



NEWS RELEASE

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Dedication of N.C. Cancer Hospital Highlights New Face of Cancer Care

CHAPEL HILL, NC – North Carolina Governor Bev Perdue, UNC President Erskine Bowles, and other dignitaries welcomed a crowd of more than 500 today to the dedication of the \$180 million, 315,000 square foot N.C. Cancer Hospital.

More than triple the previous cancer clinic space, which was located in a 1950s-era building, the new hospital was funded by the state of North Carolina and designed with patients and families in mind. Completed ahead of schedule and under budget as an expansion of UNC Health Care's Chapel Hill campus, the hospital boasts abundant natural light, easy navigation, public artworks by N.C. artists and top-notch amenities that facilitate both outstanding care and outreach across the state.

“We are enormously grateful to the people and state of North Carolina, whose investment in this hospital allows us to deliver the excellent care for which UNC is known in an environment that reflects the caring and pride we have in how we treat cancer patients and their families,” said William Roper, MD, MPH, CEO of the UNC Health Care System and Dean of the School of Medicine.

The hospital, clinical home of UNC Lineberger Comprehensive Cancer Center, boasts state-of-the-art imaging, radiation oncology, pediatric treatment, infusion and inpatient facilities. In addition, patients and families benefit from the much-expanded patient and family resource center, part of UNC's Comprehensive Cancer Support Program, which provides educational materials, counseling and symptom management services, survivorship programs, yoga classes, relaxation, an expanded “Brighter Image” boutique providing wigs, scarves and other products, and a place for patients and families to relax.

Cancer patients like Nancy Raasch of Chapel Hill, who has seen her doctors in both the old and new facilities, often spend a great deal of time receiving treatment in areas like the infusion suites. Upon visiting the N.C. Cancer Hospital for the first time, she said, “Finally, the quality of the space matches the quality of the care.”

For patients like Raasch, the new building means that time will be spent in expanded infusion areas with space for caregivers and relatives, views of campus or the landscaped hospital courtyard, the option for privacy and amenities like individual televisions to help pass the time during treatment.

Today's festivities, including ribbon cutting honors done by cancer survivors from across the state, were also streamed online to hundreds of viewers via the hospital's new state-of-the-art teleconferencing facilities, funded by the University Cancer Research Fund (UCRF).

"These high-definition videoconferencing capabilities allow teams of UNC specialists from various disciplines to talk with physicians across the state in real time, so that we can collaborate with them to develop the best, individualized treatment plans for each patient – an approach that has been shown to improve patient care," said Richard M. Goldberg, MD, the N.C. Cancer Hospital's Physician-in-Chief.

"The ability to collaborate across the state is central to our Hospital's and Center's role," notes Shelton Earp, MD, Director of UNC Lineberger Comprehensive Cancer Center.

"Our outstanding faculty has grown with recruitment of additional clinicians and scientists through UCRF support. Together they are making exciting discoveries. However, this progress is meaningless unless we can make it available to North Carolinians through clinical trials in collaboration with centers and physicians throughout the state. Partnerships help us hasten the translation of new laboratory findings into patient care. The new hospital and network will provide more patients with access to the very latest advances," he said.

The state's generous investment in improving cancer care is being enhanced through private support. To date, 15 naming gifts totaling \$1.7 million have been made for the N.C. Cancer Hospital and approved by the UNC Health Care Board. Because the facility was completed under budget and debt free, these gifts will not be used for ongoing operational expenses, but will be strategically invested to provide support to necessary start-up funding for unique and expanded patient and family services and to enhance innovative, early phase clinical research.

"We can't begin to express our gratitude both to the state and to our generous donors, whose investments help us provide the exceptional services that our patients deserve. Their gifts to the N.C. Cancer Hospital endowment fund will ensure perpetual support for these important priorities," Goldberg added.

The dedication also featured the opening of a specially-commissioned photo exhibit, "The New Face of Cancer Care." The photo display, created by N.C. photographers Neil Boyd, Rachel Garrison and Tamara Lackey, features survivors and caregivers and their stories. It will be on display in the N.C. Cancer Hospital lobby through November 13, 2009. A public open house will be held at the hospital on September 26, 2009 from 1:00-3:00 p.m. For more information, go to <http://unclineberger.org>.

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