



Trinity Health

This year, over 5,400 patients have trusted us with their cancer care. We recognize the immense responsibility that comes with that trust and strive to exceed the expectations of our patients and families. From the first touch with one of our nurse navigators or expert Oncologic physicians, we strive to provide the most up to date care alongside the comprehensive supportive services that make such a difference for patients and their families every day. The dedication of our staff, the passion and expertise of our physicians, clinical and research teams, and the support of our donors is the secret to our success.

Together, we provide hope and healing. We want to thank you for being part of our mission to provide the best care in Southeast Michigan.

**Kathleen Beekman, MD**  
Medical Director  
Trinity Health SEMI Cancer Program

## 2024-25 ONCOLOGY ANNUAL REPORT

TRINITY HEALTH CANCER CENTERS

ANN ARBOR • BRIGHTON • CANTON • CHELSEA • LIVONIA • OAKLAND

# Clinical Excellence and Research

## Clinical Excellence

We are proud to be among the first in Michigan to earn the Michigan Oncology Quality Consortium (MOQC) Michigan Excellence in Quality Certification (MEQC). This achievement follows a rigorous process where we met a wide range of quality measures during a detailed chart review.

Additionally, prior to the site visit, our policies, workflows, and cancer support services were thoroughly reviewed. The evaluation included site visits across all five of our locations. During these visits, the practices were assessed on several aspects of quality care, with a strong focus on patient and health care workforce safety. The review encompassed all Hematology/Oncology and Gynecology/Oncology services, including our infusion centers and infusion pharmacy. The feedback confirmed that our cancer program consistently follows the established policies and provides high-quality patient care across all sites.

## Research

### BIOBANKING INITIATIVES

#### National Cancer Institute Cancer Moonshot Biobank

A \$100,000 competitive research award, from NCI and Theradex Oncology, was given to co-principal investigators, Drs. Rose Juhasz and Tareq Al Baghdadi, for Cancer Moonshot Biobank (CMB) operations and engagement initiatives aimed at cancer providers and patients. The project's engagement goals are to build awareness and trust for cancer specimen biobanking and reinforce the scientific usefulness of tissue banking in cancer research. CMB primarily collects tumor tissue of advanced cancers to assess responses to oncologic drugs. Over 30 Trinity Health volunteers in Southeast Michigan have elected to have their specimens shipped to the bank.



Scan to learn more about the Moonshot Biobank.

### NCI CLINICIAN SCIENTIST AWARD GRANTED TO ELIE DIB, MD, MS, FACP



The Michigan Cancer Research Consortium (MCRC), based at Trinity Health Ann Arbor, has received a \$520,000 grant, recognizing Elie Dib, MD, MS, FACP, as a Clinician Scientist of the National Cancer Institute (NCI), part of the National Institutes of Health. This recognition will support the work of Dr. Dib, a hematologist oncologist practicing at Trinity Health IHA Medical Group, Hematology Oncology - Ann Arbor Campus and Trinity Health IHA Medical Group Hematology Oncology - Chelsea. Dr. Dib focuses much of his time on overseeing clinical cancer trials and increasing patient access to new life-saving treatments.

### NCORP



Trinity Health Ann Arbor (THAA) Hospital is the National Institutes of Health – National Cancer Institute grant recipient and leading operations, administration and regulatory Trinity site for the Michigan Cancer Research Consortium – National Community Oncology Research Program (MCRC-NCORP). MCRC is a top-five funded and performing NCORP among 42 national programs that are held to the highest standards for oncology research. MCRC encompasses NCI research work in addition to other clinical trials across all Trinity Health Cancer Center sites in Southeastern Michigan. We also oversee research administration at several partner community oncology programs.

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# 2024 | Regional Oncology Highlights

## FACILITIES

**6**  
cancer centers  
across 5 hospitals



**250+**  
colleagues



**Over  
65**  
providers



## ANNUAL PATIENT VISITS & TREATMENTS DELIVERED

**5,400+**  
new patients



**120,000+**  
patient visits in our  
cancer centers

**Over  
25,000**  
Radiation Treatments

**Over  
2,000**  
Surgeries

**Over  
40,000**  
Infusion Therapies

**Over  
2,300**  
Robotic Surgeries

## CANCER RESEARCH & CLINICAL TRIALS

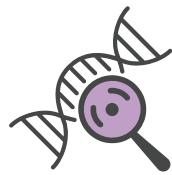


**\$3.3 million**  
annually from  
National Cancer Institute  
National Community Oncology  
Research Program

**500**  
patients enrolled  
annually



**110+**  
active protocols



**180**  
investigators

**140**  
research staff

**45**

affiliate sites across 7 health systems in  
5 states that we manage for clinical trials



**\$65,000**  
transportation services  
provided to patients

In the past year, philanthropy  
helped to provide 700 patients  
with over 2,200 rides.



**SUPPORT CANCER CARE TRANSPORTATION WITH A GIFT.**



**\$17,940**

patient education materials

**Over  
\$65  
million**  
provided in  
financial assistance  
since 2020

## Spotlight | Support Services

Trinity Health Michigan is proud to offer some of the most advanced cancer treatment options available, including innovative therapies available only through national cancer clinical trials. We offer a broad range of clinical trials for treatment or symptom management, some of which are only available in the nation's premier cancer programs. In addition, we understand that the needs, experiences and goals of each patient are unique. As a result, we have developed and made available a wide offering of support services to care for the whole patient.

### MEDICAL ONCOLOGY

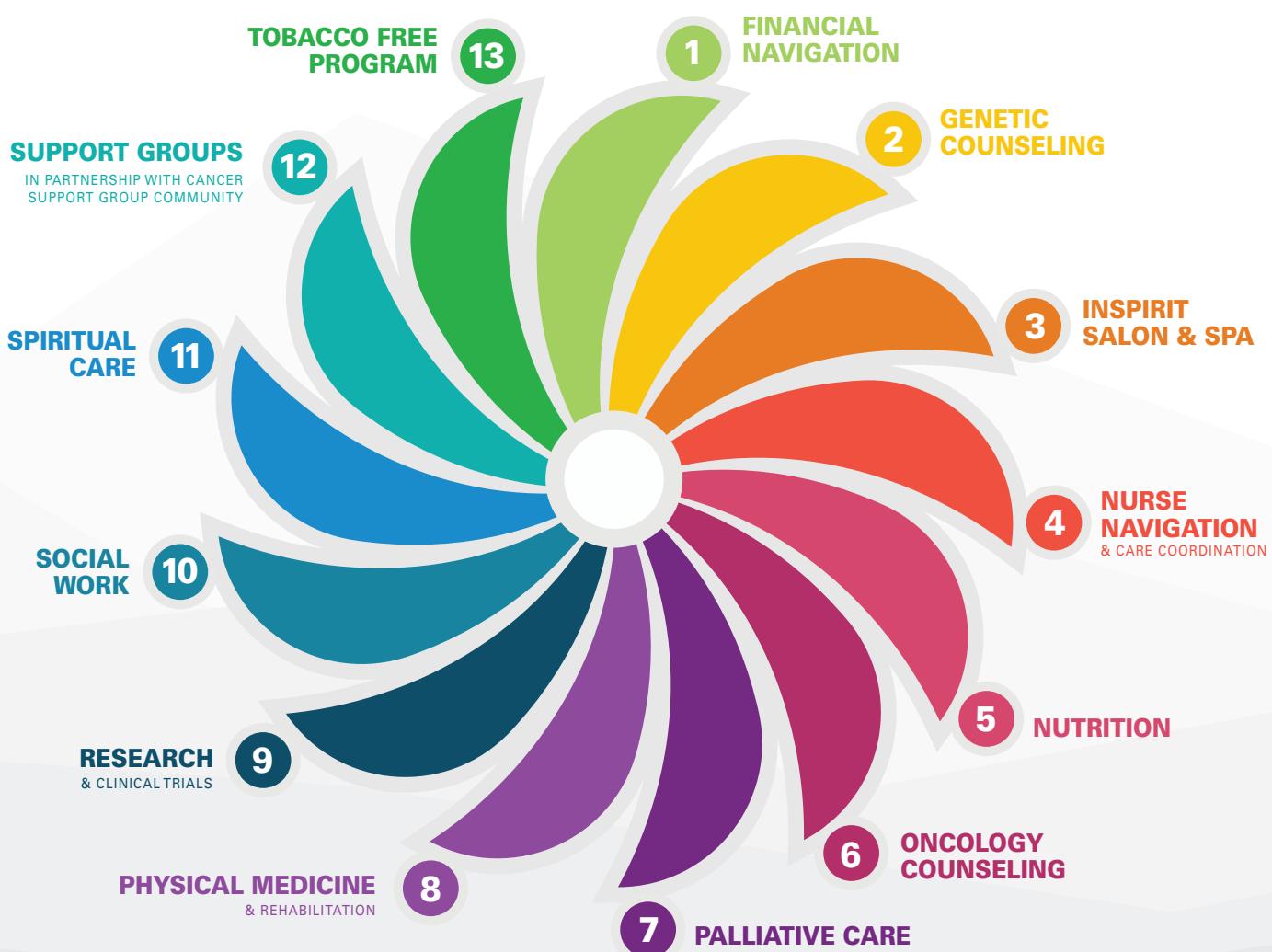
Treatment through medicine, including chemotherapy, hormonal therapy, biological therapy, immunotherapy and targeted therapy.

### RADIATION ONCOLOGY

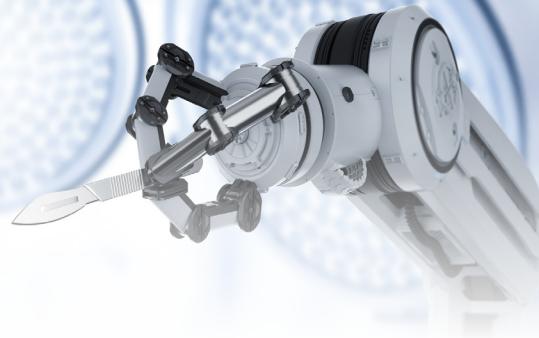
Treatment using carefully designed and targeted doses of high energy radiation.

### SURGICAL ONCOLOGY

Diagnosis and treatment through surgery, including biopsy and surgical removal of tumors.



**Our surgical teams at Trinity Health perform 2,300 robotic-assisted surgeries annually and are leaders in Michigan in this technology.**



Robotic-assisted surgery is a modern approach that uses advanced technology to help surgeons perform cancer operations with greater precision. For many types of cancer — including those of the colon, rectum, bladder, prostate, and certain gynecologic cancers — robotic surgery has been shown to offer several important benefits compared to traditional open surgery or standard minimally invasive (laparoscopic) surgery.

At Trinity Health Michigan, our surgical teams are leaders in advanced surgical technology. Trinity Health Ann Arbor is an accredited Center of Excellence in Robotic Surgery, and our Trinity Health IHA Colorectal Surgeons understand first hand how this innovation enhances their ability to care for patients with colorectal cancer. "As a surgeon, I'm fortunate that Trinity Health provides me with the most advanced tools, enabling me to deliver the highest quality care and the best possible outcomes for my patients," said Amanda McClure, MD, Trinity Health IHA colorectal surgeon and chair of the Robotic Surgery Steering Committee at Trinity Health Michigan. "Advanced robotic technology gives me unparalleled vision, precision, and control — helping me perform complex cancer surgeries with extraordinary accuracy and care — and that translates into less pain, faster recovery, and better outcomes for my patients."

## MAIN ADVANTAGES OF ROBOTIC SURGERY FOR CANCER PATIENTS



**LESS BLOOD LOSS** during surgery, which can lower the need for blood transfusions and reduce the risk of complications.



**SHORTER HOSPITAL STAYS** meaning patients can often go home sooner and return to their normal activities more quickly.



**FASTER RECOVERY & LESS PAIN** after surgery, which can help improve overall comfort and quality of life in the days and weeks following the operation.



**LOWER RISK OF SOME COMPLICATIONS** such as infections or wound problems, compared to open surgery.



**SMALLER INCISIONS** which may lead to less scarring and a better cosmetic result.

Robotic-assisted surgery uses special instruments and a high-definition 3D camera, allowing the surgeon to see the area in great detail and move their instruments with more flexibility and control. This can be especially helpful for complex cancer operations in hard-to-reach areas of the body.

# Patient Story

## Jitra Brzuch, Oncology Research Nurse

When Jitra Brzuch was diagnosed with ovarian cancer in September 2023, it was an unexpected and life-changing moment. As an oncology research nurse, in the Trinity Health Southeast Oncology Research Department for over five years, she has screened countless patients for clinical trials, yet she never imagined she would one day be a participant herself. Beyond her personal battle, Jitra saw an opportunity to advocate for something even bigger: the urgent need for greater diversity in cancer research.

Her diagnosis came by chance. She had been dealing with persistent nausea and bloating. These are symptoms that are often overlooked or dismissed, especially in women. A trip to the Trinity Health Livonia Emergency Room led to a CT scan, which revealed a mass covering her uterus and ovaries. A biopsy confirmed it was malignant. This was especially shocking because Jitra doesn't have a family history of cancer.

**"Ovarian cancer is very undetectable because most patients cannot tell by their symptoms," Jitra said. "If you have breast cancer, you might find a lump on your breast. With ovarian cancer, you don't have anything until it's at an advanced stage, which is stage three or four."**

Jitra began treatment under the care of Dr. Rebecca Liu, a Trinity Health IHA gynecologic oncologist at our Trinity Health Cancer Center - Ann Arbor. She had surgery, followed by months of chemotherapy.

Jitra also enrolled in a biospecimen banking trial, a research study where samples of her tumor tissue, blood or other biological materials were collected and stored. This allowed scientists to analyze her tumor's DNA and genetic makeup, helping to advance research on cancer detection and treatment.

### Why Minority Participation in Clinical Trials Matters

Jitra's experience in research has made her acutely aware of an issue that many don't realize: minorities are significantly underrepresented in clinical trials.

**"Most of the clinical trial data is overwhelmingly white," Jitra said. "Most of the patient population that doesn't hesitate to participate is white. My population, as an Asian or African American women, we hesitate."**

Patients of color are often hesitant to participate due to mistrust or lack of awareness. With cancer treatments and many other medical advancements being tested primarily on white patients, researchers often lack the data needed to determine how effective or safe certain therapies are for people of different racial and ethnic backgrounds.

Jitra hopes to change the narrative. She encourages patients, especially those in minority communities, to have open discussions with their doctors about the benefits of available clinical trial options.

### Compassionate Care and a Message of Hope

Despite the challenges of her diagnosis, Jitra remains incredibly grateful for the care she has received at Trinity Health. As someone who has worked alongside the nurses at the Infusion Center in Livonia, she already knew of their dedication, but experiencing it as a patient gave her a whole new perspective.

**"When I became a patient, they took care of me like family. I see them taking care of every patient like a family member," she said. "I go there, and they give me a hug and make sure I'm well taken care of."**

Jitra's journey is ongoing, but she refuses to let cancer define her. Instead, she is using her experience to raise awareness, advocate for diversity in research, and inspire others to take an active role in their health care.

By sharing her experience, she hopes to encourage others to consider clinical trials not just for themselves, but for the future of medicine. "I feel like my story might help other people to be aware of ovarian cancer. Women, we all have a chance to have ovarian cancer. Check ups are very important in routine care," Jitra said.



Left to right: Hayat Jaber, Jitra Brzuch and Kachaya Vichachang.

### THE TRINITY HEALTH IHA GYNECOLOGY ONCOLOGY TEAM

are dedicated specialists at the forefront of advanced treatments for patients with gynecologic malignancies. In the past year, they have performed 435 surgeries at Trinity Health Ann Arbor and Livonia.



**Angela Kueck, MD** chose to specialize in gynecologic oncology driven by her deep passion for women's health.

She appreciates the unique opportunity this specialty provides to deliver comprehensive care, from performing surgeries to administering chemotherapy. Dr. Kueck values the relationships she builds with her patients and their families, as the field allows her to be involved in every step of their journey. She finds the ability to make a meaningful impact on her patients' lives both fulfilling and incredibly rewarding.



**Kevin McCool, MD** knew early on that he wanted to be a cancer doctor. On his first

surgical rotation, he participated in a surgery for a woman with ovarian cancer and was amazed at what an outstanding gynecologist oncologist could do for patients. He recognized what a privilege it was to provide comprehensive care to a patient and the deep relationships that he can develop with his patients and their families.



**Rebecca Liu, MD** is passionate about women's health and provides high-quality,

comprehensive care to her patients as a gynecologic oncologist. This unique specialty allows her to perform staging surgery for patients with a new cancer diagnosis and follows them throughout their cancer course, managing their chemotherapy and enrolling them in clinical trials when appropriate. She finds that the opportunity to establish long term relationships with her patients and their families is very rewarding.

## 2024 Community Cancer Events



**2024: Brighton High School Leadership donates \$85,000 from Pink Week.**



**Faith & Blue with a Splash of Pink**, an event in the Livonia community, raised **\$8,407** to support our cancer patients. This led to an increase in patients participating in Low-Cost Mammogram Day, hosted annually in October.

## Cancer | Lifestyle Medicine

### Growing Partnership with The Farm and Lifestyle Medicine

#### The Farm

The Farm Share is a produce subscription program. We work with 20+ local farmers each week to design and pack a box of nutrient-dense local produce. Each season, 15-20 cancer patients receive fresh produce boxes, thanks to cancer center funding and The Farm team collaboration.

In collaboration with The Farm, we offer Produce to Patients (P2P). This supplies us with fresh produce during spring, summer and fall every Wednesday. We pick up the produce in the mornings and display it in the front lobby of the cancer center for patients to pick up. On average, we have enough fruits, vegetables, etc. to support approximately 20 patients weekly.

#### Lifestyle Medicine

### FOR THOSE LIVING BEYOND A CANCER DIAGNOSIS

A Lifestyle Medicine Approach for Cancer Survivors is a supportive, evidence-based program designed to help patients reclaim their health and well-being — whether they have completed primary treatment or are living with cancer as a chronic condition. Grounded in the principles of Lifestyle Medicine, this series empowers cancer survivors and thrivers at any stage with practical tools, expert guidance and a strong sense of community to move forward with confidence.

*This is a free service offered and made available by philanthropic funds.*



# Help Us Make a Difference in Our Patients' Lives

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