

Cancer treatments

LEADING EDGE AND COMMUNITY BASED

The National Cancer Institute estimates that over 90 percent of cancer patients should be treated within their own communities," reports Richard R. Caradonna, MD, of Florida Cancer Institute. Dr. Caradonna, who is board certified in internal medicine and medical oncology, is recognized for his outstanding skills and his demonstrated compassion.

We asked the doctor about the background and experience needed to bring patients in the community the latest cancer treatments available.

FAQs

Q: Dr. Caradonna, what are the benefits of community-based cancer treatment programs?

A: Oncology care is best delivered in the community because it offers a more efficient and expeditious plan in a more personalized setting. Patients are seen immediately, and a treatment plan is put into play usually within a week.

Q: I understand that Florida Cancer Institute offers a multidisciplinary cancer treatment program. Will you explain what that means?

A: Florida Cancer Institute has a large cross-section of professionals, which includes over 120 employees actively involved in the care of our patients at various levels and covers the broad spectrum of all malignancies. It provides the latest available modalities in treating cancers — not just with chemotherapy but also with biologic agents and the latest radiation therapy technology.

Florida Cancer Institute

Richard R. Caradonna, MD

Q: You have been involved in the treatment of cancer patients for many years. How important is it to keep the referring physician involved?

A: It is critical. The open communication between an oncologist and a primary care physician is crucial, because ultimately the primary care physician is coordinating the overall care of the patient. While I, the oncologist, am managing all the aspects of the cancer care, the primary care physician's involvement gives direction and management to any comorbidities [conditions that exist at the same time as the primary condition] to facilitate the patient's cancer care.

Q: You have served as principal investigator for various clinical research projects. Can you explain what that encompasses?

A: Basically, to practice cancer care properly, it is necessary to do ongoing research to be absolutely certain oncologists make the latest developments available to patients as quickly as possible. Therefore, it is critical that oncologists participate and actually formulate studies that are proven through national organizations and study groups that will be of benefit to patients with various forms of cancers. Florida Cancer Institute is extremely active in participating in clinical trials, both directly through pharmaceutical companies and through our affiliate, Shands Cancer Center at the University of Florida in Gainesville.

Also, for that small 2 to 3 percent of patients who need specialized care, clinical trials and research protocols are available, both through this affiliation and through those with our parent organization, U.S. Oncology. **FHCN**

This interview was conducted and written by Kris Kline and Mike Sabno, members of the editorial staff of Florida Health Care News.



Richard R. Caradonna, MD, is board certified in internal medicine and medical oncology. He received his bachelor of arts degree from Holy Cross College, Worcester, MA, and his medical degree from St. Louis University School of Medicine, MO. Following completion of a residency in internal medicine at Albany Medical College, he served as lieutenant commander, Medical Corps, in the U.S. Navy and subsequently completed a fellowship in medical oncology at Albany Medical College. Dr. Caradonna has held faculty positions at Albany Medical College and Thomas Jefferson School of Medicine. He has served as principal investigator for clinical research projects, has authored articles in the field of oncology, and has been actively involved in the treatment of cancer patients for over 21 years. Dr. Caradonna is a member of the American Society of Clinical Oncology and Florida Medical Association and is affiliated with Brooksville Regional Hospital, Spring Hill Regional Hospital, and Oak Hill Hospital, where he serves as chair of the Cancer Committee.

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Leading the charge against cancer ...

Dr. Caradonna welcomes calls from those interested in learning more about new cancer treatment and related topics. For further information, please call (352) 596-1926. Florida Cancer Institute is located at 7154 Medical Center Dr. in Spring Hill.

The Staff of FCI invite you to visit them on the Web at www.floridacancerinstitute.us.

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