

# 2017 Public Outcomes Report:

## Standard 1.12

The Virginia Piper Cancer Institute – River Falls is a physician led and directed program which features a Hospital Associate Cancer Program as defined by the Commission on Cancer (CoC). The CoC, a quality program of the American College of Surgeons granted Three-Year Accreditation with Commendation to the Virginia Piper Cancer Institute – River Falls in 2016.

The CoC is dedicated to improving survival and quality of life for cancer patients through standard-setting, access to prevention and early detection programs, cancer education, rehabilitation, support services such as psycho-social and survivorship care, research, education, and ongoing monitoring and continuous improvements in patient care. Each calendar year, the cancer committee provides a report of patient or program outcomes to the public on some of these standards.

### 4.2 SCREENING PROGRAM

At the Virginia Piper Cancer Institute – River Falls, lung cancer has been in the top five cancers since 2012. In 2014, 86 percent of lung cases were diagnosed at stage IV. It is only in recent years that a test known as a low-dose CT scan can help lower the risk of dying from this disease. This screening helps to find lung cancer at an early stage so treatment options are more successful.

The Institute at River Falls has collaborated with the Virginia Piper Cancer Institute – United Hospital to offer this screening option to our community members at the United campus. Patients will need to meet with their primary care provider for eligibility criteria and an order. For patients who are concerned about driving in metro areas, transportation will be made available from River Falls to United.

Referrals to lung cancer screening were tracked for a total of three weeks. During this three-week period, one patient was referred and completed a shared decision-

making visit. A low-dose CT scan was performed with negative results. This program will continue to be offered to patients in the community until the time River Falls is able to offer lung cancer screening on site.

### 4.6 MONITORING COMPLIANCE WITH EVIDENCE-BASED GUIDELINES

Peter Dahlberg, MD, completed a physician study on prostate cancer. Over the past five years, our numbers have decreased and are hard to track due to urology physicians being off-site. The committee wanted to make certain that evidence-based guidelines were being followed. The main referring urology clinic is doing all surgeries at a sister hospital due to River Falls Area Hospital no longer performing robotic surgery. Many patients stay within the urology clinic walls and don't make their way to River Falls unless there is metastatic disease. Of the prostate patients that we do see, 100 percent are concordant with evidence-based national treatment guidelines and/or prognostic indicators.

### 4.7 STUDIES OF QUALITY

The cancer committee conducted a survey to identify the potential rehabilitation needs of patients with cancer who have completed treatment at the Virginia Piper Cancer Institute. Feedback received from breast cancer survivors at a local breast cancer support group indicated that there may be a general lack of support following completion of chemotherapy. The cancer committee chose to focus on rehabilitation services due to the wide range of symptoms these services can positively impact. Liat Goldman, MD, Allina Health's medical director for cancer rehabilitation and lymphedema, and co-medical director of the Survivorship Program stated that studies show 60 percent of patients with cancer would benefit from participating in a rehabilitation service.

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Of the 31 patients who returned the survey:

- 25 percent reported fatigue/lack of energy
- 22.5 percent reported tingling or numbness in feet and hands
- 19 percent reported sleep disturbance
- 16 percent reported trouble with memory and concentration
- 13 percent reported loss of strength
- 10 percent reported balance/walking/mobility and return to work concerns.

Fifty two percent of the patients were not aware of the Cancer Rehabilitation Program. If they were aware of the program, 64 percent did not participate. If they did not participate, 46 percent reported they did not feel it was needed while 23 percent stated the program was not discussed or they did not have any further follow up after initial discussion. In 2018, River Falls will focus on patient awareness of the cancer rehabilitation program and its benefits.

## 4.8 QUALITY IMPROVEMENTS

Registered nurses working in the Infusion Department are required to complete annual education to maintain competence in that specialty. In an effort to ensure these competencies are completed, a Nurse Educator position was created in 2017. The nurse educator will provide expertise and support to meet the education and training needs of the department. This role involves monitoring the educational activities of the department and validating competency of staff to ensure regulatory and accreditation requirements are met. Major functions include planning, implementing, conducting and evaluating education programs and processes in order to promote competence, productivity and continuous learning in the department. The nurse educator will enable learning for the enhancement of patient care.

*Source: Journal for Nurses in Professional Development, March/April 2017*