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NRG Oncology Approves Danbury and Norwalk Hospitals as Primary Sites for Clinical Research

The newest clinical trials for breast cancer, radiation oncology, and gynecologic cancer are now available at Danbury Hospital and Norwalk Hospital

Summary:

- Danbury Hospital and Norwalk Hospital received approval to join NRG Oncology as primary clinical research sites. This means that patients at Danbury Hospital and Norwalk Hospital now have expanded access to the latest clinical trials for breast cancer, radiation oncology, and gynecologic cancer.
- Through NRG Oncology clinical trials, Danbury Hospital and Norwalk Hospital patients can receive the most promising cancer treatments before they are available to the public.
- The NRG Oncology partnership demonstrates that Danbury Hospital and Norwalk Hospital are highly qualified to participate in innovative cancer research on an international level.

DANBURY, Connecticut, August 28, 2019 — Danbury Hospital and Norwalk Hospital received approval to join NRG Oncology as primary clinical research sites. This means that patients at Danbury Hospital and Norwalk Hospital now have expanded access to the latest breast cancer, radiation oncology, and gynecologic cancer clinical trials that are only available to NRG Oncology members.

NRG Oncology is a prestigious, internationally recognized cancer research organization formed by the National Surgical Adjuvant Breast and Bowel Project (NSABP), the Radiation Therapy Oncology Group (RTOG), and the Gynecologic Oncology Group (GOG). The organization conducts clinical trials and studies to test new cancer treatments and to advance the field of cancer care.

A Robust Cancer Research Program

NRG Oncology primary site approval demonstrates that Danbury Hospital and Norwalk Hospital, part of [Nuvance Health](#), are highly qualified to participate in innovative cancer research on an international level. Nuvance Health has a robust team — from clinicians and researchers to administrative staff — and the facilities and resources required to fully support cutting-edge clinical research.

“NRG Oncology is a very important organization so it means a lot to be recognized for our cancer research capabilities,” said [Margo Shoup, MD, FACS](#), network chair of the cancer service line for Nuvance Health. “As members of NRG Oncology, our clinicians and researchers will be able to engage with oncology leaders from around the world to further expand their knowledge, and then apply advancements to our cancer patients, here at home.”

The surgical principle investigator (PI) for NRG Oncology clinical trials at Danbury Hospital and Norwalk Hospital is [Linus Chuang, MD](#), chairman of obstetrics and gynecology and gynecologic oncology specialist. The physician PIs are [Richard Frank, MD](#), medical oncologist/hematologist at Norwalk Hospital, director of clinical cancer research for Danbury Hospital and Norwalk Hospital, and a consultant in the gastrointestinal oncology service at Memorial Sloan Kettering Cancer Center (MSK); and, [Wenli Gao, MD](#), medical oncologist/hematologist at Danbury Hospital.

Improved Access to Clinical Trials for Patients

Through NRG Oncology clinical trials, Danbury Hospital and Norwalk Hospital patients can receive the most promising cancer treatments before they are available to the public.

“Our partnership with NRG Oncology is just another way for us to bring more cancer treatment options to our patients, especially for hard-to-treat cancers,” said Dr. Chuang, who is the American Society of Clinical Oncology (ASCO) International Affairs Committee Chair. “For example, ovarian cancer is the deadliest gynecologic cancer. With NRG Oncology, I hope to bring more ovarian cancer clinical trials to Danbury Hospital and Norwalk Hospital and provide our patients with new treatments that can help improve survival rates.”

Most recently, Danbury Hospital and Norwalk Hospital opened two new gynecologic cancer clinical trials. These clinical trials are giving patients access to new drug options to treat epithelial ovarian, fallopian tube, primary peritoneal, and recurrent ovarian cancers.

Linda Coad, a 78-year old woman from Southbury, Connecticut, was the first patient to enroll in one of these clinical trials at Danbury Hospital, which is testing the effectiveness of neoadjuvant chemotherapy prior to surgery.

In April 2019, Linda was diagnosed with unresectable advanced stage epithelial ovarian cancer. Due to the advanced stage of the disease, Linda’s cancer care team, including gynecologic oncologists and medical oncologists, determined the most effective treatment for her was chemotherapy first to shrink the tumor.

Linda successfully completed the first round of treatment — the cancerous tumor is shrinking. Her care team will continue to monitor the tumor. If it continues to respond to treatment, she may be able to have debulking surgery to remove the tumor.

“I was perfectly willing to enroll in the clinical trial because I wanted to try a new treatment that could help me now. I also want to help others in the future, which I hope I can do by being part of testing this new treatment,” said Linda. “I’m handling this as an adventure that I’m going to get out of. The way I see it, if the tumor already shrunk, it might shrink more, and then we’ll go from there.”

Linda expected to lose her hair, which is a side effect of the chemotherapy. Besides that and being tired, she said she feels lucky because she’s experienced very few side effects from the treatment.

Learn More about NRG Oncology Clinical Trials

Danbury Hospital and Norwalk Hospital oncologists will let their patients know if they are eligible to enroll in an NRG Oncology clinical trial. People are also encouraged to ask about the clinical trials. For more information, contact Pramila Krumholtz at 203-739-7997.

Vassar Brothers Medical Center, a Nuvance Health hospital in Poughkeepsie, New York, is also an NRG Oncology primary site for clinical research. For more information about clinical trials at Vassar Brothers Medical Center, call 845-483-6825 or email research@health-quest.org.

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About Nuvance Health

Nuvance Health is a family of award-winning nonprofit hospitals and healthcare professionals in the Hudson Valley and western Connecticut. Nuvance Health combines highly skilled physicians, state-of-the-art facilities and technology, and compassionate caregivers dedicated to providing quality care across a variety of clinical areas, including Cardiovascular, Neurosciences, Oncology, Orthopedics, and Primary Care.

Nuvance Health has a network of convenient hospital and outpatient locations — Danbury Hospital, New Milford Hospital, Norwalk Hospital and Sharon Hospital in Connecticut, and Northern Dutchess Hospital, Putnam Hospital Center and Vassar Brothers Medical Center in New York — plus multiple primary and specialty care physician practice locations, including The Heart Center, a leading provider of cardiology care, and two urgent care offices. Non-acute care is offered through various affiliates, including the Thompson House for rehabilitation and skilled nursing services, and the Home Care organizations. For more information about Nuvance Health, visit our [website](#).

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