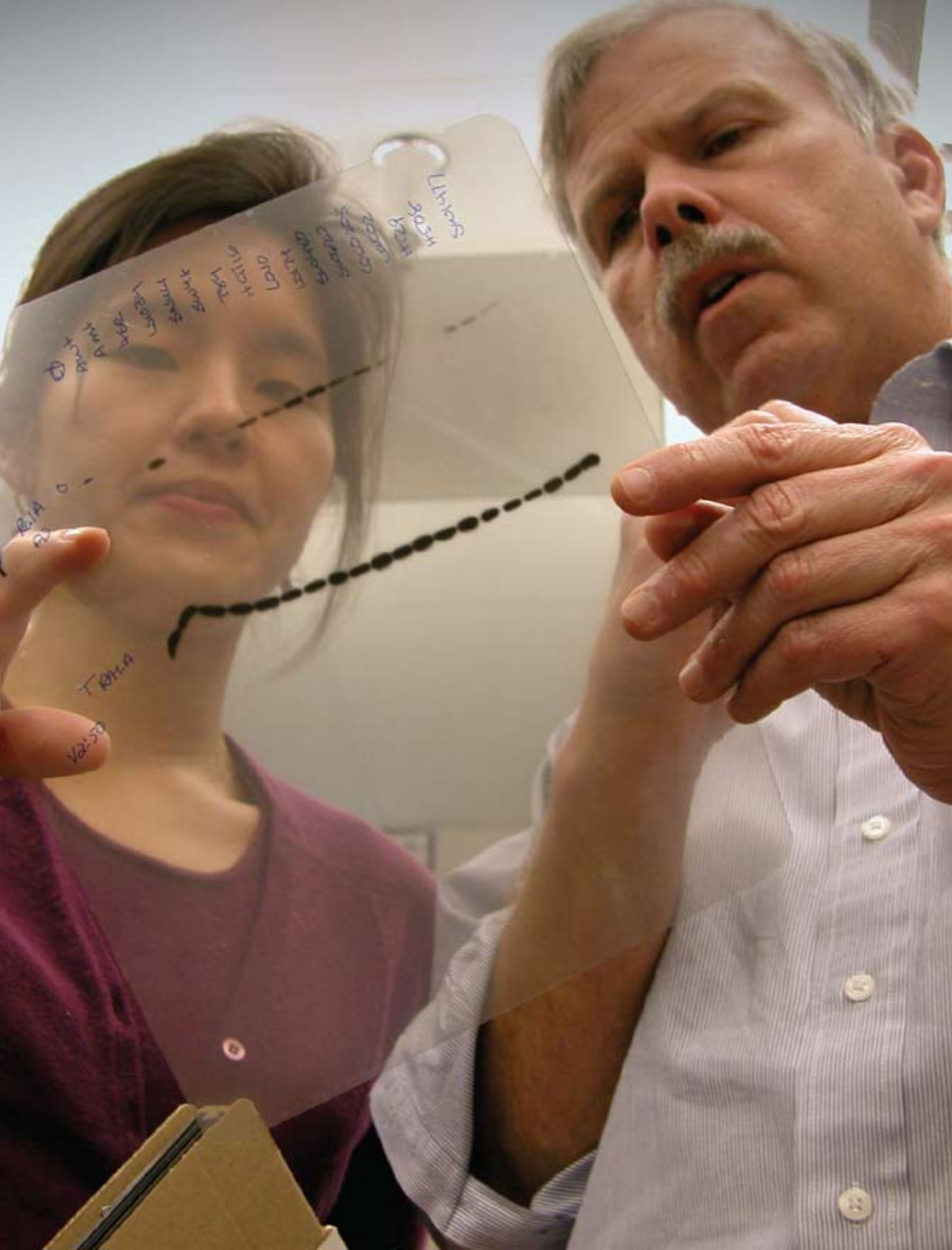
UNC Lineberger Comprehensive Cancer Center is the new face of cancer research and treatment in North Carolina. As one of only 40 NCI-designated Comprehensive Cancer Centers nationwide, UNC is at the center of an unprecedented effort to make strides against cancer and the suffering it causes.

Opened in the fall of 2009, the N.C. Cancer Hospital is the new clinical home of the Cancer Center, where UNC Lineberger faculty treat cancer patients, conduct research, develop and direct statewide programs in cancer control and prevention, and train future physicians, nurses and scientists. Accommodating more than 100,000 patient visits each year, UNC Lineberger/N.C. Cancer Hospital physicians treat patients from throughout the Southeastern U.S. and beyond.

## Experienced Care, Positive Outcomes

At UNC, our specialists see over 1000 new patients with urologic malignancies each year. In a field where experience and patient volume is directly correlated with positive patient outcomes, the Multidisciplinary Program offers a distinct advantage to our patients.

UNC researchers recently published a study in the journal Urologic Oncology demonstrating the positive impact of a team approach to the management of urologic cancer patients. The study examined 269 patients seen and evaluated in the Multidisciplinary Genitourinary Oncology Program at UNC and found that a multidisciplinary team approach resulted in positive changes to diagnostic and management decisions in up to 44% of patients with newly diagnosed urologic cancers, underscoring the dramatic potential for clinical impact through the multidisciplinary approach.



## **Translational Research and Innovation: Defining the Future of GU Oncology Care**

The values and purposes underlying our commitment to optimal patient care naturally motivate our dedication to innovation and the discovery of the treatments of tomorrow. UNC urologic oncologists have received national and international recognition for innovation in the development and application of robotic techniques and other minimally-invasive procedures to reduce the impact of treatment on quality of life for patients with these complicated conditions. In addition, patients are offered radiation therapy with the latest state-of-the-art equipment, including Cyberknife radiosurgery, as well as ablative therapies for prostate, bladder and kidney cancers.

In parallel to the high-volume clinical practice, UNC's physician-scientists conduct research on various aspects of prostate and other urologic cancers. This research has been recognized by peer-reviewed external funding support from the National Institutes of Health, the National Cancer Institute, the Department of Defense, the Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality, the Doris Duke Foundation and private industry. Our multidisciplinary approach has made it efficient to bring novel treatment approaches to GU cancer patients who need them most, with recent accomplishments that include the completion of two innovative studies evaluating new targeted therapies in combination with surgery for high-risk prostate, bladder and kidney cancer. These important trials exemplify the benefits of the close collaborative relationship among the different specialties in the UNC GU oncology group, both in helping innovate the cutting-edge treatments of today, and in bringing potential new advances in multidisciplinary care to the front lines for our patients.

**For further questions, or to make an appointment with our multidisciplinary cancer care coordinator, please call us at 919-966-9696.**



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