

# spotlight

## Virginia G. Piper Cancer Center at HonorHealth Scottsdale, AZ



**T**he Virginia G. Piper Cancer Center is an outpatient cancer center located on the HonorHealth Scottsdale Shea Medical Center campus. It is part of HonorHealth, a non-profit health system serving the greater Phoenix area. The company encompasses five acute care hospitals, an extensive medical group, outpatient surgery centers, a cancer center, clinical research, medical education, two foundations, and community services.

“Our program provides patients with access to tertiary level services in a community setting” said Matt Schneider, associate vice president, Oncology Services.

### A Full Menu of Service Offerings

For patients, this arrangement means easy access to inpatient and outpatient facilities, emergency services, and the full support of the HonorHealth network, with multiple disciplines for advanced care. The cancer center has medical and radiation oncology services and a bone marrow transplant center, as well as genetics, infusion, lymphedema, an image boutique/DME supplier, a library, a social worker, an oncology-certified dietitian, and patient navigators in one location.

On the first floor of the cancer center, patients and visitors are greeted and given directions as needed at the concierge desk. The boutique, Tina’s Treasures, named after cancer survivor Tina Johnson, offers prostheses, wigs, and bra fittings for breast cancer patients. The cancer center also has an educational conference room, which is used by the hospital and community for oncology education. A chapel and large resource library for patients, staffed with a full-time librarian,

are also located on the first floor.

The Radiation Oncology Department rounds out the first-floor services. Radiation oncologists extensively use HDR brachytherapy, and while many centers offer this treatment, the cancer center has an innovator in HDR programs, Robert Kuske, MD, as part of its team. Dr. Kuske developed the Kuske applicator, which is commonly used in this treatment. The cancer center offers HDR brachytherapy for various diagnoses, with GYN cancers and breast cancers comprising the highest volume. Other forms of radiation therapy include IMRT, IGRT, and radiosurgery.

The Outpatient Infusion Services Center is staffed by chemotherapy-certified oncology nurses along with two oncology nurse navigators who are responsible for following up with patients discharged from the inpatient oncology unit.

Surgical oncology services include access to one of the largest robotics programs in Arizona. HonorHealth network currently has seven da Vinci robots, including three on the Shea campus for multi-quadrant surgery. By the end of 2015, Schneider estimates the health system will have performed 10,000 robotic surgeries.

The cancer center has a dedicated social worker who works collaboratively with the Shea inpatient social workers in oncology to ensure that discharged inpatients receive proper follow-up care. Other supportive care services on-site include:

- Genetic counseling
- An oncology-certified dietitian
- Cooking and nutrition classes
- Body, mind, and spirit programs.

The Lymphedema Treatment Center at the cancer center is a Phase 1 treatment center and a National Lymphedema Network-sponsored facility.

The cancer service line at HonorHealth is composed of both outpatient imaging and treatment services, as well as multiple inpatient units. The Shea campus, where the outpatient cancer center is physically located and connected to the inpatient hospital, has three inpatient oncology units: a 14-bed dedicated Bone Marrow Transplant Unit, a 24-bed Hematology/Medical Oncology Inpatient Unit, and a 24-bed Oncology Medical/Surgical Unit.

The Breast Health and Research Center located at the HonorHealth Deer Valley Medical Center was the first in Arizona to offer 3D mammography. The main campus offers:

- Low-dose 3D mammography
- Interventional technologies
- Breast biopsy
- Breast MRI
- Breast ultrasound
- Bone densitometry
- Body composition analysis
- Spa-like setting.

In addition, two satellite locations offer 3D imaging. The HonorHealth Deer Valley Medical Center offers many oncology services, including extensive breast surgical and reconstructive services. The Deer Valley campus also features radiation oncology, medical oncology, and fellowship-trained breast and GYN oncology surgeons.

The HonorHealth Scottsdale Osborn Medical Center offers extensive surgical

oncology services including robotic surgery and on-site radiation and medical oncology services.

### “Bridge between Care and Cure”

The Virginia G. Piper Cancer Center is joined by a pedestrian bridge to the Debi and Jerry Bisgrove Research Pavilion, which houses HonorHealth’s Research Institute. Dubbed the “Bridge between Care and Cure,” this walkway symbolizes the integration of advanced technology and science with state-of-the-art standard patient care. The core program at the research institute is early drug development in cancer. This is a joint program between HonorHealth and the Translational Genomics Research Institute (TGen).

“Our concept is to have the rigors and technology of an academic setting, but placed within the community where we can accelerate innovation to the patients,” said Mark Slater, PhD, vice president of Research for the HonorHealth System and chief executive for the HonorHealth Research Institute.

Currently, 65 cancer clinical trials are open through the research institute; focused on targeted therapies and precision medicine. All of the physician investigators have joint appointments both in the HonorHealth network and with TGen. These physician scientists are paired with PhD bench-scientists in laboratories at TGen for the discovery work. The clinical care, clinical research, and clinical development part of the translation is done at HonorHealth, embodying the concept of linking the bench and the bedside.

Patients enrolled in clinical trials receive the full complement of services through the cancer center, as well as access to new technologies and all of the support services surrounding clinical trials. Free navigation services, offered to all patients, are performed by oncology-certified APRNs. The research institute has three navigators; one dedicated to pancreas and GI cancers, and two others that work across disciplines. The navigators assist patients in identifying appropriate clinical trials, answering any patient questions, and determining sites or options near their home, as well as trial options on-site. These navigators also help



patients gather medical records needed for the intake process to determine eligibility for a trial and then ultimately go through the consenting process with patients.

Dr. Slater stresses the importance of the concept of “an institute without walls.” The research institute began with a lead gift from the Virginia G. Piper Trust, establishing collaboration with TGen in November 2005. Since then, “through research, we’ve brought collaborations, technologies, talent, and connections with universities, companies, and other research institutes, both local and distant. This has brought patients from 48 states and two dozen countries to the cancer center for clinical trials and care,” said Dr. Slater.

The cancer center was selected as one of the original Stand Up to Cancer (SU2C) Dream Team sites. It was also the only facility in the Southwest participating as a collaborator in the \$18 million SU2C pancreatic cancer Dream Team grant.

Dr. Slater cites advanced molecular medicine, state-of-the-art full genome sequencing, access to immunotherapies, such as PD-L1, and imaging capabilities, as highlights of the program.


Additionally, RADAR (Rapid Detection and Assessment of Response), a rapid cancer detection program developed through a collaboration between local physicians, HonorHealth’s Research Institute, and the Virginia G. Piper Cancer Center, uses textural analysis of images to show the biology of tumors and whether they are responding to therapies.

### Robust Transplant Program

The peripheral stem cell transplant program, as a whole, transplants nearly 200 patients a year, putting it in the top 5 percent of the

country as far as quantity of transplants. The program’s success is due to the Cancer Transplant Institute at the Virginia G. Piper Cancer Center, located on the campus of HonorHealth Scottsdale Shea Medical Center. With five transplant physicians on staff, the institute keeps open appointments for same-day or next-day consults.

The institute is accredited by FACT (Foundation for the Accreditation of Cellular Therapy) for both autologous and allogeneic adult transplants.

The transplant institute strives to give cancer patients the most personalized care possible, and assigns a transplant coordinator the first day. That coordinator serves as the patient’s point of contact and will walk patients through each step of the transplant process. “Our patient experience scores are very high and many of the comments we hear from patients are ‘I really felt like I was being taken care of by family,’ ” said Selma Kendrick, RN, MS, OCN, BMTCN, director, peripheral stem cell transplant program. 

### Select Support Services

- Support groups
- Navigation
- Nutrition and dietary counseling
- Survivorship care
- Body, mind, and spirit
- Resource library

Percentage of patients accrued to clinical trials annually: 6%

Number of new analytic cases seen in 2014: 4,114