

spotlight

Samaritan Pastega Regional Cancer Center Corvallis, Oregon



The Samaritan Pastega Regional Cancer Center in Corvallis, Oregon, is a comprehensive community cancer program providing oncology care at both the regional and community levels. The cancer program (as part of Samaritan Health Services Cancer Program) has been accredited by the American College of Surgeons Commission on Cancer since 2011.

Today, cancer services are provided in the brand new cancer center building that sits on a hilltop rise, greeting patients entering the Good Samaritan Regional Medical Center campus. The new facility, which opened in late 2015, serves as the hub of the cancer program. Satellite services also operate in four additional locations across three counties, covering almost 100 miles.

The new cancer center took more than 12 years to come to fruition. After some key donors committed to seeing the new center built and a successful community fundraising campaign, the facility opened in December 2015, creating a single, consolidated location for outpatient cancer care services.

Previously, cancer services were spread throughout several buildings across the medical campus. To access care, patients had to either drive or walk across campus to different sites of care, and for patients fatigued by cancer treatment, this was burdensome.

Consolidated Cancer Care

The glass-fronted atrium serves as the focal point of the building, with the stonework on the exterior echoed on interior finishes. The design incorporates natural light and art, creating a calm, healing environment. “The

change of venue in terms of the openness of our new center has been a real positive for patients. Our prior location was certainly functional, but it wasn’t as open or light as the place we have now,” said David Hufnagel, DO, medical director for Samaritan Cancer Program’s medical oncology and hematology services.

Cancer patients receiving treatment at the new center appreciate the convenience of having services all in one location. “The patient response we hear in clinic has all been very positive. After seeing us in clinic, patients used to have to cross the street to get their labs done, or a port flush done and infusion. Now they’re able to do all that in one place,” said Dr. Hufnagel.

The Samaritan Pastega Regional Cancer Center has three floors containing a range of oncology services including medical oncology (with eight medical oncologists on staff), infusion, clinical trials, resource center, lymphedema therapy, social work, financial counseling, laboratory, PET-CT, a café, and a concierge. Patient navigation is currently available for breast and head and neck cancer patients.

A benefit of the new facility is the significant increase in the number of infusion chairs. “That was a big issue before we moved, and now we have a lot more infusion space. It was always very difficult to get extra patients into infusion. Now we don’t have that difficulty,” said Dr. Hufnagel.

The infusion center is located on the third floor, with 8 open bay infusion chairs, 10 private infusion rooms, plus one room with a bed. Large windows provide scenic views of the valley. “Having infusion in the

same building as the clinic is important because if a patient is having a complication during clinic hours, it’s more than likely that their doctor is just right downstairs,” said Dr. Hufnagel.

New services also include three multi-purpose meeting rooms equipped with teleconferencing equipment. The cancer center’s teleconferencing capabilities are primarily used to communicate with Samaritan’s satellite sites and for tumor boards. The cancer center intends to expand the use of this technology to perform telemedicine in the future; the center is affiliated with Stanford Health Care and their Stanford Cancer Center, in a developing relationship to provide telemedicine.

The new cancer center is connected by a covered walkway to the building that formerly served as the cancer center, which now is dedicated to radiation oncology services. Expanding the existing center was not an option due to construction regulations. The solution was to build the new center directly in front of the existing location, then join the two buildings by way of landscaping and a short, covered pathway.

The radiation oncology unit—with a staff of three radiation oncologists—includes a new Varian VitalBeam linear accelerator, and radiation services, including cone-beam 3D CT imaging, IMRT, IGRT, and electronic brachytherapy.

Medical oncology and chemotherapy services are offered within the cancer center and at all satellite locations. Radiation therapy services are available only within the regional cancer center in Corvallis.



The Mario Pastega House

For some of the rural outlying communities within Samaritan’s catchment area, transportation to appointments can be a barrier. While many of these patients can be seen at the satellite locations, those requiring radiation therapy may have to drive up to an hour, depending on where they live.

To help alleviate this travel burden, the Mario Pastega House was founded in 2004. The house is a 6,500-square-foot overnight residence located on the hospital campus with

- 12 guest suites
- A chapel
- An outdoor patio and garden
- A children’s play structure
- A central kitchen and dining area
- Living and recreation areas
- On-site laundry facilities.

Lodging at the Mario Pastega House is available to patients who are coming from more than 25 miles away and who have a referral from a medical provider or hospital staff member. A nominal donation is

suggested, but no one is ever turned away for financial reasons.

Unique Community Support Programs

Community outreach is driven by a full-time (FTE) staff member with the help of more than 100 community volunteers spreading the message about the value of early cancer detection.

That’s My Farmer is a collaborative program between Samaritan’s cancer resource centers and local farmers markets. Dietitians lead a six-week-long series for cancer survivors about the health value of eating fresh, local produce. Survivors receive a cookbook and cooking tips, and meet weekly with the dietitian to discuss food prep and healthy eating. The program operates on grant funding, allowing the cancer center to distribute vouchers to each survivor participant for their local farmer’s market.

The donor-funded SurvivorFit program provides cancer survivors with free, three-month memberships to local fitness centers. A trainer with specific education

related to oncology provides one-on-one fitness consultations.

Samaritan also offers numerous services to patients and families at no charge through their two Samaritan Cancer Resource Centers located in Albany, Oregon, and at the Samaritan Pastega Regional Cancer Center. Services include massages, wig fittings, support groups, art therapy, and more. 

Select Support Services

- Dietitians
- Navigation
- Social work
- Financial counseling
- Cancer resource centers
- That’s My Farmer
- SurvivorFit

New analytic cases in 2014: 1,446
Percent of patients accrued to clinical trials: 8 percent