

Christiana Hospital, Newark, Delaware Helen F. Graham Cancer Center at Christiana Care



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- Patrick Grusenmeyer, ScD, Administration Leader for Cancer Center

Background

Christiana Care Health System is the major healthcare provider in Delaware and the surrounding region, including portions of Maryland, Pennsylvania and New Jersey. It includes two hospitals: the 780-bed Christiana Hospital in suburban New Castle County (the largest of six acute care hospitals in the state), and the 290-bed Wilmington Hospital in downtown Wilmington. The Health System treats 60 percent of the region's patients with cancer. The Helen F. Graham Cancer Center is located on the Christiana Hospital campus and treats 2,600 new cancer cases a year. Plans are underway for a 90,000 square-foot addition to the Cancer Center that will include the Deal Center for Translational Cancer Research, a project with the University of Delaware, the Delaware Biotechnology Institute, and the Nemours Alfred I. duPont Hospital for Children.

Patient Service Area

The smallest state in the union, with just three counties, 62 percent of Delaware's population resides in dense New Castle County, home of Wilmington. Christiana Care provides 80 percent of the healthcare in New Castle County and 66 percent of the healthcare in the entire state. Throughout the state, three quarters of the population is White, 19 percent African American, and 5 percent Hispanic. The median income is well above the national average (\$52,499 in Delaware vs. \$36,276 nationally). Although Delaware's cancer death rates are declining faster than the national average, health disparities between African American and White patients are a concern, particularly in Wilmington.

Access and Outreach Initiatives

To address the region's healthcare disparities, Christiana Care provides intensified outreach to individuals in three targeted high-risk ZIP codes in the city of Wilmington. The Health System plans to increase the number of Hispanic women receiving mammograms by 10 percent and increase clinical trials awareness among minority groups. Since 2002, Christiana Care has partnered with the Jefferson Medical College of Thomas Jefferson University in Philadelphia to enhance access to clinical trials.