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NORTHWEST CANCER SPECIALISTS C.A.R.E.S. PROGRAM
Coordinated Advocacy, Resources, Education & Support

*Integrating Palliative Care Education and Support
in a Community Oncology Practice*

PORTLAND, Ore., May 12, 2011 – Northwest Cancer Specialists (NCS) initiated the NCS CARES program (Coordinated Advocacy, Resources, Education and Support) to improve care and support for patients with life-limiting illnesses.

The objectives of the [NCS CARES program](#) are to increase staff access to palliative care education and support, improve team communication about goals of care, symptom management, and Advance Care Planning (ACP) and increase the percentage of patients having Advance Directives (AD) in the electronic medical record (EMR).

Recent publications highlight both the potential benefit of integrated palliative care for advanced cancer patients and the variability that exists across the US in care at end of life, suggesting that many oncology patients still die without the benefit of appropriate psychosocial support and symptom management.

“At NCS, Advance Care Planning and staff support programs will continue with the goal of further integrating palliative principles across the continuum of oncology care, for the benefit of our patients, their families, and the team of oncology professionals who serve them,” said Angela Kalisiak, MD, Director of the NCS CARES program.

A care conference model was implemented to develop plans of care for patients with complex symptom management needs or unmet psychosocial needs. Special focus is given to patients transitioning from curative to palliative treatment to ensure they are getting the best possible care, support and help with necessary resources while maintaining their comfort and quality of life.

At NCS, we recognize the importance of helping guide patients and family members through the process of Advance Care Planning (ACP) and having Advance Directives (AD) in place allowing you to communicate your wishes about medical treatment, including treatment at the end-of-life, to family, friends and health care professionals.

About Northwest Cancer Specialists

Northwest Cancer Specialists is a regional oncology and hematology practice with a dedicated team of over 40 medical oncologists, hematologists, gynecologic oncologists and radiation oncologists seeing patients at seven locations in the Portland-Vancouver metropolitan area. For more information, please visit, www.nwcancer.com.

Northwest Cancer Specialists is united in healing with US Oncology, supporting the nation's foremost cancer treatment and research network to accelerate the availability and use of evidence-based medicine and shared best practices. For more information, visit the company's Website, www.usoncology.com.

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