

# Leading the way in radiation oncology



Radiation therapy is just one component of an overall cancer treatment plan, but one that approximately 60 percent of patients face during their battle with the disease. It includes the use of high energy x-rays to treat the disease by destroying cancer cells or ensuring they are unable to grow and divide. It is often used following cancer surgery or in addition to chemotherapy.

At the Hallmark Health System (HHS) CHEM Center for Radiation Oncology, conveniently located on Montvale Ave. in Stoneham, patients are offered the perfect blend of clinical expertise coupled with compassionate, personalized care to help them beat cancer and return to healthy living. The Center has been caring for area patients for more than 20 years and was the first freestanding radiation oncology site in Massachusetts. It was recently awarded a three-year term of accreditation in radiation oncology by the American College of Radiology (ACR), the nation's oldest and most widely respected radiation oncology accrediting body. The ACR seal of approval represents the highest level of quality and patient safety and is awarded only to facilities that meet specific guidelines and standards.

The Center's multi-disciplinary team is made up of physicians, physicists, nurses, radiation therapists and dosimetrists who are experts in the use of radiation oncology equipment and technologies. The team is led by Medical Director Paul McKeough, MD, who is board-certified in radiation oncology and a fellow of the American Board of Radiology. The Center uses advanced technologies and equipment, which rivals what is offered at some of the Boston academic medical centers.

Dr. McKeough said the staff communicates with patients' primary care physicians so that all of their providers are on the same page, ensuring continuity of care. He said the Center also has great relationships with Boston hospitals, who send many of their patients to HHS for radiation oncology.



Lynn Marcinkowski, a radiation therapist at the Center, gets a patient ready for her radiation treatment.

"The strength of our Center is being able to provide patients with the best cancer care without leaving the communities they live and work in," said Dr. McKeough.

When patients are first referred to the Center they have a consultation with Dr. McKeough followed by a planning session with the multi-disciplinary team, who then come up with a comprehensive treatment plan that will outline how best to attack the cancerous cells while protecting the area of healthy tissue around it. Most patients receive radiation therapy Monday through Friday for about 20 minutes a day for a period of seven weeks.

"We pride ourselves on being a patient-focused Center where people aren't just a number," said Glenn Davis, RTTR, operations manager of oncology for HHS. "We see our patients every day for several months so we really get to know them and build up those personal and family relationships."

To learn more about the Center, visit [www.hallmarkhealth.org](http://www.hallmarkhealth.org) and select "Programs" or call (781) 279-0655.