



ABOUT THE JOHN H. 'JACK' BURBAGE, JR. Regional Cancer Care Center



The Regional Cancer Care Center was named in honor of John H. 'Jack' Burbage, Jr. to recognize Mr. Burbage's substantial personal and financial contributions to Atlantic General Hospital and our community.

The 18,000-square-foot center opened in July 2018 to provide one convenient, centrally-located facility for the care and treatment of individuals with cancer and blood disorders.

In addition to providing medical oncology and chemotherapy infusion services and integrative therapies, the Center offers radiation treatment,



genetic counseling, PET imaging, laboratory services, plus community education and support facilities.

Moreover, the Center's advanced telemedicine capabilities allow patients and their physicians to consult with world-renowned cancer experts at the University of Maryland Medical Center – thereby eliminating extensive travel for consultation and follow-up care for patients who may require more intensive cancer care services.

Jack Burbage, a Berlin resident, is CEO of Blue Water Development Company. As a graduate of Stephen Decatur High School, Jack has deep roots in the community. He is a member of the Lions Club, the Economic Development Corporation, and Maryland Coastal Bays. He also sits on the board of directors of Taylor Bank and is a member of the Maryland Builders Association and the Maryland Bankers Association.

John H. 'Jack' Burbage, Jr.

Cancer care is near and dear to his heart, since Jack lost his mother to cancer as a young child. The experience left an indelible mark, and it was the impetus for his decision to serve as co-chair of Atlantic General Hospital's Campaign for the Future, a major funding source for the Regional Cancer Care Center.



A Vital Resource for Our Community

The Breast Center at the Burbage Regional Cancer Care Center fills an important need.

For women and men whose mammograms have identified concerning spots that require further testing, they now have the support and reassurance of an entire team of specialists.

In fact, even prior to a diagnosis, patients awaiting a biopsy are scheduled to visit the Breast Clinic at our John H. 'Jack' Burbage, Jr. Regional Cancer Care Center. Clinical staff includes the breast surgeon as well as the plastic surgeon, medical oncologists, radiation oncologists and breast navigators who may be involved in their care – should cancer be found.

The mission of the Breast Clinic is to improve coordination among all of the specialists involved in each patient's care – and to reduce the stress that accompanies waiting for answers about "what happens next."

The Breast Clinic is staffed by some of our region's most notable medical specialists, including:

► Alae Zarif, MD

Dr. Zarif performs breast oncology surgery, in coordination with plastic surgeon Dr. Vincent Perrotta for reconstruction, as appropriate.

► Vincent J. Perrotta, MD

Dr. Perrotta performs reconstructive surgery, working with Dr. Zarif in the operating room, often immediately following mastectomy or lumpectomy procedures.

► Rabindra Paul, MD

Dr. Paul provides chemotherapy, immunotherapy and other medical oncology services as needed, in coordination with lumpectomy or mastectomy procedures.

► Paige Wildmann, CRNP

Ms. Wildmann provides patient care throughout the breast clinic experience. As necessary, she provides coordination of care from diagnosis through survivorship.

► Manoj Jain, MD

Dr. Jain provides radiation oncology treatment in coordination with medical and surgical oncology.

For more information about the Breast Clinic and its services, please call 410-641-9568.





Alae Zarif, MD



Vincent J. Perrotta, MD



Rabindra Paul, MD



Paige Wildmann, CRNP

Life-affirming Treatment and Care at the Burbage Regional Cancer Care Center

The "earthly angels" of the RCCC work to make each day brighter and better for our patients.

A cancer diagnosis brings with it a wide range of emotions – not to mention many questions. Feeling overwhelmed and fearful are some of the most common sentiments expressed by patients and their families once they learn of a cancer diagnosis.

At Atlantic General Hospital and the John H. 'Jack' Burbage, Jr. Regional Cancer Care Center, patients and their families can rely on a staff of highly knowledgeable physicians and other professionals to answer the questions they have, while guiding them through each step of treatment.

Most cancers are treated with:

- Surgery
- Radiation
- Systemic therapy such as chemotherapy

... or any combination of the three.

▶ Radiation Oncologists target a specific area of the body where

there is cancer, by using a Computed Tomography scan (CT scan) to simulate radiation treatment. With the information gathered by the CT scan, the radiation oncologist, physicist and dosimetrist prepare a customized radiation treatment plan. Detailed planning is done to ensure precise, reproducible treatments, targeting the cancer while protecting healthy tissue.

Radiation treatments are carried out using a machine called a linear accelerator. The Burbage Regional Cancer Care Center is equipped with a state-of-the-art linear accelerator complete with advanced technology for precise targeting and daily imageguided treatments.

▶ Radiation Therapists are

trained in administering radiation treatments. The therapists at the RCCC are highly experienced. They take the time and effort to get to know each person and their family, providing a shoulder to lean on and cheering the successful end of treatment. These "earthly angels" are emotionally invested in each and every person they treat.

► Medical Oncologists and

Medical Oncology Nurse Practitioners are specialists in the treatment of cancer via systemic therapy. This type of therapy uses methods such as chemotherapy, hormone therapy and immunologics to treat cancer. These medications treat the entire body and may be given intravenously (through an IV, for example) or taken orally.

If medications are to be administered intravenously, patients will be given an appointment at the infusion area of the Cancer Center. Our oncology nurses care for patients receiving treatment in the visually appealing, state-of-the-art infusion center. In addition, an onsite pharmacist is available at all times. With the physician, nurses and pharmacist working in close

collaboration, each patient's cancer is treated based on their own specific treatment plan using nationally recognized, evidence-based guidelines.

In addition, office personnel work closely with patients to schedule appointments, assist with patient care, help with any financial concerns, and provide support on innumerable other items. The people who make up our exceptional Medical Oncology team have this in common: They work at Atlantic General Hospital and the Burbage Regional Cancer Care Center because they truly care about their

Cancer Screening

The following imaging services are offered by Atlantic General's specialists to detect cancer and monitor treatment:

- 3D mammography
- PET/CT scans
- Low-dose CT for lung cancer screening
- MRI
- Nuclear imaging

Salisbury 5% **Rest of AGH Maryland** Service Area 12% Ocean City 15% **AGH Cancer Patients Rest of Maryland Eastern Shore 7%** Berlin 32% fellow community members who have Selbyville 8% This commitment manifests itself every single day as they give patients virtual handshakes and hugs, share a Dagsboro 4% smile or a laugh, and try to make each Frankford 4% Ocean View 4% Second-Home Residents 3% Rest of AGH Delaware Service Area 2%

Note: Percentages are based on the home address zip code of cancer patients at AGH, 2020.

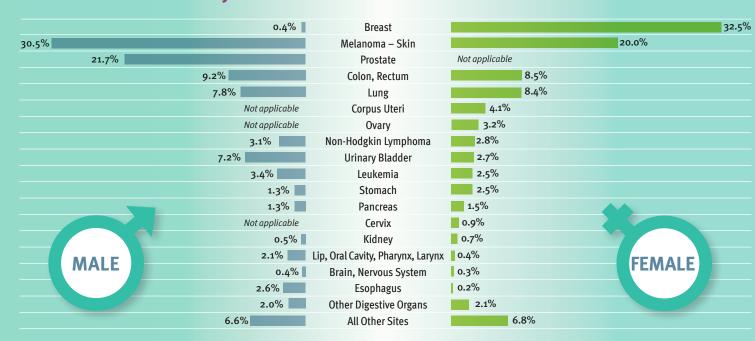
Virginia Eastern Shore 4%

Occurrence of Cancer by Site and Gender

by Location

been diagnosed with cancer.

day a little brighter.



Atlantic General Hospital patient percentage data based on 1,525 reportable cases: 2020.

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CANCER SCREENING SAVES LIVES

The Burbage Regional Cancer Care Center endorses the goal of resuming cancer screening and treatment during the COVID-19 pandemic.



The number of people newly diagnosed with cancer has decreased significantly in the United States – as well as in other countries around the world during the COVID-19 pandemic. (1,2) At the same time, there is little evidence that the rate of new occurrences of cancer is actually decreasing.

What these two trends tell us is that many cancers are going undiagnosed and untreated in the wake of the coronavirus pandemic. Moreover, studies reveal that the number of cervical, colorectal, breast, prostate and lung cancer screening tests has dropped dramatically due to concerns about COVID-19.(3,4)

Studies have also noted a significant drop in cancer diagnoses along with delays in active treatment. (1,5) These developments are quite concerning, because identifying and treating cancer early improves positive outcomes significantly. In this context, it's important to remember that cancer was fatal for more than 600,000 people in the United States in 2020. (6)

The National Cancer Institute (NCI) conservatively predicts that there will be nearly 10,000 excess deaths in the U.S. from breast and colorectal cancer alone over the next 10 years because of pandemic-related delays today in cancer screening and treatment. (7) That estimate doesn't account for other cancer types and also assumes only a 6-month disruption in care. Considering everything, it suggests that the



Photo courtesy of Jill Jasuta, Worcester Country Economic Development.

actual deaths could turn out to be

In light of the current situation, the American Cancer Society and the National Comprehensive Cancer Network have released a joint plea for people to resume their cancer screenings. As a leading cancer center on the Delmarva Peninsula, we join with these organizations in urging everyone to resume regular primary care checkups, schedule any recommended cancer screenings, and if needed, undertake evidencebased cancer treatment to lessen the negative impact the pandemic is having on identifying and treating patients who have cancer.

The fact is, cancer screening and treatments save lives. Moreover, hospitals and medical systems across the country have implemented numerous infection control measures to provide a safe environment for people to receive screenings and medical care during the pandemic.

Together, we have an opportunity to help reduce the negative impact that the pandemic is having on those with cancer. We call on community leaders, healthcare professionals and everyone else to do their part to:

- Ensure that people are not delaying care for important medical issues.
- Encourage people to resume recommended cancer screenings along with all preventive and prescribed care, as recommended by their doctor.
- Facilitate and encourage people diagnosed with cancer to resume evidence-based treatment.
- Contact a physician right away if any medical symptoms of concern arise.

The good news is that ongoing advances in cancer screening and treatment have resulted in a significant decline in annual death rates from cancer. (8) But we must not lose our momentum now. Join us in helping everyone re-engage in cancer screening and care. After all, people's lives depend upon it!

National Comprehensive Cancer Network® references: 1. Kaufman et al. | Changes in the Number of U.S. Patients with Newly Identified Cancer Before and During the Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19) Pandemic, LIAMA Network, August 4, 2020 2. Raphael, T. I Coronavirus Has a Massive Impact on Cancer Care. | Bloombera, June 15, 2020, 3, Patt et al. | Impact of COVID-19 on Cancer Care: How the Pandemic Is Delaying Cancer Diagnosis and Treatment for American Seniors, ICO Clinical Cancer Informatics, I Published online November 30, 2020. 4. Printz C. | Cancer Screen ings Decline Significantly During Pandemic | Cancer | Published online August 10, 2020. 5. American Association for Cancer Research (AACR). | AACR Cancer Progress Report. September 2020. 6. American Cancer Society | Cancer Facts & Figures 2020 7. Sharpless, N. | COVID-19 and Cancer. Science. June 19, 2020. 8. Simon, S. | Facts & Figures 2020 Reports Largest One-year Drop in Cancer Mortality. | American Cancer Society (www.cancer.org). January 8, 2020.

Surviving a Colon **Cancer Diagnosis**

Richard Widmayer's Story

Millsboro resident Richard Widmayer knew he was due for a colonoscopy, but it wasn't something he particularly welcomed.

His last procedure had been 15 years earlier, but he didn't really want to go through the whole colonoscopy experience again. Instead, Richard opted for the Cologuard® colon cancer test. This is an at-home screening procedure that involves sending in a stool sample for evaluation.

Mr. Widmayer's screening result was positive, leading him to get a colonoscopy to confirm the diagnosis. In December 2019, he was diagnosed with stage III colon cancer. He underwent a right hemicolectomy to remove the affected portion of the colon. At that time he was also referred to the Burbage Regional Cancer Care Center and met with medical director and oncologist, Dr. Rabindra Paul.

Dr. Paul discussed treatment options with Richard, based on National Comprehensive Cancer Network (NCCN) guidelines. NCCN provides evidence-based guide-

lines in the fight against cancer and helps standardize care across the continuum.

After completing six months of fluorouracil (5FU chemotherapy) intravenously, Richard is diseasefree. He is now in his survivorship plan of care that includes regular CT scans, surveillance colonoscopies and regular blood work to monitor any rise in colon cancer tumor markers.

Richard was very pleased with his care at the Burbage Regional Cancer Care Center. His case highlights the importance of getting screened for colon cancer at least every 10 years, starting at age 45.

It's also a good reminder that there are a variety of colon cancer screening options that are non-invasive and easy to undertake. You can start with one of those types and proceed from there based on the results. Be sure to talk with your healthcare provider about the options that are available based on your own risk factors.

NEW PARTNERSHIPS ANNOUNCED WITH

New relationships underscore the increasing collaboration between the Burbage Regional Cancer Care Center and the University of Maryland Medical Center.

The Burbage Regional Cancer Care Center is pleased to announce several new partnerships with the University of Maryland Medical Center (UMMC). UMMC was recognized in the 2020 U.S. News and World Report "Best Hospitals" rankings as among the top hospitals in the state of Maryland, as well as operating nationally-ranked programs in cancer care.

The newest partnership between the RCCC and UMMC was launched in January 2021 with UMMC's Gynecologic Oncology surgeons Gautam Rao and Dana Roque. Both surgeons were named "Top Doctors" in the specialty of Gynecologic Oncology by *Baltimore Magazine* in 2020.



Gautam G. Rao, MD is board certified in gynecologic oncology. He is a highly skilled laparoscopist and robotic surgeon, with clinical

expertise in the surgical and medical management of endometrial, ovarian and cervical cancer. Dr. Rao received his medical degree from the University of Miami. He completed his residency in obstetrics and gynecology at Wayne State University in Detroit, and his fellowship in gynecologic oncology at the University of Texas Southwestern Medical Center in Dallas.



Dana Marie Roque, MD graduated with a BS degree in chemistry from Duke University, and earned her medical degree

from the University of North Carolina School of Medicine in Chapel Hill. She completed her residency in obstetrics, gynecology and reproductive sciences at Magee Women's Hospital-University of Pittsburgh

Medical Center and her fellowship in gynecologic oncology at Yale University. In 2014, Dr. Roque joined the faculty at the University of Maryland as assistant professor in the Division of Gynecologic Oncology.

Patients referred to the Burbage Regional Cancer Care Center are able to have telemedicine consults with UMMC surgeons from the RCCC facilities in Berlin. If surgery is warranted, our staff will line up all pre-surgical tests at Atlantic General Hospital,



saving patients extensive travel to and from Baltimore. After surgery, any needed chemotherapy or radiation can be done at the RCCC.

The Burbage Regional Cancer Care Center's relationship with UMMC began in

2017, with a partnership with **Joseph S. Friedberg, MD**, who heads the Division of Thoracic Surgery at the University of Maryland School of Medicine.

Dr. Friedberg received his BS degree from the University of Pennsylvania College of Engineering and Applied Science, followed by his medical degree from Harvard Medical School. Dr. Friedberg came to the University of Maryland from Penn Presbyterian Medical Center (part of the University of Pennsylvania Health System), where he was chief of Thoracic Surgery, co-director of the Penn Mesothelioma and Pleural Disease Program, and an associate professor of thoracic surgery at the University of Pennsylvania's Perelman School of Medicine. Dr. Friedberg is a member of numerous medical societies including the American Association of Thoracic Surgeons, the American College of Chest Physicians, and the American Society of Clinical Oncology.

Patients with suspected lung cancer referred to the Burbage Regional Cancer Care Center are able to have telemedicine consultations with Dr. Friedberg, conducted at the RCCC's facilities.

Cancer Genetic Counseling

For some families, the propensity for cancer seems to be inherited – passed down from one generation to the next. Several family members could have

been diagnosed with the same type of cancer – perhaps at an early age – for which there may be a hereditary factor (known as a gene) that is responsible for these cases of cancer.

Several genes have been discovered that may explain why cancer appears to run in the family. Individuals who carry a change (mutation) in a hereditary cancer gene are at an increased risk to develop cancer, or a second cancer.

Over the past few years, genetic testing for these genes has become available. In partnership with UMMC, Burbage Regional Cancer Care patients who qualify for testing are set up with a UMMC genetic counselor via telehealth. Specimens are collected by nurses at the RCCC and sent for analysis. Patients have "virtual" follow-up appointments set up with a genetic counselor from UMMC for interpretation.

Genetic counseling for cancer is available for a variety of inherited cancer syndromes. Some of the most common involve breast cancer, ovarian cancer and colon cancer. As appropriate, genetic counselors work closely with the patients who are enrolled in our breast cancer and colon cancer treatment programs.

For questions regarding the Cancer Genetic Counseling program, please call the RCCC office at **410-629-6888** or visit **www.atlanticgeneral.org/conditions-services/cancer-care-oncology/**.

Getting Back on the Road Again

MICHAEL MEADE'S STORY



Ocean City resident
Michael
Meade,
age 73, had
been travelling crosscountry with

his wife in their RV. While visiting home for what was intended to be a short Thanksgiving break, Michael developed a persistent sore throat. He went to see his ENT, who took one look and suspected cancer.

Indeed, a biopsy revealed that Michael had stage I squamous cell carcinoma of the left tonsil.

Unfortunately, the cancer location was so close to a carotid artery, it was not operable. Instead, Michael was referred to the Burbage Regional Cancer Care Center for radiation and chemotherapy.

Michael ended up having 36 doses of radiation and cisplatin chemotherapy, which were completed in March 2020. Throughout his treatment, he needed to have a feeding tube since he was unable to swallow food. Katie Busacca, the RCCC's registered dietitian, helped him manage his nutrition. Commenting on his experience, Michael says, "The cancer center has an amazing staff!"

Michael's specific cancer was attributed to HPV (human papillomavirus). HPV is normally thought to cause cervical and other re-

productive cancers, but it is also responsible for causing approximately 70% of oropharyngeal cancers (throat, tongue and tonsils). There is a vaccine for HPV, and it's normally encouraged for youth aged 11-12 years old to receive it to prevent multiple cancers later in life.

This wasn't Michael's first battle with cancer. In 2006 he developed melanoma, which he had treated in the metro region of the state.

Comparing the two treatment experiences, Michael observes, "People can be afraid that if you're on the Shore you will not get excellent medical care. But I tell friends and family, 'Don't be afraid to trust your life to the Burbage Cancer Care Center.'"

Michael was impressed by the compassionate nature of both Dr. Paul and Dr. Jain. "The Burbage Cancer Care Center has the very best equipment along with very caring people," he emphasizes.

Michael adds that he felt fortunate to receive the kind of quality care that the Burbage Regional Cancer Care Center provides, and that it was available so close to his home. "It's a very well run organization," he says.

Michael's cancer is in remission now, and he is well into his survivorship care plan. Next on his to-do list is getting his RV back from Texas, where he'd left it at Thanksgiving.

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What is a Tumor Board?

A tumor board, also known as a "cancer case conference," is a multidisciplinary meeting held to discuss individual cancer cases.

Each person is unique in their body system makeup, which is determined by factors such as heredity and lifestyle as well as environmental and other factors. At the same time, cancer is a highly complex illness that impacts many parts of the body. For this reason, the treatment of cancer is multifaceted and highly individualized, which is why the work that tumor boards do is so important.

Atlantic General Hospital's cancer program holds tumor boards at least twice each month. The meeting includes cancer care team members from:

- Surgery
- Radiation Oncology
- Medical Oncology
- Palliative Medicine
- Radiology
- Pathology

Also part of the meeting are nurses, radiation therapists, nutritionists, chaplaincy and social workers. The group convenes to discuss each specific patient's medical condition and the treatments that he or she will need.

Tumor board meetings are typically held shortly after a diagnosis has been made and prior to treatment (prospectively). During the meeting, radiologists review the patient's images that are visible to all in attendance. Likewise,

pathologists detail pathology reports, along with the variables unique to specific cancers.

The insights derived from the tumor board meeting assist physicians in developing a custom treatment plan for each patient, taking into consideration the patient's comorbidities and any barriers to care. Those aspects are especially important when a person's cancer may require more than one treatment – for example, when a

patient needs a combination of surgery, chemotherapy and radiation therapy.

The shared knowledge obtained from a tumor board assists in the coordination of care as efficiently as possible.

Atlantic General Hospital has a team of highly engaged physicians, nurse practitioners and other specialized caregivers who come together for the sole purpose of creating a personalized care plan for each patient with cancer.





Getting the Better of Breast Cancer

GRACE SCARFI'S STORY



At age 54, the last thing Newark resident Grace Scarfi expected was a breast cancer diagnosis.

Grace had gotten regular mammograms, but in 2019 one of the tests showed irregularities. Ultimately, a biopsy showed invasive ductal carcinoma.

According to the American Cancer Society, approximately 180,000 women in the United States will be diagnosed each year with this specific type of breast cancer. Fortunately, Grace's cancer was at stage 1 and she met with surgeon Dr. Alae Zarif to discuss her options.

She opted for a bilateral mastectomy followed by adjuvant chemotherapy. Adjuvant chemo is given after surgery to destroy any remaining cancer cells to prevent reoccurrence.

"Dr. Zarif has the best bedside manner," Grace says. She couldn't believe how fast and efficient the process was. She reports that within just a few weeks, surgery was performed and she had already started her breast reconstruction process with plastic surgeon Dr. Vincent Perrotta. This is the typical timeline for people who are patients of the Burbage Regional Cancer Care Center's breast clinic, where all care is coordinated on a fast track to facilitate treatments.

Next, Grace met with Dr. Rabindra Paul, medical director and oncologist at the Burbage Regional Cancer Care Center, to come up with her treatment plan. "He was so patient and explained everything in a way I could understand," she says.

Grace's specific cancer was triple positive, which meant that her cancer was HER2 positive as well as positive for estrogen and progesterone receptors. HER2 is a growth-promoting protein found on some breast cells. That can make the cancer grow and spread faster.

However, HER2 positive cancers also respond well to the newer therapies that target HER2 and hormone receptors. Dr. Paul treated Grace with Herceptin, a HER2-targeted therapy. She will also continue with hormone therapies for up to five years.

Her cancer now in remission, Grace can't say enough about her positive experience with Atlantic General Hospital and the Burbage Regional Cancer Care Center.

"This was during COVID, so my family couldn't come with me for my surgery or treatment," she explains, adding, "Everyone has been so wonderful and supportive. You expect that from your family, but not from people you've never met!"

Grace recalled that she actually looked forward to coming into the center to get her treatment. "How incredible is it to have two years of interaction with a health system – and every single interaction is positive!"

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Delivering Patient Satisfaction that Goes Beyond the Expected

That's our commitment to our patients – every day.

The Burbage Regional Cancer Care Center is known for providing extraordinary patient care and compassion. The Center was recognized as a Guardian of Excellence award-winning cancer center in 2019 by the respected healthcare rating agency Press Ganey Associates for achieving consistent patient satisfaction scores above 95%.

That commitment continues every day. Recently, we interviewed several of our patients to hear what they have to say about the Center.

Pocomoke City resident Kathryn Redden is also a current patient at the RCCC.

When you get a diagnosis like cancer and you hear that word, it changes your life. Faith put me here at the Regional Cancer Care Center. It's a holistic center. You feel good things while you're here. They are all about you, and wherever you're sitting for treatment you are looking out on a beautiful view. They understand and listen. Dr. Paul and Paige Wildmann, the nurse practitioner - they listen. You can see the staff cares, and boy does that help during a difficult time and helps with healing!

William Rollins of Ocean View, DE has been undergoing chemotherapy at the RCCC.

It's been wonderful. Everyone is so kind and compassionate. It's overwhelming how kind they are. They seem like family. Dr. Paul is wonderful. The whole experience has been great. We come from **Baltimore and it's so different;** we felt like we were in a factory over there. Here, it's been so personal. We would recommend the RCCC highly.

Here's Princess Anne resident Olga Zavala, commenting about her experience with the radiation oncology treatment staff at the RCCC.

They're fantastic. They treated me like family. They calmed me down from the beginning [and] throughout my treatment. Here, they never let you down. I knew I was going to be OK. The doctors are fantastic and the staff are great.



John H. 'Jack' Burbage, Jr.

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