



Cutting the ribbon on the renovated Cancer Center at South County Hospital are, from left to right, Claudia Swain, Eve Keenan, Thomas Breen, Kimberly O'Donnell, Lou Giancola, president/CEO of South County Health; Leah Arsenault, RN; Dr. J. Russell Corcoran, Rob Panoff, Noreen Mattis, Ann Marie McGarty, RN; Dr. Aaron Weisbord, Rachel Craven, Dr. James Smythe, and Anne Schmidt.

South County Hospital completes extensive Cancer Center renovations

WAKEFIELD – On Nov. 17, South County Hospital celebrated the completion of 14 months of extensive renovations to its Cancer Center with an open house. Located on the first floor of the Hospital's Read Wing, the Center allows many existing services to be accessed in one place – a significant benefit for patients and their families, as well as for providers.

The design of the renovation was based on input from the Patient & Family Advisory Council, South County Health oncology providers, and architectural data on best-practice standards for cancer care environments. The result is a light-filled space that is home to exam rooms, physician offices, consultation rooms, infusion therapy bays, education space, a meditation room, and more – finished and furnished in quality materials and a color scheme that reflects the natural hues of this coastal community.

"Bringing many cancer care services together under one roof enhances clinical collaboration and innovation, while creating a more convenient treatment experience for patients and families," said **GERALD COLVIN, DO**, Medical Director of Oncology/Hema-tology. "What we have is a true community cancer center."

"We treat virtually every kind of cancer," said medical oncologist **JAMES L. SMYTHE, MD**, noting that South County Hospital is one of only two hospitals in Rhode Island with a board-certified oncology pharmacist on staff. "Even in cases where a specific treatment is needed for a rare cancer, we work closely with other cancer centers, referring for care when needed and often providing prescribed treatments here at the Hospital. It's incredibly important that patients have access to quality cancer care close to home. Commuting

long distances for care presents very real implications for patients. It requires people to spend time in the car during one of the most difficult times of their lives, instead of with family and friends where they belong."

In addition, he said, clinical concerns – from fatigue to the stress caused by navigating urban traffic to post-treatment nausea and other complications – mean the convenience of treatment impacts a patient's well-being.

Accredited by the Commission on Cancer, the services of South County Health's oncology/hematology program includes board-certified providers, a multi-disciplinary tumor board that meets weekly, oncology nurse navigators, rehabilitation, and complementary therapies such as Reiki and massage.

"By the end of the decade, it's estimated that 900 Washington County residents will be diagnosed with cancer annually," **LOU GIANCOLA**, president/CEO of South County Health, noted at the dedication ceremony. "We have a decades-long tradition of caring for cancer patients here and this newly designed space enhances the delivery of that care by facilitating collaboration among providers and improving the patient and family experience. While there are renowned cancer centers in our area, such as Dana Farber in Boston, we – like other community hospitals across the country – are capable of treating most cancers with the same level of expertise, which is why nationally 85 percent of cancer patients receive treatment in a community hospital setting. The added benefit to patients and families is the comfort and convenience of being able to remain close to home." ♦