

32963

HEALTH

THAT HEALING FEELING

**Scully-Welsh expands integrated
medicine treatment for cancer patients**

HEALTH

Scully-Welsh expands integrated medicine treatment for cancer patients

BY KERRY FIRTH
Correspondent

A cancer diagnosis can be devastating and debilitating. Often the patient is in such a state of disbelief and confusion that they don't know where to turn or how to help themselves through the journey facing them.

The physicians at Cleveland Clinic Indian River Hospital's Scully-Welsh Cancer Center understand that treating a patient for cancer is more than just treating the disease. It also means helping the patient heal emotionally and physically as they undergo the biggest fight of their lives. That's why they instituted the Integrated Medicine Program for patients undergoing cancer treatments at their facility.

"The purpose of cancer centers is to treat and cure cancer," said Dr. Eleni Anastasia Tousimis, director of the Scully-Welsh Cancer Center. "But more than that, we aim through integrated medicine to actually improve the patient's quality of life and treat their symptoms from the cancer treatment that they received.

"We offer 20 complementary services like music and art therapy, acupuncture, nutrition advice, and patient navigation assistance to help our patients cope and heal.

"When an individual is undergoing chemo infusion or radiation, our volunteers roll out a cart to offer food to the patient. It's not just any food cart loaded with junk food. It's a masterpiece because we did a lot of research to identify the best food for patients



undergoing slow therapy to prevent nausea and vomiting. We have a lot of ginger, anti-inflammatory foods, kumbucha and protein shakes to really help patients who are feeling malnourished during their treatment.

"It's been such a wildly successful model here at Scully-Welsh Cancer Center that it's now been rolled out throughout Cleveland Clinic Florida, and it's been picked up by a Louisiana cancer center."

Cancer patients are also offered a complementary 12-week exercise program led by a personal trainer from an Ohio nonprofit called Maple Tree. Data shows certain exercises decrease anxiety and increase feelings

of wellbeing in addition to decreasing the heart rate and blood pressure.

The Art and Music Therapy Program strives to bring joy to the patients while they are undergoing their treatment. Art projects give them something to do instead of just sitting through an infusion, and music allows their minds to drift away from the reality they are facing.

Tom Colombo, a 90-year-old survivor of head and neck cancer, received 20 chemotherapy sessions at the Scully-Welsh Cancer Center and found music not only helped him get through the treatments, but brought joy to other patients and staff who walked by.

"When I walked in the first day and saw that magnificent grand piano in the lobby, I said, 'Jesus, you found something that I thought wasn't positive and you turned it into a positive thing,'" he said. "All the days I spent there, I came in and enjoyed the piano."

"Our visiting therapy dogs bring joy and calm to our patients as well as to our staff," Dr. Tousimis continued. "Petting a dog creates a sense of wellbeing and helps decrease anxiety. Our staff benefits as much as our patients from the pup visits because they are in very stressful jobs and can often experience burn out."

There are long-term residual effects from a cancer diagnosis as well. Just this year, Scully-Welsh Cancer Center started a new survivorship program for patients who are five or more years out from cancer treatment, which is designed to help survivors deal with challenges they face after their treatments and help them achieve a good quality of life.

Sarah Taylor is the administrative program coordinator for Scully-Welsh Cancer Center and has been charged with heading up the Integrative Medicine department. She and Dr. Tousimis partnered to bring a wide range of complementary services to their cancer patients in 2022 and she is con-



Call 772-562-5051
CromerAndCairnsDental.com

1225 US HWY 1, VERO BEACH, FL 32960
JULIE A. CROMER, DDS

We've got all your dental or cosmetic needs in one place!

\$79

NEW PATIENT SPECIAL
COMPREHENSIVE EXAM
FULL SET XRAYs
TREATMENT PLAN
CLEANING*

*Not in combination with any other offer, insurance or discount plan. Offer good for new patients only. Cleaning included is only in absence of periodontal disease. (D0150) (D1110) (D0210) (D0330)

DENTAL LAB ON PREMISES

The patient and any other person responsible for payment has a right to refuse to pay, cancel payment, or be reimbursed for payment for any other services, examination, or treatment that is preformed as a result of and within 72 hours of responding to the advertisement for the free, discounted fee, or reduced fee service, examination, or treatment.



Personalized
BOTOX & FILLER
treatments!

Frown Lines? Wrinkles? Crow's Feet?
Forehead Lines? Fuller Lips?

WE'VE GOT YOU
COVERED!

- ◆ COSMETIC DENTISTRY
- ◆ GENERAL DENTISTRY
- ◆ DENTURES & PARTIALS
- ◆ DENTAL IMPLANTS
- ◆ WHITENING
- ◆ BOTOX & FILLER TREATMENTS
- ◆ GUM SURGERY
- ◆ WALK-INS WELCOME
- ◆ FINANCING & SAVINGS PLAN AVAILABLE

SE HABLA ESPANOL

HEALTH

tinually expanding the program as well as doing community outreach to inform the public.

“We’ll be offering complimentary physiological counseling for patients in about month and we’ve recently added on some more holistic services like vibrational sound therapy with crystal and Himalayan singing bowls and aromatherapy with lavender-infused towels for patients and caregivers during their chemo and radiation sessions,” Taylor explained.

“Our new Blue Program provides orchids to all of our newly diagnosed cancer patients. We’re constantly looking for ways to enhance the lives of patients.”

Taylor and Dr. Tousimis are outside-the-box thinkers looking for unique ways to assist cancer patients, so they were happy to listen when Ocean Research and Conservation Association reached out recently to propose a collaboration. The Vero Beach environmental organization’s idea was to help cancer patients by bringing them out to the Indian River Lagoon, where the organization conducts research, because nature is a natural healer.

“We just started a nature program with them because part of healing is

getting out into nature and it’s also a way for cancer patients to meet other people who are going through similar experiences,” Taylor said. “Some of our patients don’t have family or friends close by and they are isolated. People receiving cancer treatment can face a very challenging and lonely time, and getting them out in nature helps them [feel better and] engage with other peo-

ple. They can also interact with others in our numerous support groups. We intend to keep adding to the list of programs and welcome input and support from the community.”

“It’s been my dream to do a program like this. I wanted to do it when I was at Georgetown, but we didn’t have the space or the resources,” Dr. Tousimis said. “Here at Cleveland Clinic Indi-

an River Hospital, we have the space, and we have the support of a philanthropic community that funds our integrated treatment programs.”

For more information about the Integrated Medicine program at Scully-Welsh Cancer Center, contact Sarah Taylor at 772-226-4837. ■



WHY FLORIDA FAMILIES ARE CHOOSING ADVOCATE

- Free In-Home Consultation
- 24-Hour Customer Support
- Long-Term Care Insurance
- Certified Care Providers
- Nurses, Nurse’s Aides & Companions
- Veteran’s Aid & Attendance

CONTACT YOUR LOCAL CLIENT CARE LIAISON!

📞 Lisa Buell | 772.882.5454

🌐 www.AdvocateInHomeCare.com



Licensed to Operate in Florida: NR# 30211045