



Profile: Outpatient Oncology Clinic at St. Catharines General Hospital

The inevitable reality is that today, someone in Ontario is diagnosed with cancer every eight minutes. We all know someone or of someone – mothers, fathers, sons, daughters, friends and neighbours, young and old – who have been touched by this disease.

Fortunately, the Outpatient Oncology Clinic at St. Catharines General Site (SCG) of the Niagara Health System (NHS) is here to care for and support Niagara residents throughout the continuum of cancer care.

Located on the third floor of the Moore/McSloy Wing at SCG, the Outpatient Oncology Clinic provides outpatient services including consultation, diagnostic procedures, education, support, chemotherapy treatment and follow-up for the vast majority of cancer patients.

Patient-centred care is provided by an interprofessional team of medical oncologists, specialized nurses, a palliative care physician and consulting radiation oncologists working collaboratively with the social worker, spiritual and religious care consultant, nutritionist, pharmacists, physiotherapists and others to support patients through the delivery of their personalized treatment program.

The Clinic has a longstanding relationship with Cancer Care Ontario (CCO) and the Hamilton Health Sciences' Juravinski Cancer Centre (JCC). A coordinated, supportive relationship with CCO and the JCC ensures comprehensive, integrated cancer services are available for the people of Niagara.

"We are thankful for our partnership with the Juravinski Cancer Centre and Cancer Care Ontario as it allows us to provide seamless care for patients requiring radiation treatment," explains Trudy Street, Manager of Clinical Oncology Services at NHS. "Radiation treatment is currently not available in Niagara, causing patients and radiation oncologists to travel between Hamilton and Niagara for treatment and related services."

The Clinic works hand-in-hand with several other community and system partners including:

- Ontario Breast Screening Program
- Hamilton Niagara Haldimand Brant Community Care Access Centre
- Canadian Cancer Society, Niagara Unit
- Hospice Niagara
- Wellspring Niagara
- Hamilton Niagara Haldimand Brant Community Hospice Palliative Care Network
- Hotel Dieu Shaver Health and Rehabilitation Centre
- Clinical trials organizations such as National Cancer Institute of Canada Clinical Trials Group and Ontario Clinical Oncology Group.

The NHS also provides satellite clinics at the Greater Niagara General (GNG) and Welland Hospital (WHS) Sites where consultation, follow-up and supportive care is provided to outpatients and inpatients promoting care as close to home as possible.

Walker Family Cancer Centre

The Oncology Program will evolve to a full-service cancer centre when the new health-care complex is constructed, aided by the generous philanthropic donation from Walker Industries. The Niagara Regional Cancer Centre, which will be substantially complete in 2011, will be known as the Walker Family Cancer Centre.

NHS, as the host hospital, will partner with Cancer Care Ontario to jointly operate the cancer centre, which will provide ambulatory cancer care, including: prevention, early detection, supportive care services and systemic and radiation therapy.

Once operational, the new cancer centre will become the hub of a coordinated regional cancer treatment network for Niagara, serving the more than 2,500 Niagara residents diagnosed with cancer each year.

This means that 95 per cent of Niagara cancer patients will be able to receive their chemotherapy and radiation treatment in the Niagara region; allowing them to make this personal journey at home, here in Niagara.

"Thanks to the support of initially the Hotel Dieu and now the Niagara Health System, as well as Cancer Care Ontario, and especially thanks to the tremendous dedicated staff in our clinic, we have been able to provide a level of care to cancer patients in Niagara that has served as a model for community cancer clinics for 23 years," says Dr. Brian Findlay, Chief of Oncology Services for the NHS. "With the new Walker Family Cancer Centre, we will be able to achieve our goal of providing that care almost entirely in Niagara."