August 2023

DCI E-news

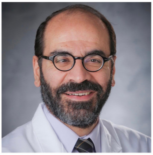
Duke Cancer Institute

DCI E-News is a monthly newsletter sharing the latest DCI and oncology-related announcements, feature stories, and news updates. For more, visit the DCI Blog.

In the Spotlight

Duke, UNC-Chapel Hill Awarded up to $50 Million from the FDA for New Research Center

The FDA will give $50 million over 5 years to Duke and UNC to set up a research center that will provide the federal agency "infrastructure and tools to shorten the drug and device development process." DCI members **Susan Halabi, PhD** (Biostats) and **Ehsan Samei, PhD** (Radiology), with Duke cardiologist **Robert Mentz, MD**, are principal investigators on the Duke side.



MORE: FDA gives $50M to Duke, UNC to establish world-class public health research center *(WTVD Raleigh)*

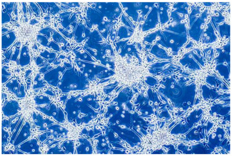
New Drug Approved in Leukemia

On July 20, 2023, the FDA approved quizartinib in combination with chemotherapy for patients with acute myeloid leukemia (AML) that harbor FLT3-ITD mutations. The approval was supported by findings from the international phase 3 QuANTUM-First trial showing a doubling of median overall: 31.9 months vs. 15.1 months. The findings were reported by **Harry Erba, MD, PhD**, in May in The Lancet. Patients on the trial ranged from 20 to 75 and the benefit was observed across the entire patient population. This type of AML is associated with a higher risk of relapse and a worse overall prognosis. READ/WATCH

New Study Disrupts Long-Held Paradigm for Tumor Resistance to Immunotherapy

A study published in Nature Cancer — authored by MD/PhD student **Emily Lerner** and co-author **Peter Fecci, MD, PhD**, describes how tumors, including glioblastoma, previously thought to be unresponsive to immunotherapy are responsive through a novel mechanism. The findings bridge the gap between the adaptive and innate immune response in cancer. READ

COMMENTARY: Correcting Drug Development Paradigm for Glioblastoma Requires Serial Tissue Sampling



Mustafa Khasraw, MD, is a senior author of a commentary, published in Nature Medicine, which notes that while obtaining several biopsies over the course of a patient's cancer to assess recurrence and/or treatment responses is widely accepted across many tumor types, this isn't the case for glioblastoma. Khasraw and co-authors are advocating for this to change. READ

Clinic & Community News

Duke Health Forges AI Partnership with Microsoft to Reshape Healthcare

This new 5-year strategic partnership will include the creation of a Duke Health AI Innovation Lab and Center of Excellence. Microsoft will provide training to foster a cloud-savvy IT workforce and construct a secure cloud environment to simplify and modernize IT operations. In addition, Duke intends to use Microsoft Azure's secure cloud to streamline clinical care, promote health equity, and further advancements in research and education. READ

OTHER DUKE AI NEWS: AI gets better at writing patient histories when physicians engineer the prompts :: Bridging the trust gap is key for AI to succeed in healthcare

Skin Cancer Incidence Dates Back 200+ Years & It's Rising

Skin cancer is the most common type of cancer in the U.S. (commonly basal and squamous cell). Diagnosis and treatment of non-melanoma skin cancer climbed 77% between 1994 and 2014. The American Cancer Society attributes the increase to improved skin cancer detection, more exposure to the sun and longer lifespans. "One of the most well-established, modifiable risk factors is UV exposure, and we have that from solid epidemiological data on the harms of UV exposure and increasing risk of skin cancer from that," said **April Salama, MD**, in an interview with USA Today. READ

Duke Regional Named America's Most Socially Responsible Hospital

The Lown Institute, a nonpartisan think tank, evaluated more than 3,600 hospitals for its Hospital Index for Social Responsibility. 54 made the honor roll by earning "A" grades in three areas: equity, value, and patient outcomes. This includes community investment, racial diversity & inclusion, and pay equity. Duke Regional took the top spot. Last year it was number #2. READ

ALSO: America's most 'socially responsible' hospital is in the Triangle *(Raleigh News & Observer)*

Retiree-Turned-Cancer-Survivor Brings New Meaning to Service

Cancer Care JUNE 2023

Jim Slaughter with Kelli Van Wagner, MN RN OCN, Clinical Operations Director, Duke Cancer Center

Diagnosed ten years ago with stage four small bowel cancer and four years ago with stage four lung cancer, **Jim Slaughter** knows first-hand the challenges, both physical and emotional, associated with oncology care. His onetime professional affiliation with Duke, sense of humor, and life-changing bout with cancer drive him to try and make the experiences of others the best possible. READ in the June issue of the Cancer Care Calendar

More about Jim Slaughter : WATCH/READ #MyDukeCancerStory: A Life In Service To Others

Leaving Nothing but Smiles in Their Wake

Cancer Care JULY 2023

Delilah enjoying belly rubs at Survivorship Day on June 7.

Photo by Alex Boerner

Delilah, a 50-pound Golden Retriever, and her Duke pet therapy partner, Sharon Pitz, make their way to Duke Central Tower and Duke University Hospital each month to visit with patients and their families. Sharon, who retired from Duke Nutrition Services after a 43-year career as a dietician, helped to establish Pets at Duke in 1994 and was the first therapy dog team in the program. Pitz began visiting on the hematology oncology units at Duke University Hospital with her then therapy dogs, George and Boulder. Now teamed with Delilah, they continue to leave nothing but smiles in their wake. READ

VIEW the **August** Cancer Support Calendar (click to view)

WELCOME!

Terry McDonnell, DNP, ACNP-BC
Chief Nurse Executive Duke University Health System
(effective Sept. 5)

Dr. McDonnell has a doctorate in nursing and is an acute care-certified nurse practitioner who specializes in treating patients with gastrointestinal cancers.

Most recently, she served as the vice president of clinical operations and chief nursing officer of the Fred Hutchinson Cancer Center. READ

Laura Alder, MD
Thoracic Medical Oncologist (DRAH, DUH, DWCC)
Assistant Professor of Medicine

Dr. Alder recently graduated from her Hematology-Oncology Fellowship at Duke. She joined the Duke faculty and DCI thoracic team on July 31 and her first clinic day is today, August 8.

In addition, Alder will offer consultations to patients with brain and spine metastasis during her clinic at Duke Raleigh.

Brian Hughley, MD, FACS
Head and Neck Oncology & Microvascular Reconstructive Surgeon
(DRAH)

Dr. Hughley completed his fellowship in 2015 at the University of Iowa. Most recently he served as assistant professor of Head and Neck Surgical Oncology at University of Florida Health. Hughley joined the DCI Head & Neck team on July 31 and his first clinic day is August 11. He will also see veterans at the Durham VA Medical Center. READ

MORE

Moving Medicine Forward: **Dr. Shariff** Receives Community Cancer Centers Innovators Award *(Duke Dept. of Medicine)*

Duke RadOnc Resident **Jim Leng, MD**, has received an ASTRO/ARRO Global Scholars Grant to increase access to pediatric radiation oncology and brachytherapy in Tanzania *(ASTRO/ARRO)*

The intersection of insurance with shared decision making for advanced prostate cancer care *(Uro Today)*
Features **Rand Wilcox Vanden Berg, MD**

WATCH: Exploring Racial Biases in Clinical Trials: The PANTHER Study's Findings on Prostate Cancer *(Uro Today)*
Features **Daniel George, MD**

Research News

STUDY: New Research Casts Doubt on Role of Fungus in Driving Pancreatic Cancer

Four years ago, a report that a common species of fungus might fuel pancreatic cancer offered a promising new view of the deadly disease. But in working to validate the finding, DCI researchers led by **Peter Allen, MD, PhD**, have found no such association. The study appeared in the journal Nature.

"There is a growing body of literature connecting the human microbiome to disease, and this was particularly compelling for pancreatic cancer, but our findings did not support an association between fungi and the development of pancreatic cancer in humans." READ

DukeSurgery
Jennifer Plichta, MD
Breast Surgery

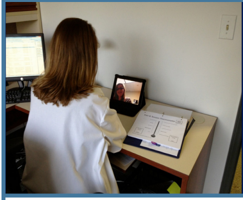
Jennifer Plichta, MD, on Improved Staging for De Novo Metastatic Breast Cancer

Jennifer Plichta, MD, MS, and team have developed a novel prognostic staging system, for de novo metastatic breast cancer (dnMBC). They report in the Journal of Clinical Oncology that this new staging system reflects improved outcomes for this disease, accurately summarizes prognosis, and facilitates patient-provider communication. Using large population data sets and including estrogen receptor, progesterone receptor, and HER2, and grade, they identified four unique subgroups of patients with dnMBC with "distinctly different survival." Plichta's paper was an ASCO Reading Room selection. READ

Check is Co-PI of a New $500K MBC Research Grant with Racial Disparities Focus

Devon Check, PhD, is co-PI of a new $500K Susan G Komen grant to DCI and UNC Lineberger Cancer Center investigators. The project aims to develop a better understanding of key social and biological determinants of health related to inflammation, chronic stress, and immune system changes that impact metastatic breast cancer outcomes. READ

Komen Awards New Metastatic Breast Cancer Research Grant



STUDY: Improved Pain Management for Patients with Advanced Cancer

A clinical research study led by DCI/Duke Psychiatry faculty **Joseph Winger, PhD**, and **Tamara Somers, PhD**, found that cognitive behavioral therapy-based Meaning-Centered Pain Coping Skills Training is a promising approach for improving pain management in advanced cancer patients. The findings were published in PsychoOncology. READ

*Other DCI/Duke Psychiatry faculty on the study included **Sarah Kelleher, PhD; Katherine Ramos, PhD, MA, MEd; Francis Keefe, PhD, MS;** and **Laura Porter, PhD**; from Duke Biostats; **Reginald Lerebours, MS,** and **Maren Olsen, PhD**, and from Duke Population Health Sciences/DCI **Devon Check, PhD,** and **Karen Steinhauser, PhD**.*

MORE

The Relationship Between PNH and Aplastic Anemia *(Health Central)*
Features **Carlos DeCastro, MD**

Breakthroughs in HER2-amplified colorectal cancer *(Medscape)*
John Strickler, MD

Cristina Gasparetto , MD, Reviews Data for Selinexor Combination Regimen in R/R Multiple Myeloma *(Targeted Oncology)*

Adding Olaparib to Abiraterone does not worsen HRQoL in mCRPC *(Renal and Urology News)*
Andrew Armstrong, MD, MSc

Team Spirit

DCI Represents at AACI CRI 2023

Colleen Riggan, BSN, RN, the ARPM for DCI's Prostate & Urologic Cancers program (top left in red, with Chloe Fournier, MBA) presented a poster on the results of a piloted protocol review mentorship program for 3rd year MedOnc Fellows. DCI COEE's **Kearston Ingraham, MPH** (pictured above, top right) was invited to speak at a panel discussion on innovative strategies for clinical trial improvement. Also in attendance (pictured above, bottom right) were DCI research practice managers **Julia Rasmussen, MS, BSN, RN,** and **Wanda Wray, RN, BSN, MS; Jamie Roberts** (RPM, Duke CTSI); and **Sarah Knowles, MPH, PhD** (ARPM, DCI).

White Ribbon Presented to Duke Regional Cancer Center for World Lung Cancer Day

On August 1, the Duke Regional Hospital Cancer Center was gifted a custom white ribbon — to help honor those battling lung cancer — by the Durham County Department of Public Health and Bull City Woodshop.

The gesture was made possible by the nonprofit White Ribbon Project. Pictured is Olivia Cunningham with the Durham County Department of Public Health presenting the ribbon to the DRH Cancer Center's Nurse Manager of Operations **Jana Linsenmeyer, BSN, RN, CMSRN.**

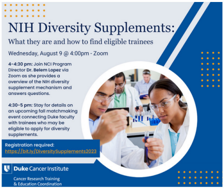
HNS&CS Department Partners with Area Churches & DRAH for Community Event

Over the weekend, a team of volunteers led by **Trinitia Cannon, MD, Leda Scearce, CCC-SLP, MM, MS,** and **Dina Abouelella, MPH,** which also included **Tammara Watts, MD, PhD,** and **Katharine Ciarrocca, DMD, MSEd,** partnered with North Raleigh International Baptist Church (NRIBC) and Duke Raleigh Hospital to offer head and neck cancer screenings. Dozens of families from the Cedar Creek Apartment Complex community came out for the free screenings, education, and games, and Duke Raleigh donated backpacks full of school supplies. READ

Events

Academic Events (strictly academic or clinical)

August



NIH Diversity Supplements:

What they are and how to find eligible trainees

Wednesday, August 9 @ 4:00pm - Zoom

4-4:30 pm: Join NCI Program Director **Dr. Belem Lopez** via Zoom as she provides a overview of the NIH diversity supplement mechanism and answers questions.

4:30-5 pm: Stay for details on an upcoming fall matchmaking event connecting Duke faculty with trainees who may be eligible to apply for diversity supplements.

Registration required: https://bit.ly/DiversitySupplements2023

Duke Cancer Institute
Cancer Research Training
& Education Coordination

AUG. 9 (4p to 5:00p) via ZOOM

4p to 4:30p NCI Director Dr. Belem Lopez presents "NIH Diversity Supplements: What they are and how to find eligible trainees"

4:30 to 5p Session with Dr. Gerard Blobe detailing an upcoming matchmaking event connecting DCI faculty with trainees

REGISTER in advance

September

SEPT. 14 (5p to 6p via Zoom): Black Men in Medicine "Moving Forward Together" (Zoom series) RSVP here
**Calendar invites with Zoom details will be sent upon registration*
Questions? Email johann@duke.edu

October

OCT. 1-3 (in-person & virtual): 2023 AACI/CCAF Annual Meeting
REGISTER TODAY | VIRTUAL OPTION AVAILABLE

LOCATION: Salamander Washington DC (formerly Mandarin Oriental) Washington, DC

OCT. 2-3 (in person): "Celebrating Scientific Discoveries that Advance Human Health: A Scientific Symposium in Recognition of Robert J. Lefkowitz's 50 years at Duke"

This event will include scientific presentations from 7 Nobel Laureates as well as other eminent scientists.

The event also includes a special leadership session with **Coach K**, Executive Vice President for Health Affairs and Dean **Mary E. Klotman**, President **Vincent Price**, and **Dr. Lefkowitz**, led by **Dr. Sim Sitkin**

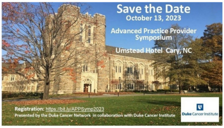
**All faculty, staff, trainees, and students are welcome to attend. This event is also open to the public.*

More information, full schedule, and event registration

OCT. 13: DCI/DCN APP Symposium

LOCATION: Umstead Hotel, Cary, NC

REGISTER



Save the Date
October 13, 2023

Advanced Practice Provider Symposium

Umstead Hotel Cary, NC

Registration: https://bit.ly/APPSymp2023
Presented by the Duke Cancer Network in collaboration with Duke Cancer Institute

Duke Cancer Institute

Special Events (general public welcome)

August

ALL OF AUGUST through SEPT. 6: Strike Out for Sarcoma Sneaker Drive at Duke Cancer Center Durham to support sarcoma research at DCI (see ad below)

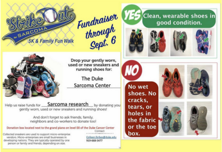
September

Through SEPT. 6 or SEPT. 10: Strike Out for Sarcoma Sneaker Drive to benefit sarcoma research at DCI

LOCATION: Duke Cancer Center Durham, Level 00

*Donors may drop off their gently used sneakers in the bin up until Sept. 6 OR drop them off at the Strike Out for Sarcoma 5K on Sept. 10.

(See ad below, click to enlarge)



Strike Out for SARCOMA 5K & Family Fun Walk

Fundraiser through Sept. 6

Drop your gently worn, used or new sneakers and running shoes for:

The Duke Sarcoma Center

Help us raise funds for Sarcoma research by donating your gently worn, used or new sneakers and running shoes!

And don't forget to ask friends, family, neighbors and co-workers to donate too!

Donation box located next to the grand piano on level 00 of the Duke Cancer Center

Collected sneakers are used to support micro-enterprise vendors. Micro-enterprises are small businesses in developing nations. They are typically operated by one person or family and friends, depending on size.

Contact
Colleen.forbes@duke.edu
919-668-5477

YES Clean, wearable shoes in good condition.

NO No wet shoes. No cracks, tears, or holes in the fabric or the toe box.

SEPT. 10: Strike Out for Sarcoma 5K event

DETAILS

LOCATION: WakeMed Soccer Park in Cary, NC

SEPT. 23: Gail Parkins Memorial Ovarian Cancer Walk ovarian cancer walk

Gail Parkins Memorial
Ovarian Cancer Walk & 5k Run
Saturday, September 23, 2023

SEPT. 29 (in person & virtual, 5:30p to 8p): "New Approaches in the Care of Patients with Prostate and Urologic Cancers" Symposium

For patients! Learn about the latest clinical advances in the treatment of kidney, prostate, and bladder cancers during a live discussion among faculty/oncologists in the DCI Center for Prostate & Urologic Cancers. Speakers include: **William Berry, MD**; **Michael Harrison, MD**; **Zach Reitman, MD, PhD**; **Ankeet Shah, MD**; **Michael Abern, MD**; **Andrew Armstrong, MD, MSc**; **Ryan Fecteau, MD, PhD**; **Christopher Hoimes, DO**; **Shahla Bari, MBBS**; and **Hannah McManus, MD**.

AGENDA

SEPT. 30: Tackle Cancer Tailgate/Duke Football game
DCI hosts a Tailgate party. Come and cheer on our Duke Blue Devils against The Fighting Irish of Notre Dame!

TICKET INFORMATION

LOCATION: Wallace Wade Football Stadium, Duke University

DCI CENTER FOR PROSTATE AND UROLOGIC CANCERS
TACKLE CANCER
TAILGATE

SEPT. 30: CRUSH Colorectal Cancer 5K (back after a 4 year hiatus) REGISTER

LOCATION: former Northgate Mall

2023
CRUSH
COLORECTAL CANCER
5K
run • walk

Saturday, September 30th
NORTHGATE MALL
DURHAM
DUKECRC5K.ORG

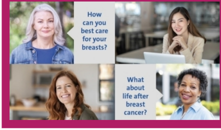
Scan to sign up and register today!

October

OCT. 7 (in person): 7th Annual "What's Best for Breasts: A Conversation with Duke Clinicians"
*First time in person since 2019!

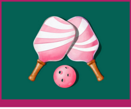
Agenda & Registration Coming Soon

LOCATION: Trent Semans Center lower level


How can you best care for your breasts?
What about life after breast cancer?

OCT. 20, 21, 22: Duke Cancer Institute Pickle for Pink Tournament & Silent Auction to benefit Duke Breast Surgery and Duke Breast Oncology programs.
OCT. 20: Pickle Ball Exhibition Match, inc. Collin Shick
OCT. 21-22: Pickle Ball women's doubles, men's doubles, mixed doubles

LOCATION: Duke Faculty Club
LEARN MORE



Duke Cancer Institute 50th Anniversary | 50 Years of Life-Changing Care

Julie Poucher Harbin, Senior Writer, DCI, is Managing Editor of the DCI E-News & the DCI Blog.

FILL OUT THIS FORM to submit announcements of upcoming events; new faculty, fellows, or residents; honors, awards, recognitions, new roles, promotions; and other news you wish to share for potential inclusion in the next DCI E-news or internal channels.

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