A Healthier World Awaits
To invest in cancer care is to believe in the future. Penn State Hershey Cancer Institute arose in central Pennsylvania to confirm our belief in the futures of the patients we treat, in the research we conduct to find new cures, and in education that combines superlative science with emotional intelligence for new generations of cancer experts.

To support Penn State Hershey Cancer Institute is to invest in change and renewal. It is our vision that the most progress will come from young institutions like ours, institutions unfettered by administrative hierarchies and historical legacies. Ours is a culture of action and momentum, a culture that does not yet rest on its laurels but seeks tirelessly to contribute to and apply new knowledge.

A little more than forty years ago, lush fields of corn and alfalfa covered the site of our centerpiece main building. Only a few short decades later, Penn State Hershey Cancer Institute is a site of national recognition, a place where some of the world’s most gifted clinicians work alongside the brightest minds in basic and translational research. We are a beacon of hope, committed to providing the most advanced care available to people across the region, the state, and beyond. We have become a destination in comprehensive cancer care.

Today we ask you to join us in mapping the future of cancer care. Academic medicine at its best requires ongoing investment in patient care, in research, and in cancer experts. Our campaign’s success will help us make the journey to better treatments and cures a faster one for patients everywhere.

Thomas P. Loughran Jr., M.D.
DIRECTOR, PENNSYLVANIA HERSHEY CANCER INSTITUTE
A NEW ERA

After years of building a strong core, Penn State Hershey Cancer Institute is poised at the brink of a new era. A state-of-the-art facility sets the stage for expanding and enhancing key programs. Investments here will allow us to realize the promise of this new time, primed for progress by all the vital qualities that define the world’s best cancer centers.

Innovative translational research

At Penn State Hershey Cancer Institute, care and research inform each other. The scientists investigating cancer and the physicians treating cancer patients interact daily. Their physical integration leads to more and better treatment choices for individual patients. It boosts the power of translational medicine, harnessing the knowledge transmitted between lab and clinic to speed the discovery of new cancer treatments.
The best possible care for each patient

What do the best cancer centers offer? They offer solutions that take into account all the patient’s needs, from care coordinated by multidisciplinary teams to today’s most powerful treatments and technologies and access to new therapies on the horizon. But perhaps most important, they offer comfort and expert support for patients and families during difficult times. Penn State Hershey Cancer Institute now offers:

- Integrated teams of surgical oncologists, medical oncologists, radiation oncologists, nurses, social workers, dieticians, and other care providers.

- State-of-the-art treatment options that refine tumor targeting, reduce treatment time, and, in many cases, replace surgery – all in a new radiation oncology suite.

- A healing garden, private treatment rooms, and a daytime infusion space that provides an outpatient setting for intensive care and sets patient care apart in the region.

“The building embodies our concept of a community devoted to providing comprehensive care and finding a cure for cancer. Having researchers, clinicians, and patients under one roof leads to what I like to call ‘productive collisions.’ We learn from each other more quickly now.”

Thomas P. Loughran Jr., M.D.
DIRECTOR, PENN STATE HERSHEY CANCER INSTITUTE
“As genetic profiling, imaging, and other technologies become more sophisticated and our knowledge of tumor biology and signaling pathways grows, so does our ability to understand each person’s cancer and how it will respond to particular treatments. Translational research maximizes the impact of this knowledge to create promising new therapies.”

Chandra Belani, M.D.
DEPUTY DIRECTOR, PENN STATE HERSHEY CANCER INSTITUTE
Harnessing research for today's patients

Chandra Belani, M.D., is the kind of multi-talented professional who is putting Penn State Hershey Cancer Institute on the map. One of the world’s leading lung cancer researchers, he is also an authority in the development of new cancer drugs. Belani leads clinical research at the Cancer Institute, overseeing the exchange of ideas between labs and clinics and the important early phase clinical research studies that lead to new and better approaches to cancer.

Hope found

For years, London's Wendy Trueman lived without an explanation for the unpredictable bouts of intense fatigue and difficult-to-shake blood infections that punctuated her life. Several years ago, her doctors in Britain pointed to a diagnosis for which they believed little could be done: large granular lymphocytic (LGL) leukemia. After some online sleuthing, Wendy and husband John found a doctor who offered hope: Cancer Institute Director Tom Loughran, perhaps the world's leading expert in this rare form of cancer. Today, Wendy and John travel to Hershey from England twice a year for evaluation, thoroughly enjoying their time with the “fantastically nice” Cancer Institute staff. Wendy’s progress has been remarkable.

Four generations of Wendy’s family have donated blood to help Hershey researchers look for markers that might explain why some people develop this unusual condition. The Truemans also have set up a fund to support research at the Cancer Institute.

“For people with LGL leukemia, just to be diagnosed is to be extremely lucky. My medium of luck was Hershey and Dr. Loughran. As far as I am concerned, they are the best in the world.”

Wendy Trueman
FRIEND OF PENN STATE HERSHEY CANCER INSTITUTE
At the forefront of personalized medicine

Today's cancer care is personalized. Each person's treatment is based on the genetic or molecular characteristics of that patient's cancer, a strategy that leads to quicker, better results and fewer side effects. The Cancer Institute's doctors and researchers are leading the way in discovering new ways to tailor care to individuals. Because our new facility has dedicated space for Phase I and II clinical research studies, patients here benefit from the opportunity to participate in clinical research studies at the leading edge of these new developments.

GOAL: PATIENT CARE

THE ART OF CARING, THE SCIENCE OF HEALING

The best models of patient-centered care constantly evolve. Investments in patient care will enable us to create new models for enhancing the care – and lives – of people with cancer and their families.
Attention to the patient experience

Managing cancer care has always been a juggling act for patients and their families. The Cancer Institute’s single-center, multidisciplinary approach relieves patients of the need to coordinate communication and care across providers. Instead, many appointments with treatment team members take place on the same day and in the same place.

At Penn State Hershey Cancer Institute, patients do not need to navigate multiple destinations. Instead, patients access everything they need, from clinical consultations to infusion to education, in a spacious, light-filled facility that reflects our commitment to patients’ comfort, ease, and healing.

Bringing people together

Penny Rybka lived in a flurry of activity, surrounded by friends. Witold Rybka M.D., director of the Cancer Institute’s Bone Marrow Transplant program, remembers his wife as someone whose main focus was bringing people together.

When Penny died eight years after being diagnosed with lung cancer, Rybka, his sons, and Penny’s brothers looked for a public way to remember her and pay tribute to the care they received at Penn State Hershey Cancer Institute. Penny, a hematology technologist, EMT, and volunteer with Penn State Hershey’s Association of Faculty and Friends, always felt strongly about the importance of acknowledging all those involved in cancer care, from nurses and social workers to radiation technologists and palliative care professionals.

With added support from fellow faculty members and gifts from guests at son Jan’s recent wedding, Rybka endowed the Penny Rybka Memorial Lectureship. This annual meeting will focus on topics Penny held dear, such as the nuances of integrated care and quality of life among cancer patients.

“We knew that the answer to Leonard’s cancer and that of so many others lay in the hands of young researchers like those at Penn State Hershey. We wanted to invest in that promise.”

Aura Hill
FRIEND OF PENN STATE HERSHEY CANCER INSTITUTE
GOAL: RESEARCH

BUILDING THE TREATMENTS OF TOMORROW ON THE RESEARCH OF TODAY

Major advances in cancer care happen only with substantial investments in research. We are fortunate to live in an era when the lag time between research insights and new therapies gets shorter and shorter every day. Advances in technology and in our understanding of the genetic underpinnings of many cancers mean that today’s investments are likely to benefit patients in the very near future, rather than decades from now.

In our labs, our scientists and clinicians are creating whole new routes on the map of cancer treatment.

- Our Cancer Control and Population Sciences Program works to improve quality of life for people with cancer and to understand how carcinogens interact with genetic risk factors.

- The Chemical Carcinogenesis and Chemoprevention Program studies the role of the environment in the development of cancer, finding new ways to prevent cancer caused by smoking, diet, and other environmental factors.

- In the Experimental Therapeutics Program, our scientists collaborate with nanotechnology experts at University Park to develop new cancer treatments that target cancer at the cellular level.

- The Viral Oncogenesis and Host Defense Program performs groundbreaking work in understanding the relationships between viruses — including hepatitis B, hepatitis C, and human papillomavirus — and human cancers.

The big picture

Are there cancer hot spots, places where people are at higher-than-average risk of developing cancer? That’s one of the questions researchers in the Cancer Control and Population Sciences (CCPS) Program are trying to answer more fully. Phil Lazarus, Ph.D., director of the CCPS Program, is studying how genetics and modifiable risk factors, such as smoking and diet, combine to increase colorectal cancer risk in northeastern Pennsylvania. It’s just one example of how Cancer Institute researchers are using cutting-edge genetic research to create interventions tailored to local communities.

“We’re not just any cancer center. We’re in a unique area with unique issues, and we really want our research to reduce the burden of cancer in our state.”

Phil Lazarus, Ph.D.
Professor of Pharmacology and Public Health Sciences
“Not only are we conducting the basic research that will lead to the next generation of vaccines, we’re collaborating with virologists, immunologists, and public health experts to create a complete picture of how well these vaccines work in the long term and how co-factors such as geography, smoking and poverty influence outcomes.”

Harriet Isom, Ph.D.
ASSOCIATE DIRECTOR, PROGRAM DEVELOPMENT, PENN STATE HERSHEY CANCER INSTITUTE
What inspires me is the way patients, clinicians, and researchers work together here. There are fewer hierarchies and more integration than at other medical campuses. There is room to grow, to explore the possibilities that will lead to the next generation of cancer therapy.

Tiny revolutions

The future of medicine is small – very small. Cancer Institute researchers, in collaboration with bioengineering and materials science groups at University Park, are using nanotechnology – manipulation or manufacture of material at the molecular level – to deliver highly targeted cancer drugs. Gavin Robertson, Ph.D., associate professor of pharmacology, pathology, dermatology and surgery, and associate director of translational research, has shown how certain nanoparticles, filled with a drug that targets the genes that trigger melanoma, may offer a potential cure for this deadly disease.
Prevention is the best medicine

Is the answer to reducing cancer rates as simple as dietary supplements? According to Chemical Carcinogenesis and Chemoprevention Program leader Karam El-Bayoumy, Ph.D., the answer is yes. Nearly two-thirds of the cancer deaths in the United States can be linked to lifestyle, including diet and tobacco use. In the 1990s, studies showed just how effective selenium, a mineral found in fish, whole wheat, and other foods, can be in protecting against cancer, potentially cutting the number of cancer deaths in half among those who took it. El-Bayoumy’s team is currently engaged in a National Cancer Institute-funded study that takes this knowledge one step further, pinpointing which forms of selenium work best in which people to prevent prostate cancer. Another study, funded by the Susan G. Komen Foundation, looks at how the Omega-3 fatty acids found in fish oil can boost the breast cancer-preventing power of medications like Tamoxifen and Raloxifene.

“I believe in prevention, and the Cancer Institute’s unique, collaborative environment allows us to translate our research in ways that help prevent cancer more quickly and more effectively than we could elsewhere.”

Karam El-Bayoumy, Ph.D.
ASSOCIATE DIRECTOR, BASIC RESEARCH
PENN STATE HERSHEY CANCER INSTITUTE
Focus on disparity

Rural and low-income residents of Appalachia tend to have higher incidences of certain cancers, due in part to barriers such as limited access to health care, lower literacy levels, and lack of insurance. Through the Northern Appalachia Cancer Network (NACN), Penn State faculty, physicians, staff, and community members work together to improve cancer outcomes in rural Pennsylvania by studying community interventions and their effectiveness. According to epidemiologist Gene Lengerich, V.M.D., community-based networks like NACN allow every community to benefit from advances in cancer care and prevention and are just one example of the ways in which Penn State Hershey Cancer Institute marshals resources to meet the needs of its larger community.

“"This work allows us to have a direct impact on our greater community, to begin to share resources and share the challenge of reducing cancer."

Gene Lengerich, V.M.D., M.S.
Professor of Epidemiology

CHANGING THE CANCER LANDSCAPE

At the same time that the Cancer Institute works on the national stage, garnering unprecedented research dollars and attracting patients and practitioners from far afield, it also retains a central focus on the needs of local, rural communities. Penn State is the only site of world-class academic medicine available to people with cancer in central Pennsylvania that is close to home and family. Seventy percent of the Institute’s patients live in central Pennsylvania, much of which remains rural. The Cancer Institute’s catchment area includes 27 counties, many of them medically underserved.

Network outreach

The Cancer Institute actually improves care in hospitals across the state. Through a network of hospitals, the Institute delivers up-to-the-minute training to local practitioners and serves as a site for referral of more complex cases. Institute specialists work with local hospitals to develop disease management programs and specialized services, including access to clinical research and participation in clinical studies. The Cancer Institute gives some of the most rural areas in Pennsylvania access to world-class cancer care, strengthens the skills of local practitioners, and provides much-needed local education and outreach programs.
In the pink

Lady Lions basketball coach Coquese Washington knows that almost everyone has a cancer story. Her own hits close to home. When Washington was in middle school, her older sister was diagnosed with leukemia. Though her sister responded well to treatment and is now in her forties, cancer remains a cause close to the coach’s heart. So when Penn State Hershey Cancer Institute approached the Lady Lions about becoming part of their popular Pink Zone initiative, Washington jumped at the chance. The result is a day in which Cancer Institute staff help to celebrate cancer survivors, support the Lady Lions in a regular-season game, and share the progress being made against cancer in a post-game social. Funds raised through ticket sales and auctions go to several cancer charities, including the Cancer Institute.

“The more I learn about the Cancer Institute, the more interested I am in highlighting this jewel that’s right here in our own state and our own university.”

Coquese Washington
LADY LIONS BASKETBALL COACH
GOAL: EDUCATION

ATTRACTION AND MENTORING THE LEADERS OF TODAY AND TOMORROW

A critical mass of innovative researchers and clinicians magnetizes a cancer center, allowing it to attract talent that can move science and medicine forward in leaps and bounds. Our strong faculty has already helped us become a destination for great cancer care, but it needs to grow. Penn State Hershey Cancer Institute needs to recruit the most gifted teachers who are also the best clinicians and researchers.

Education is a vital part of the Penn State Hershey Cancer Institute’s mission. Our residency, graduate, and continuing education programs prepare physicians, scientists, nurses, and technicians to be leaders in many fields. Together with the College of Medicine, we train dozens of medical students. Our own fellowships in hematology and oncology have produced scores of experts in both disciplines who now fill posts nationwide. The Cancer Institute is also the educational sponsor of the Central Pennsylvania Oncology Group, keeping regional professionals current in treatment advances.
A natural fit

For Assistant Professor of Medicine Edward Gunther, M.D., Penn State Hershey Cancer Institute offers the perfect balance between treating patients, training scientists, and advancing care through research. His research focuses on the fundamental question of cancer relapse. His work benefits from collaboration in genetics and information technology with experts at Penn State's main campus, but Gunther also finds that his ongoing work as a clinician has a profound influence on the questions he asks in his teaching and research.

“I’m at Hershey because it’s a growing, fast-moving institution. Research here is creative and aspirational – the kind of research that leads to breakthroughs. Funding from the Jake Gittlen Cancer Research Foundation is essential to my lab, so the community is always close by. When local high school students tour the lab, everyone is energized and inspired. It reminds you that what you’re doing is really important to people.”

Edward Gunther, M.D.
ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR OF MEDICINE

The case for world-class care

Former Hershey Foods CEO and Cancer Institute volunteer Ken Wolfe knows how devastating it can be when a loved one loses a battle that begins and ends too quickly. He lost his wife Ruthie only four months after she was diagnosed with cancer in 1992. Knowing what his wife went through, Ken understands why a world-class cancer center is so important to the people of central Pennsylvania.

“My support of the Cancer Institute has to do with the comprehensive nature of the care it offers to the local community. It brings together the most up-to-date resources and knowledge in a single place, close to home. Having that level and depth of capability right in our own backyard is so important to our families and our region.”

Ken Wolfe
FORMER HERSEHEY FOODS CEO AND CANCER INSTITUTE VOLUNTEER
ON THE MAP

With core strength and new facilities, Penn State Hershey Cancer Institute is ready to be more effective, more powerful, and more recognized than ever before. Our plans call for us to be:

- A destination for patients and health care professionals from around the world.
- A site of breakthrough research that promises new insights into the mysteries of cancer and its prevention.
- A complex where scientific innovations become lifesaving treatments faster than ever before.
- An educational institution nurturing the scientists and clinicians who will define the future of cancer care.

Now, we need your partnership to realize these goals.

Support for patient care

Private support enables the Cancer Institute to deliver the very best care, ensuring that patients will be treated with compassion by the best clinicians in the most therapeutically advanced environment possible.

Support for research

Major investments in our facility need to be matched by investments in our research infrastructure. A new federal commitment to cancer research opens exciting possibilities, but we also need a broader commitment to research independent of the uncertainties of government funding. Support will provide necessary labs and equipment, as well as seed funding that enables promising young researchers to establish track records of success that can then lead to external funding.

Support for Faculty

Among our top priorities are the resources to strengthen support for existing faculty and recruit top talent. We seek new and established physician-scientists committed to translating scientific discovery at the bench to the bedside in our disease-specific areas of strength.
Join Us.
Give Now.
A Healthier World Awaits.