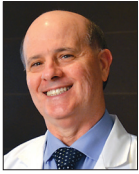


# Willis-Knighton CANCER CENTER

**2019 Annual Report**



# MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIRMAN



**Robert Nickelson, MD**

Chairman, Cancer Committee | *Willis-Knighton Cancer Center*

**W**illis-Knighton Cancer Center has always been and always will be about putting our patients and their loved ones first, and as I reflect on 2019, I find it more important than ever to put a true definition to these inspirational words. When WKCC opened its doors more than 20 years ago, surrounding patients with an integrative and expert team of physicians and clinicians was a novel concept. This ability to pair specialized oncology services with compassionate care was something that could rarely be found outside our walls. Today, I am proud to look out at the healthcare oncology landscape and see how medical institutions around the country are starting to embrace this concept.

The Willis-Knighton Cancer Center offers the most comprehensive, technologically advanced treatments in the region. We are the first and ONLY center in the state of Louisiana to offer proton therapy. In addition, the Department of Radiation Oncology offers state-of-the-art high dose radiation treatments that avoid damaging healthy tissue and successfully treat all stages of cancer. Our robust center has seven medical oncologists, five radiation oncologists, two gynecologic surgeons and one gynecologic oncologist/surgeon. This strong team gives our center the clinical expertise and cancer-fighting know-how.

## **Willis-Knighton Cancer Center is One Team-All Focused On You**

High-tech patient care with a multidisciplinary approach to treatment of cancer is the hallmark of the Willis-Knighton Cancer Center.

The center offers patients:

- Internationally recognized radiation oncology program, with leading-edge proton beam therapy center.
- Spacious, comfortable infusion therapy program
- Experienced and compassionate physicians and support staff
- Board certified medical physicists
- Physician offices on-site
- Laboratory services on-site
- Imaging (CT, MRI and PET-CT) on-site
- Support groups and services for patients and caregivers
- Convenient location just off Interstate 20 in Shreveport, Louisiana
- Distinguished accreditations— Commission on Cancer of the American College of Surgeons, American College of Radiology, American College of Radiation Oncology, Commission on Accreditation of Medical Physics Educational Programs

The Willis-Knighton Cancer Committee has worked hard throughout the year to put together a program that exemplifies our dedicated effort to align with our mission statement: “to continuously improve the health and well-being of the people we serve.”

The Cancer Committee is a multidisciplinary body comprised of medical oncologists, radiation oncologists and surgeons dedicated to cancer treatment, as well as radiologists and pathologists. This team is supported by other specialties such as physical therapy, nutrition services, social services and spiritual care. Administration and other staff round out our robust program.

This year’s annual report includes an analysis of our cancer statistics, the tumor conferences and news on various treatment options. We continue to have a dedicated cancer conference program that meets every week for general cancer, a biweekly breast conference and a weekly hepato-pancreato-biliary conference. These collectively provide a multidisciplinary approach to the care of our patients. Furthermore, the report will go into a high-level view of our supportive oncology program, which continues to complement our patients’ treatment for active, progressive or advanced disease. We will keep enhancing our services and coordination of care as we look forward to continued improvement in both delivery of care and improved access for our community.

I am encouraged by all that we have done in 2019, and could not be more proud of our team as we have been able to provide more than 3,200 new patients with unparalleled cancer care over the last year. As you read through our annual report, I hope that you are inspired by our patients, encouraged by our successes, and are as motivated as we are to make 2020 an even better year for our patients and all those fighting cancer throughout the world.

*We are thankful for our staff who are here every day, always available when needed to help us provide compassionate and evidence-based care.*

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "R. Nickelson MD".

*Dr. Robert Nickelson*

# WILLIS-KNIGHTON CANCER COMMITTEE

## 2019 Willis-Knighton Cancer Center Committee Members

These physicians and other health professionals were responsible for promoting a coordinated and multidisciplinary approach to cancer patient management.

### Physician Members

**Julie Cupp, MD** – Breast Surgeon

**Lane Rosen, MD** – Director, Radiation Oncology and Radiation Oncology Representative

**Jake Wang, MD** - Radiation Oncology Representative Alternate

**Joyce Feagin, MD** –Palliative Care Representative and Cancer Liaison Physician

**Ramin Zamani, MD** – Radiology

**Nihar Patel, MD** – Hematology/Oncology Representative

**Tyler Lash, MD** – Hematology/Oncology Representative Alternate

**Gregory Wellman, MD** – GI and Liver Pathology Working Group Chairman

**Robert Nickelson, MD** – Chairman, Cancer Committee

### Non-Physician Members

**Brianna Barrow** – Clinical Research Coordinator

**Michele Branch** – American Cancer Society Representative

**Santi Cook** – Rehabilitation Representative

**Eileen Czerwinski** – Care Manager and Coordinator, Psychosocial Services

**Jennifer Edwards, RN, BSN, OCN** – Survivorship Representative

**Debra Evans, RN** – Oncology Nursing Representative

**Krystal Jeffery, BSRT (R)(T)** – Radiation Oncology Representative & Quality Improvement Coordinator

**Sarah Larson** – Cancer Center Operations Manager and Community Outreach Coordinator

**Amber Mandino, RHIA, CTR** – Cancer Registry Manager and Cancer Registry Quality Coordinator

**Linda Marion, LDN, RD, CSO** – Clinical Oncology Dietitian

**SaraBeth Massey, RHIA, CTR** – Cancer Registry Representative

**Donyea McNabb, RHIA, CTR** – RN-Home Health/Hospice Representative

**Mary Nordberg, Phd** – Genetics Educator

**Cassie Phillips, CTR** – Cancer Conference Coordinator

**Vince Sedminik** – Cancer Center Director

**Patricia Thomas, RN** – Patient Care Coordinator, Inpatient Oncology

# CANCER REGISTRY

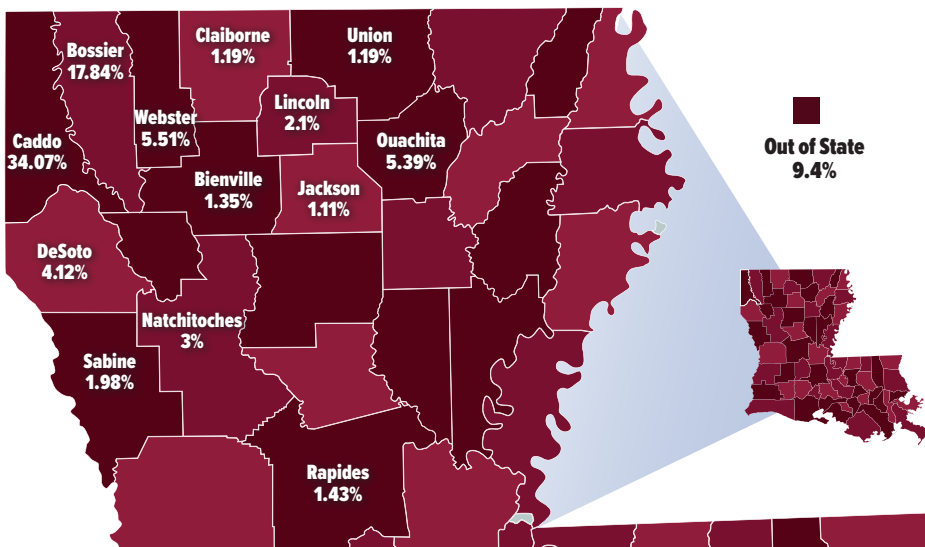
Since cancer is one of the leading causes of death in the U.S., health systems have been required to collect data on cancer cases from diagnosis through survivorship to help identify trends and ultimately improve care for patients battling cancer. Many hospitals, including Willis-Knighton, have comprehensive cancer registries to collect this data. Four

tumor registrars on staff collect accurate and complete cancer data on all Willis-Knighton cancer patients. This includes a complete summary of a patient's history, diagnosis, treatment and status throughout his or her life. The data is used to produce statistics on the occurrence of cancer in a defined population and to provide the basis for assessing and

monitoring the impact of cancer on the public. (All registry statistics are from 2018).

The data is used internally and is also reported to local, state and national cancer agencies where it is used in the planning and evaluation of cancer prevention and cancer control programs.

## Percentage of Cases



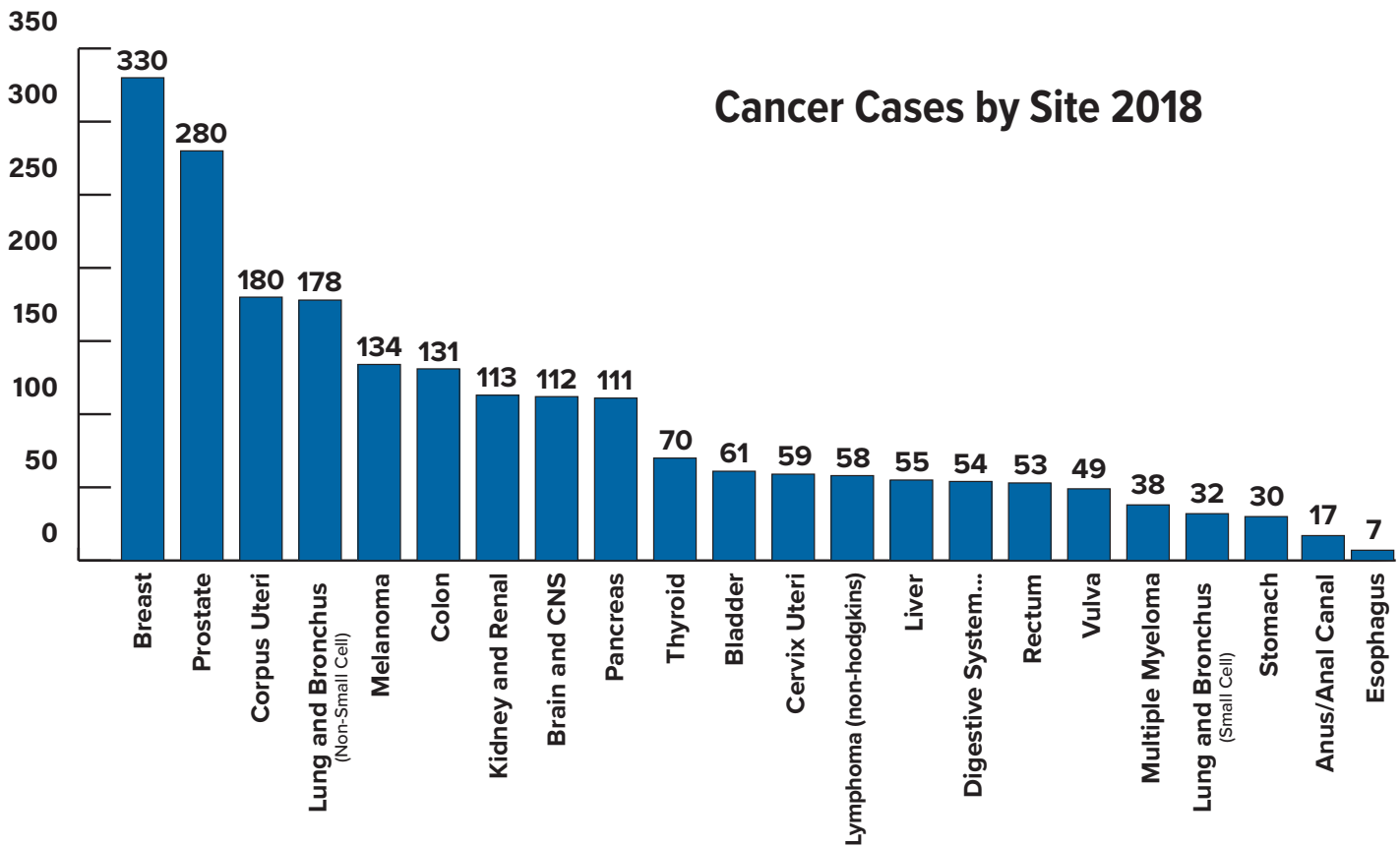
Number of Cases	
Caddo	934
Bossier	450
Out of State	237
Webster	139
Ouachita	136
DeSoto	104
Natchitoches	68
Lincoln	53
Sabine	50
Rapides	36
Bienville	34
Claiborne	30
Union	30
Jackson	28

## Cancer Site Cases 2017 InfoGraphic

In 2017, the latest year for which incidence data are available, in the United States, 1,701,315 new cases of cancer were reported, and 599,099 died of cancer. For every 100,000, 438 new cancer cases (male and female) were reported and 153 died of cancer. Cancer is the second leading cause of death in the United States, exceeded only by heart disease. One of every four deaths in the United States is due to cancer. Incidence data are compiled from cancer registries meeting U.S. Cancer Statistics data quality criteria covering 100% of the U.S. population. All data is from the official federal statistics on cancer incidence and deaths, produced by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and the National Cancer Institute (NCI).

Cancer Type	Men		Women	
	Louisiana	USA	Louisiana	USA
All Sites	548.5	475	426.4	413
Breast	N/A	N/A	128.8	125
Colon and Rectum	52	42	38.1	32
Lung and Bronchus	78.2	63	51.9	49
Non-Hodgkin Lymphoma	23.4	22	15.4	15
Prostate	135.3	107	N/A	N/A
Urinary Bladder	32.5	33	7.1	8
Brain and other Nervous System	7.5	8	5.1	5





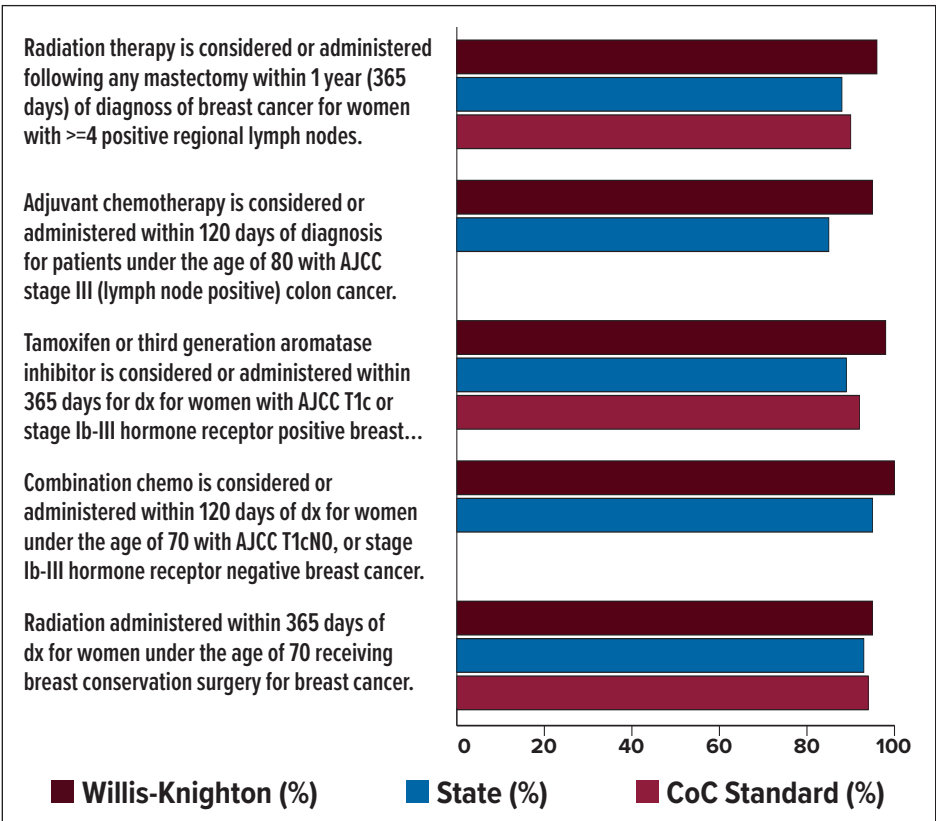
## Quality Measures

Willis-Knighton received superior scores using the 2017 CP3R Accountability Measures for the American College of Surgeons Commission on Cancer (CoC) when compared with the CoC Standard and other Louisiana cancer center scores as of May 2020.

The CP3R measures address appropriateness and timeliness of cancer care in five different categories.

WKCC surpassed the CoC expected standard by an average of 6% and that of other participating Louisiana cancer center scores by 8%.

Willis-Knighton exceeded the CoC Standard percentages on all accountability measures, ensuring compliance with Standard 4.4.



# CANCER CONFERENCES

The Willis-Knighton Cancer Center offers several cancer conferences each week. Our conferences are an essential part of our cancer program that provide a multidisciplinary setting to review and discuss the treatment plan for newly diagnosed patients and those with recurrences.

Type of Conferences	Number of Conferences	Number of Cases Presented
General Cancer	41	99
Breast Cancer	21	67
Hepatobiliary Cancer	47	517
Thoracic Cancer	10	38
<b>Total</b>	<b>119</b>	<b>721</b>

Case presentation includes: A review and discussion of the patient history, diagnostic testing, pathology review, and treatment planning. Appropriate staging is discussed for applicable cases. National Comprehensive Cancer Network (NCCN) treatment guidelines are referenced to ensure treatment plans are in line with nationally recognized standards. Clinical trials are reviewed and discussed for applicable cases.

**Our multidisciplinary team includes physicians from:**

- Diagnostic radiology
- Medical oncology
- Pathology
- Radiation oncology
- Specialists  
(Gastroenterology, Pulmonary, Transplant)
- Surgery

**Other health professionals:**

- Nurses
- Clinical research
- Cancer registrars
- Dietitians
- Genetic counselors
- Social workers





# MEDICAL ONCOLOGY AND HEMATOLOGY



From left: Prakash Peddi, MD; Maxwell C. McDonald, III, MD; Robert A. Nickelson, MD; Anil Veluvolu, MD; Nihar K. Patel, MD; Tyler Lash, MD; and Joyce E. Feagin, MD

Medical oncologists specialize in the treatment of cancer primarily through the use of systemic therapy, which includes chemotherapy, targeted therapy and immunotherapy. Unlike surgery and radiation, systemic therapy can travel throughout the body to kill cancer cells. Historically, medical oncologists have used chemotherapy, which are medications that treat cancer. Newer forms of systemic therapy, that are also used by the medical oncologists at the Willis-Knighton Cancer Center include targeted therapy and immunotherapy. Targeted therapy includes drugs that “target” specific molecules on cancer cells in order to treat cancer more effectively and often with less toxicity than chemotherapy. Immunotherapy drugs are designed to stimulate a patient’s immune system to more effectively attach and kill cancer cells, often with remarkable results.

At the Willis-Knighton Cancer Center, the seven medical oncologists are also trained in hematology, which is the study of blood disorders. They are qualified to treat both benign and malignant blood disorders in addition to treating “solid tumor” cancers.

Willis-Knighton Cancer Center was honored to host a tour for Dr. Rebekah Gee, secretary of the Louisiana Department of Health. While at the center she checked out the only proton therapy center in the state of Louisiana and learned about the many patients and visitors it attracts, not just from our area but nationally and internationally.



Medical oncologists Dr. Prakash Peddi, Dr. Maxwell “Chip” McDonald and Dr. Robert Nickelson, along with radiation oncologist Dr. Jake Wang, and senior vice president Jaf Fielder, help welcome Dr. Rebekah Gee.

# 2019 LUNG CANCER SCREENING

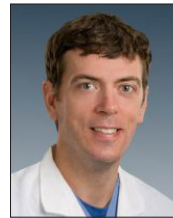
In the fall of 2018, we rolled out our Low Dose CT Lung Screening Program. Since its inception, Willis-Knighton Health System has been named a Screening Center of Excellence by the GO2 Foundation for Lung Cancer for its ongoing commitment to responsible lung cancer screening. Low dose CT screening for lung cancer carried out safely, efficiently and equitably can save tens of thousands of lives per year by finding lung cancer early when it is most treatable and even curable.

Designated Screening Centers of Excellence are committed to provide clear information on who is a candidate for lung cancer screening based on current evidence and to comply with comprehensive standards reflecting best practices developed by professional bodies such as the American College of Radiology (ACR), the National Comprehensive Cancer Network (NCCN) and the International Early Lung Cancer Action Program (I-ELCAP). Through established guidelines for controlling screening quality, radiation dose and diagnostic procedures within an experienced, multidisciplinary clinical setting, Screening Centers of Excellence are ensuring that lung cancer screening's life-saving benefit transforms lung cancer care in their local community.



***will be diagnosed with lung cancer in their lifetime.***

Willis-Knighton is dedicated to providing patients with the highest quality care. Low dose CT screening has shown to be the only proven method to detect lung cancer at an early and treatable stage. "We are thrilled to be part of this elite group, setting an example for responsible screening practices across the country," says Korey Burgin, MD.



“

**“We are thrilled to be part of this elite group, setting an example for responsible screening practices across the country.”**

**- Dr. Korey Burgin** ”

## 2019 Lung Cancer Facts per ACS & GO<sub>2</sub> Foundation

- #1 cancer killer in U.S.
- 228,150 new cases diagnosed
- 142,670 deaths
- 25% of all cancer deaths
- Lowest 5 year survival rate or 18% (breast=90%, prostate=99%, colorectal=65%)
- Eligible screening rates are about 2% (breast=50%, prostate=35%, colorectal=63%)

Lung cancer screening with low-dose spiral computed tomography (LDCT) has been shown to reduce lung cancer mortality by about 20% compared to standard chest X-ray among current or former heavy smokers. Early state detection of lung cancer is when the disease is most treatable, and only 16% of the eligible population will be diagnosed at an early stage.

Eligibility criteria (all must be true to be eligible for screening)...

- 55 to 77 years old
- Current smoker or former smoker who has quit within past 15 years
- At least 30 pack-year smoking history
- Asymptomatic for lung cancer with no personal history of lung cancer
- Healthy enough to have lung surgery
- Willing to receive potentially curative treatment





## Low dose CT lung cancer screening is recommended by:

- GO<sub>2</sub> Foundation for Lung Cancer
- United States Preventive Services Task Force
- Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services
- National Comprehensive Cancer Network
- American Cancer Society
- American Lung Association
- National Lung Cancer Roundtable



WK Lung Screening Numbers		
Month	2018	2019
Jan.	—	25
Feb.	—	23
Mar.	—	25
Apr.	—	20
May	—	27
June	—	21
July	8	30
Aug.	37	40
Sept.	32	40
Oct.	40	47
Nov.	28	39
Dec.	17	33
<b>Total</b>	<b>162</b>	<b>370</b>
<b>Cycle 2*</b>		<b>67</b>
<b>Cancers Found</b>		<b>4</b>

\*Returning for year 2 scan

# PROTON THERAPY

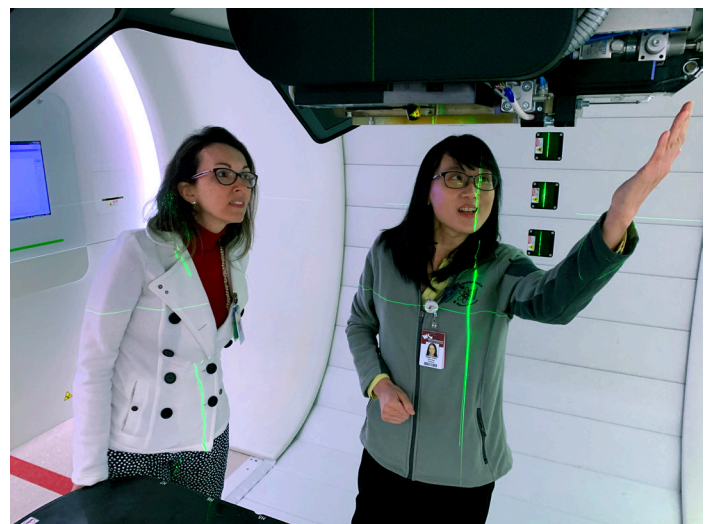
Willis-Knighton Cancer Center, Louisiana's only proton therapy center and the 15th in the United States, reached a milestone in 2019—five years of delivering proton therapy to cancer patients. The center began using proton therapy on Sept. 9, 2014, becoming the first community hospital in the world with proton therapy and the first in the world to offer compact Intensity Modulated Proton Therapy (IMPT).

In comparison, New York City's renowned Memorial Sloan Kettering Cancer Center began using proton therapy the day of our 5-year anniversary of proton therapy.

Proton therapy is a high-tech alternative to X-ray radiation. Unlike traditional radiation, protons stop inside the tumor and do not continue to travel through the body. Healthy tissue receives much less, often no, radiation dose. "This can be particularly important for tumors close to important body structures such as the brain, spine, lung and prostate," says Lane Rosen, MD, medical director for radiation oncology and the proton therapy center.

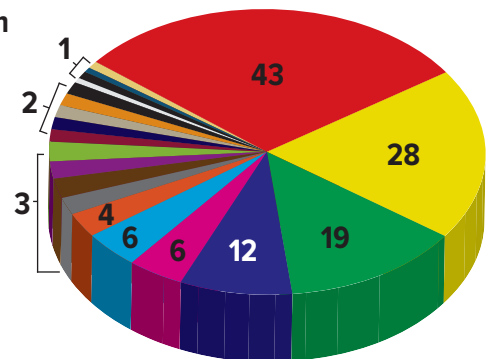
Over the past five years, Willis-Knighton Cancer Center's Proton Therapy Center has treated nearly 700 patients from throughout the southcentral and southeastern United States; the IMPT technology has allowed 22 different types of cancer to have been treated; and it has hosted the largest proton therapy users meeting (IBA) with delegates from 17 countries.

In 2019, Camila Salata, PhD, who is on staff at Brazil's nuclear energy authority, visited the WK Proton Therapy Center to learn about equipment, techniques and challenges of the Proteus<sup>®</sup>ONE proton therapy system. She traveled as part of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA). The IAEA is the world's central intergovernmental forum for scientific and technical co-operation in the nuclear field. It works for the safe, secure and peaceful uses of nuclear science and technology, contributing to international peace and security and the United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals. Dr. Salata was challenged to establish proton therapy guidelines for Brazil. She will learn about equipment, techniques and challenges of a proton therapy delivery system.



Camila Salata (left), PhD, a radiation oncologist from Brazil, looks over the Proteus<sup>®</sup>ONE proton therapy system at Willis-Knighton Cancer Center with medical physicist Dr. Gwen Chen.

## 151 Proton Patients treated during 2019





# RADIATION ONCOLOGY



**From left: Daniella Dang, MD; Jessica Nash, PA-C; Sanford Katz, MD; Lane R. Rosen, MD; Michael Durci, MD; C. Jake Wang, MD, and Heidi Wimberly, PA-C.**

Radiation therapy is the use of radiation to kill cancer cells. Radiation interrupts the ability of cells to divide and kills the cell. Cancer cells are normally more sensitive to radiation than healthy cells so fewer healthy cells are damaged during the process. Healthy cells cannot typically tolerate large doses of radiation however, so treatments are normally spread out over five to eight weeks. This provides enough radiation to kill the cancer cells but allows enough time for healthy cells to recover from the radiation.

Willis-Knighton Cancer Center has become the first site in the United States to offer Philips MRCAT Pelvis, innovative technology that provides both soft tissue and density maps from a single MRI exam. MRCAT (Magnetic Resonance for Calculating Attenuation) eliminates the need for a secondary CT, giving doctors all the information they need to accurately and efficiently create a patient's radiotherapy treatment plan.

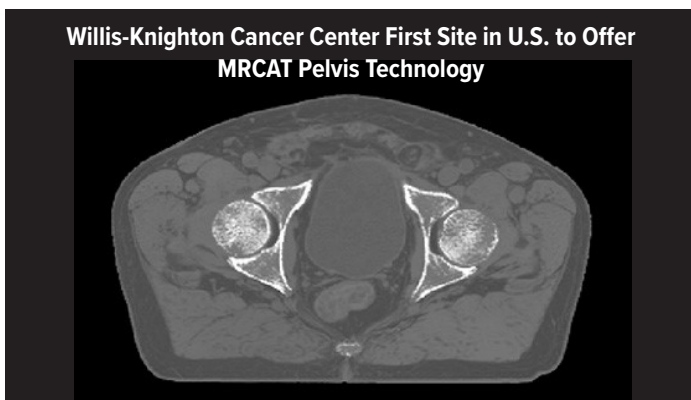
For more than three years, Willis-Knighton Cancer Center has been using a dedicated MRI (magnetic resonance imaging) system for planning radiation therapy treatments. With greater capabilities

to visualize organs and tissues, MRI simulation enhances the accuracy of therapy and provides additional safety for patients by reducing the need for additional imaging.

"We are constantly striving to make our treatments safer," says Lane R. Rosen, MD, director of radiation oncology.

Michael L. Durci, MD, radiation oncologist, acknowledges the benefits for a number of cancers located in the pelvis. "MRCAT pelvis brings additional confidence to our therapy planning process while giving us the ability to eliminate extra CT scanning in treatment planning for prostate, rectum, bladder, anus and cervix."

"Philips is honored to partner with the cancer program at Willis-Knighton," says Ardie Ermers, Philips general manager of radiation oncology. "We have the common strategy of reducing the burden of cancer. Innovative technologies like MRCAT Pelvis in radiation oncology will support Willis-Knighton to improve clinical outcomes and streamline workflows."



# TREATING THE WHOLE PERSON

Here at the Willis-Kington Cancer Center, we understand that cancer can affect our patients in a multitude of ways. When hit with a cancer diagnosis, the patient is not only affected physically with cancer, but also emotionally, socially, spiritually and financially. We also consider the effect that treatment may have on the patient's loved ones. Coping with cancer is taking care of the whole patient. Thus, our support services centers on a holistic approach in assisting our patients throughout the treatment process.

*Here are a few ways our support services help.*

## • NAVIGATION SERVICES

Navigation services are designed to assist patients and their families during their treatment journey. This includes assistance in understanding their diagnosis, available resources, treatment options, and services during their cancer journey. In order to best assist our patients, we offer educational classes such as Chemo 101, which help newly diagnosed cancer patients and their loved ones with information specific to their diagnosis, treatments, nutrition, resources and side-effect management.

## • FINANCIAL RESOURCES

The Willis-Kington Cancer Center provides financial assistance and resources to patients through our financial advocate, business office, and care managers. Our financial advocate assists patients in applying for and determining eligibility for Willis-Kington's financial assistance program, accessing co-payment assistance, and assistance with the cost of treatment. Additional services include assistance connecting with insurance companies, co-payment of oral drugs, review and payment of medical bills. Our care managers assist with financial resources by acting as a facilitator and partner with patients in locating and accessing financial resources for cancer treatment. This includes connecting and educating patients on programs for dealing with employment concerns during treatment, home care resources, and local lodging and

transportation services. The Caddo-Bossier Cancer Foundation League assists patients with gasoline, transportation, and lodging needs for Willis-Kington cancer patients. Care managers also connect patients with other resources such as, the American Cancer Society and Susan G. Komen. These organizations can assist and refer patients to resources to help with out-of-pocket costs.

## • INDIVIDUAL AND FAMILY COUNSELING

Our licensed professional counselor can provide short-term counseling for patients and loved ones free of charge, offering both individual and/or family counseling. Our counseling services can help patients cope with their diagnosis, changes in their life and relationships, and grief and loss associated with the treatment process.

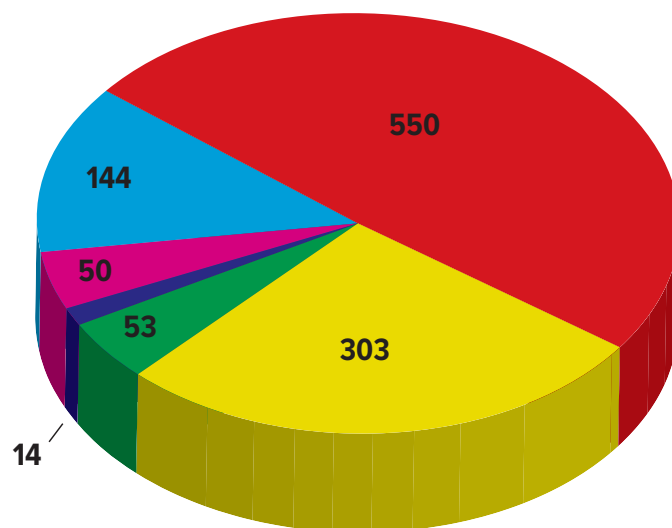
## • SUPPORT/EDUCATIONAL GROUPS

We offer support groups that can provide patients and their loved ones needed support while on their journey through a cancer diagnosis. Challenges faced by the patient and their loved ones are discussed with other patients who have been experiencing similar issues related to cancer. Educational classes provide patients and their families with new ways to cope with cancer by addressing different topics such as symptom control, stress management techniques, nutritious eating tips, and lifestyle changes that will be of value both during and after treatment.

## • CARE MANAGEMENT/SOCIAL SERVICES

Our care managers work with patients and their loved ones as partners in their care. They are available to assist patients

### Support Group and Educational Attendance by patients 2019



- General Cancer Support Group
- Resource Fairs
- Chemo 101
- Women Rise
- Coping with Cancer
- Men to Men



and their families/friends cope with cancer and address any psychological, economic, or social barriers to their treatment. Care managers empower patients by building on strengths, helping patients and caregivers learn self-care, and assisting in coordinating a support network for patients. Services include providing counseling, resource linkage, advance care planning, support groups and more. Cancer treatment is stressful on many levels. Our care managers help by advocating on behalf of the patient and educating patients on available resources.

#### • **NUTRITIONAL SERVICES**

Cancer treatment can place a lot of nutritional demands on a patient's body. Nutrition is an important part of cancer care, even if the patient chooses not to have further treatment. If a patient can only consume small amounts at a time, eating more frequent meals can help them feel stronger and have more energy. Patient choice and maintaining quality of life are priorities. A registered dietitian nutritionist with certification as a specialist in oncology nutrition is available to help provide appropriate nutrition education and help with nutritional problems. In addition, oral nutrition supplement coupons and/or samples are provided based on need.

#### • **CANCER RESOURCE LIBRARY**

Our library offers informational resources such as books, pamphlets and flyers on various cancer related topics. Cancer Center staff is available to assist with researching specific materials and information via the internet and referrals.

#### • **CANCER CENTER RESOURCE FAIR**

The Cancer Center Resource Fair is a "one stop shop" for patients and their loved ones to obtain information and ask questions about services that are offered here at the Cancer Center. Vendors include various departments across the system, as well as local community resources.



**Patients and exhibitors connect at the Cancer Center Resource Fair.**

#### • **ASSIST WITH ADVANCE CARE PLANNING**

Advance care planning is the process of communicating information about a patient's diagnosis, treatment options, life goals, values and wishes for the future. Advance care planning ensures that patients have a voice in the future of his or her care. Care managers assist patients and their loved ones in advance care planning discussions and assistance with completing legal documents such as the Living Will and the Medical Power of Attorney, which makes the patient's values and wishes known. Our care managers are here to assist patients

through the process, educate patients on their options, and answer their questions.

#### • **SURVIVORSHIP SERVICES**

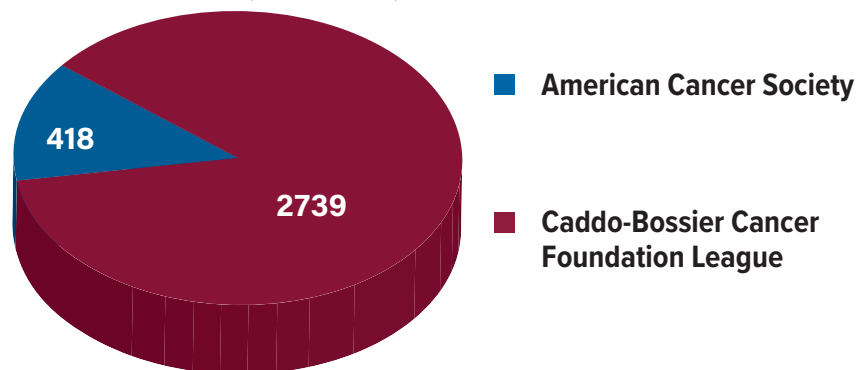
Survivorship services provide patients who have completed chemotherapy and/or radiation with a personalized treatment summary and follow-up care plan. Patients are educated on symptoms of recurrence or new cancers; late and long-term side effects of treatments; and health, wellness and screenings. They also are connected to available resources and helped with the transition of care back to the primary care physician.

# PARTNERSHIPS

## AMERICAN CANCER SOCIETY

The American Cancer Society and Willis-Knighton partner to provide services, information and programs for cancer patients and thus play an important role to the Cancer Center social workers. ACS partners with local hotels to provide free hotel nights for cancer patients who live 40 miles or more from treatment to help lessen the burden of driving every day. The American Cancer Society offers several services to patients including connecting with cancer resources/information, the Road to Recovery program, and the Pack Health coaching program. The Road to Recovery program is a volunteer program where volunteer drivers provide free rides to and from treatment for patients who do not have transportation. Along with local services, ACS provides free personal health manager folders for patients to keep all their information about treatment. The Pack Health coaching program provides chronic care management assistance via a digital health coaching program that provides personalized support for patients including weekly calls, encouraging messages, digital content/educational materials.

## Partnership (Patient) Referrals 2019



## CADDO-BOSSIER CANCER FOUNDATION LEAGUE

The Caddo-Bossier Cancer Foundation League, a nonprofit 501c3 organization, was established in 2011, by local cancer survivors who understand the emotional and financial issues faced by those dealing with this devastating disease. The foundation operates on a totally volunteer basis and depends on financial support from people and organizations. Ninety-six percent of the proceeds go directly to providing services for patients.

In 2019, CBCFL received more than 2,700 referrals for patients from Arkansas, Louisiana, Texas and beyond with more than \$70,000 in gas cards, more than \$3,700 in taxi vouchers and almost \$5,500 in lodging. These services, and more, make it possible for patients to reach their appointments and receive vital treatment. Each year more and more cancer patients rely on this support, and the need continues to grow. Almost \$530,000 in services have been provided since the CBCFL began its mission to assist our cancer patients.

# DONATIONS FOR PATIENTS

Donated blankets to the Willis-Knighton Cancer Center bring more than warmth to patients receiving treatment. “It warms their hearts as well,” says Lauren Nelson, Cancer Center social worker and care manager assistant. “Chemo can take hours and oftentimes patients are nervous and overwhelmed. They don’t know what to expect. They are in a hospital environment where it’s cold. It’s a lot to take in,” Nelson says. “When we give a patient a blanket, their face lights up and they feel the support of someone they don’t even know. It helps them physically and mentally.”

Harvey Subaru in Bossier City again this

year donated boxes of blankets and arts and crafts kits for patients undergoing treatment as part of the “Subaru Loves to Care” program. This program, according to manager David Barrow, is a national partnership of Subaru dealers with the American Cancer Society and the Leukemia & Lymphoma Society. Their goal is to spread hope, love and warmth to those fighting cancer through small gestures of caring.

Barrow and fellow employee Steven Belk delivered more than 80 blankets and 50 arts and crafts kits along with customer care cards with inspirational messages such as “You got this; we are thinking about you.”



**Lauren Nelson (center), Cancer Center social worker and care manager assistant, receives blankets and arts and crafts kits from representatives of Harvey Subaru.**

“We are grateful to Subaru and their partners as they spread hope and love to our cancer patients,” adds Sarah Larson, Cancer Center operations manager.



# PATIENT TESTIMONIALS

## New group offers multiple myeloma patients another resource for support

### Paul Lerchie, *survivor*

When I was diagnosed with multiple myeloma in 2012, I had no idea what I was in for! With help from my doctors, family and friends, I managed to get enough information to feel OK about having a stem cell transplant.

After recovering from my stem cell transplant, I started looking for a MM support group. There was not one in Shreveport. All that was available locally was a general cancer support group that I have been attending regularly for years. At the time, it was very helpful, and I still attend. I learn something each time I attend, and still do. I realized that I had learned more about many other cancers than the multiple myeloma that I suffer with. I began my search and found a multiple myeloma group in Tyler and Dallas, Texas. I did attend the group in Tyler and found so much useful information and support. Multiple myeloma is not a curative disease and some of the information concerning disease progression and how to survive daily was not readily available. This made me start thinking about what I could do to start a local multiple myeloma support group. My first step was to talk to the administrator of the Willis-Knighton Cancer Center and found the support I needed to keep investigating on how to start one. As I investigated, I found the International Myeloma Foundation and they were a great resource for help. They already had many multiple myeloma support groups around the country and were willing to help me start a group in Shreveport, Louisiana. They sent me



Paul Lerchie (survivor) and Lauren Nelson (facilitator) listen to other support group members in the Multiple Myeloma Support Group.



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“Multiple myeloma is a diagnosis that lasts your lifetime, but you don’t have to feel alone living with this disease. These support groups allow patients to share their experiences, good and bad, with others in a similar situation. This can be educational though also with goals of improving quality of life and outcomes.”

- Dr. Nihar Patel, medical oncologist

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everything I needed and more. I took the information I received to the WK administration and they approved starting a multiple myeloma support group. I then went to the social services department to let them know and we started the group.

The group was a hit from the start. We have been growing but are always looking for more myeloma patients. If you know someone with multiple myeloma, this group will welcome and support them.

# MEDICAL PHYSICS AT WILLIS-KNIGHTON CANCER CENTER



**From left: Gwen Chen, PhD; Adam Sova, MS; Percy Nebah, MS; Terry Wu, PhD; Matthew Maynard, PhD; Joseph Syh, PhD; and Joseph Dugas, PhD.**

Every patient who comes through the department of radiation oncology at Willis-Knighton Cancer Center has a medical physicist involved with his or her care. Radiation therapy medical physicists are experts who apply their specialized technical and scientific backgrounds towards the care and treatment of patients needing radiation therapy. They normally hold a PhD or master's degree in physics or engineering, have completed a two- to three-year clinical residency, and are nationally certified by the American Board of Radiology. For most patients the medical physicist's involvement occurs behind-the-scenes performing reviews of their treatment plan or routinely testing the radiation-producing machines used for treatment. However, for certain patients and procedures the medical physicist is involved in the patient's daily care in a more hands-on fashion such as assisting in patient simulation, positioning, treatment planning, and treatment delivery. One key aspect of a medical physicist's role is in consultation with the radiation oncologist providing technical input on unique or challenging cases and helping

to determine the best course of action for the patient. In all circumstances, a medical physicist's main responsibility is to help ensure the accurate delivery of radiation treatments to every patient, every day. The department of radiation oncology at Willis-Knighton Cancer Center is staffed by five PhD physicists and two physics residents. The department also has three full-time medical dosimetrists, professionals with knowledge of the overall

characteristics and clinical relevance of radiation oncology treatment machines and equipment. Dosimetrists also have the education and expertise necessary to generate radiation dose distributions and dose calculations, known as treatment plans, typically using highly advanced radiation treatment planning computer systems in collaboration with the medical physicist and radiation oncologist.



**From left: Dosimetrists Chris Henry, BS, RT(R)(CT), CMD; Megan Rodrigues, BS, CMD; and Joseph Brocato, BS, RT(R)(T), CMD.**





Jonas D Fontenot, PhD, and chief operating officer, chief of physics, presents Nicholas W. Marsh, MS, with his graduation certificate from Willis-Knighton Cancer Center's Medical Physicist Residency program. Mary Bird Perkins Cancer Center in Baton Rouge, Louisiana, has an agreement with Willis-Knighton Cancer Center to serve as a partner program in the residency program. WKCC was chosen based on our interest in the program, and sufficient clinical staff and resources to effectively train residents. WKCC has one new resident added each year for a two-year medical physicist residency training program.

## GYNECOLOGIC ONCOLOGY

A gynecologic oncologist is a surgeon who specializes in the diagnosis, treatment and surgery for women with cancers of the female reproductive system as well as the external female anatomy. Gynecologic Oncology Associates has three physicians, all of whom are board certified and have completed specialized training with the da Vinci Robot to perform surgeries robotically.

**Dr. Destin Black** completed residency in the field of obstetrics and gynecology, completed a fellowship in gynecologic oncology and is currently advancing her education with a master's degree in Healthcare Administration. Dr. Black continues to care for her patients after surgery, as well as during and after treatment for malignant conditions.

**Dr. Debra Cline** spent many years as an obstetrician-gynecologist and is currently a gynecologic surgeon who performs surgery on a wide range of benign but complex cases. Within the practice she sees cancer patients for ongoing surveillance, treatment for cancerous conditions and continues their care after surgery.

**Dr. Leslie Dean** is also a gynecologic surgeon performing surgery on patients with benign, complex conditions and sees



From left: Destin Black, MD; Debra Cline, MD; and K. Leslie Dean, MD.

patients for ongoing care after surgery for their cancer condition. Dr. Dean was an obstetrician gynecologist for many years prior to joining Gyn Oncology. She also serves on multiple committees within the Willis-Knighton Health System.

Doctors Black, Cline and Dean are members of multiple gynecologic and gynecologic oncology committees and participate in community outreach programs, focusing on awareness and education on gynecologic cancers for

women of all ages. Dr. Black also leads lectures for residents and medical students. While all three physicians participate in the residency program, allowing residents to assist in clinic as well as in the operating room. Each physician continues their education and increases their knowledge in their specialty.

Each doctor also provides Telemedicine, when appropriate, to patients who may live in surrounding states and who may require consultation or counseling.

# THE IMPORTANCE OF CLINICAL TRIALS



**Jacinta Lewis, clinical trials coordinator, and Briana Barrow, manager of clinical trials.**

**A**t the Willis-Knighton Cancer Center we believe that today's clinical trial may result in tomorrow's medicine. Studying how new treatments work in a representative group of people with cancer ultimately results in more and improved options for everyone, which helps people live longer and better lives with cancer. Clinical trial participants receive the best available standard of care and may have access to the newest treatment approaches. In cancer clinical trials, patients are NEVER given a placebo instead of an effective standard treatment. In fact, placebos are rarely used in cancer treatment clinical trials. They are only used when there is NO standard treatment or in a clinical trial that compares standard treatment plus a new treatment against standard treatment plus a placebo. Patients in cancer treatment trials receive either a new treatment, a combination of treatments, or the treatment that is currently considered the best available proven treatment. A clinical trial patient will NEVER be treated with less than the standard of care. These clinical trials offer an important treatment option for people affected by cancer. The results of these research studies determine whether new treatments are approved for prescribing by doctors for patients outside of clinical trials. In the United

States, the Food & Drug Administration (FDA) is the regulator organization that makes this approval decision. There is also an institutional review board (IRB) made up of doctors, researchers and community members who ensure that the clinical trial is ethical, and that the rights and welfare of the patients who take part are being protected.

Participating in clinical trials contributes to the knowledge about whether new cancer treatments are safe and effective and work better than the current treatments. In doing so, new cancer treatments and other medical approaches are developed through the results of clinical trials. They provide a great opportunity to gain access to cutting-edge treatments and further the advancement of cancer research. They help in determining whether new cancer treatments are safe and effective and work better than current treatments. Clinical trials are also vital for adding to medical knowledge that can improve the care given to patients.

Today, patients are living longer from successful cancer treatments that are the results of past clinical trials. This ultimately results in

# THE IMPORTANCE OF CLINICAL TRIALS

improved patient outcomes and survival rates. Tens of thousands of people are helped each year because they decided to take part in a clinical research trial, along with millions of others that benefit from what is learned from those clinical trials.

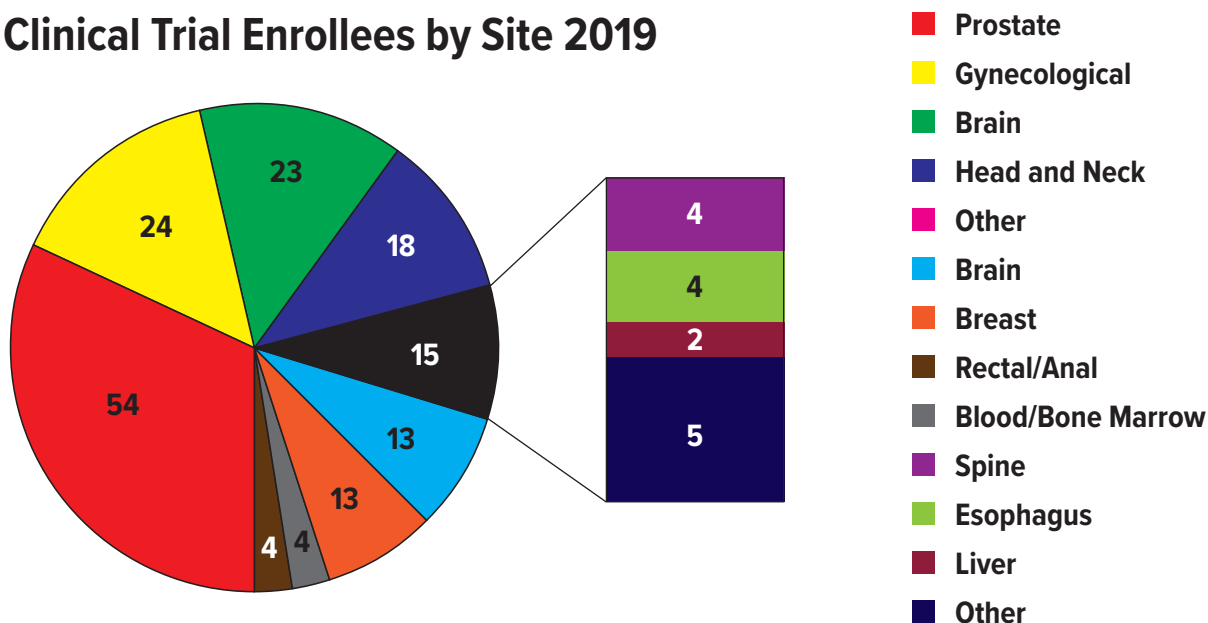
Our cancer center participates in numerous clinical trials; both national and international, providing patients access to high-quality research studies closer to home. During 2019, we offered 26 clinical research trials to our patients being treated for: prostate, breast, lung, brain, head and neck, liver, colorectal/anal, skin,

gynecologic, myelomas, lymphomas, leukemias, and proliferative disorder cancers.

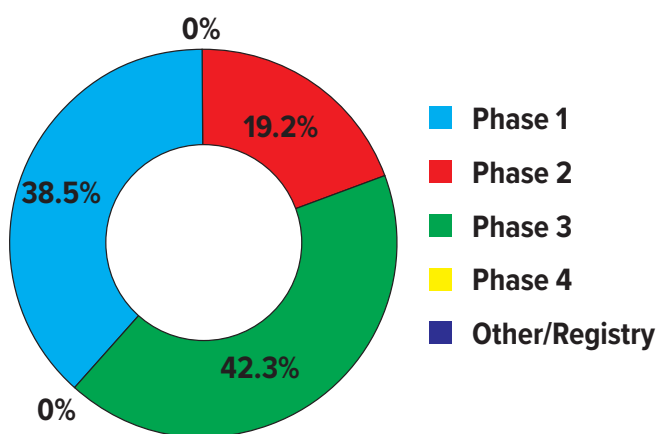
Our research initiative is Willis-Knighton's commitment to providing our physicians and patients with the most current treatment alternatives.

To learn more about clinical research offered at Willis-Knighton Cancer Center, call (318) 212-8671 or visit [wkhs.com/Cancer/Cancer-Treatment-Services/Clinical-Trials](http://wkhs.com/Cancer/Cancer-Treatment-Services/Clinical-Trials)

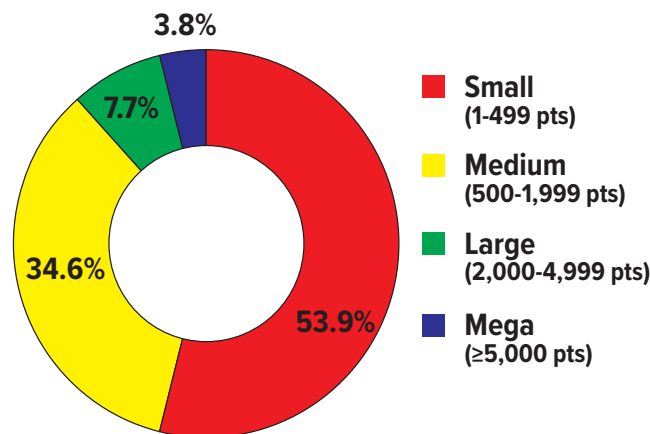
## Clinical Trial Enrollees by Site 2019



## Clinical Trials by Phase



## Clinical Trials by Size







## **TELEPHONE DIRECTORY**

Medical Oncology .....	(318) 212-8620
Radiation Oncology .....	(318) 212-4639
Gynecologic Oncology .....	(318) 212-8727
Genetic Counseling .....	(318) 212-6214
Psychosocial Services .....	(318) 212-8026
Clinical Trials .....	(318) 212-8671
American Cancer Society .....	(800) 227-2345
Susan G. Komen Northwest Louisiana .....	(318) 220-7050
Lung Screening .....	(318) 212-6238
Caddo-Bossier Cancer League Foundation .....	(318) 212-4585