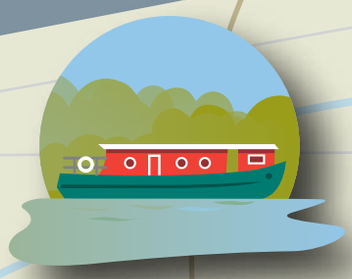
2014 Volume II

# Dialogue

James P. Wilmot Cancer Institute | University of Rochester Medical Center



UR MEDICINE | WILMOT CANCER INSTITUTE

*Letter from the Director*

# Hello friends of the Wilmot Cancer Institute,

WILMOT CANCER INSTITUTE

We have much to celebrate this spring, and I'm absolutely delighted to kick off the season of renewal with our new brand:

**Wilmot Cancer Institute.**

You'll read more on these pages about why we decided to rebrand, but I want you to understand that this important change is the foundation of our vision for the future of Wilmot cancer care. By establishing an Institute as the umbrella organization for our clinical and research enterprises, we're providing a clear identity, and what I hope is a source of tremendous pride for all.

Earlier this year the University rolled out the UR Medicine brand, covering all clinical services. The Wilmot Cancer Institute sits prominently beneath the UR Medicine banner, along with Strong Memorial Hospital, Golisano Children's Hospital, Strong West, and the Flaum Eye Institute.

In terms of patient care, the Wilmot Cancer Institute is devoted to providing the resources, infrastructure, technology, and, of course, clinical excellence, to every case. With access to the full portfolio of Wilmot assets, each patient – no matter where he or she lives in western New York – will gain top-quality care in a more convenient location. Our patients throughout the region are now able to receive Wilmot care close to home.

Rebranding also clarifies any confusion that might result from our mergers and acquisitions in 2012 and 2013 with Pluta and Interlakes Oncology. Now that our regional footprint is in place, the Wilmot Cancer Institute becomes the central organization to which these care centers are linked.

On a related note, I'm happy to announce the opening of Comprehensive Breast Care at Pluta, our breast treatment center that truly marries the best of Wilmot with the best of Pluta. I'm proud of the way our teams worked together to make this vision a reality, and I'm confident that Pluta will become a regional destination for compassionate and comprehensive breast cancer care.

Our strategic planning and subsequent growth during the past two years justifies the Institute model and points to why we're unique in the region. Thank you for the strong support along the way. I feel confident that we've given you new reasons to invest in Wilmot.

Sincerely,

Jonathan W. Friedberg, M.D., M.M.Sc.

*Director, James P. Wilmot Cancer Institute*

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**On the Cover**
The Wilmot Cancer Institute's growing reach

Illustration by
John Cammarosano,
K2 Design




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# Wilmot: More than Meets the Eye

Soon, new signs will mark the Wilmot Cancer Institute locations around the Rochester region. While they might catch your eye, what's less visible is the hard work accomplished behind the scenes to fold all of our clinical services, researchers, faculty and staff into the new brand.

Whether it involved creating uniform protocols for mixing chemotherapy, or managing staff changes and e-record transitions as a result of our recent mergers, Wilmot leaders, including Brian Martin and Patti Murray, associate directors of the Wilmot Cancer Institute, proudly took on the extra tasks.

As we expand, our goal is to keep it as seamless as possible for the thousands of patients we currently serve at the following locations:

- Wilmot Cancer Center, 601 Elmwood Ave., Rochester, on the University of Rochester Medical Center campus adjacent to Strong Memorial Hospital (585.275.5830)
- Interlakes at Highland Hospital, 1000 South Ave., Rochester, North Building, Level 3, (585.475.8700)
- Interlakes at Professional Office Building on the campus of Unity Hospital, 1561 Long Pond Road, Greece (585.453.2700)
- Interlakes – Strong West, 156 West Ave., Brockport (585.395.0124)
- Pluta Cancer Center and Comprehensive Breast Care at Pluta, 125 Red Creek Drive, Henrietta (585.486.0600)
- Interlakes at Sands Cancer Center on the campus of F.F. Thompson Hospital, 360 Parrish St., Canandaigua (585.393.7040)
- Interlakes – Geneva, 675 West Washington St., Geneva (315.781.2250)

With the Wilmot Cancer Institute as its canopy, each satellite office provides an array of medical oncology and other treatment services. Radiation therapy is available in Henrietta (585.486.0600), Greece (585.225.3989), Canandaigua (585.396.6180), and at Highland Hospital (585.341.6750).


*Illustration by*
*John Cammarosano, K2 Design*


UR MEDICINE | WILMOT CANCER INSTITUTE
Wilmot Cancer Center
UR MEDICINE | WILMOT CANCER INSTITUTE
Highland Hospital
UR MEDICINE | WILMOT CANCER INSTITUTE
Geneva
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Sands Cancer Center
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Oswego
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Greece
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Webster
Ontario
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Rochester
Gates
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Fairport
Erie Canal
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Syracuse
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# A Coming-Out Party for Wilmot Cancer Institute

Rebranding is more than just a name change, a catchy tagline, or a fresh logo. It's a reflection of who you are.

The leaders at Wilmot faced a moment of truth earlier this year, as they looked back over the past 18 months and realized the cancer center had fundamentally evolved. No longer was it merely one site on the University of Rochester Medical Center campus where patients came for treatment. Under new leadership, Wilmot had revived a commitment to its entire community – from inside its own walls, to Rochester and throughout the Finger Lakes region – and branched out significantly from 601 Elmwood Avenue in Rochester.

Once the decision was made to bring our services into the region, we grew quickly through a couple of key mergers and acquisitions. Seven Wilmot Cancer Institute clinics now have a stake in towns within a redefined metropolitan territory, from Greece to Geneva. Ambitious plans to expand even further across western New York are in place.

In addition, we renewed our pledge to clinical excellence. This resulted in key faculty recruitments and the expansion of integrative medical services such as palliative care, social work, and specialized psychiatry and cardiac services for cancer patients.

We also cast a brighter spotlight on research, which sent us on a mission to tout this unique asset and tell our story of how science informs clinical care at Wilmot every day.

We chose the name Wilmot Cancer Institute because, quite simply, it better reflects the umbrella organization that we have become.

"Everything we've done is the product of hard work by many people, which warrants a name that conveys a smarter place and a stronger presence in the community through an integrated network of clinics," said Jonathan Friedberg, M.D., director of the Wilmot Cancer Institute.

The Institute brand also aligns Wilmot more closely with other well-known centers like the Roswell Cancer Institute in Buffalo and Dana-Farber Cancer Institute in Boston.

We want to make it clear to patients in the Rochester region that Wilmot is special in terms of cancer enterprises, with our promise that research and a reliance on evidence-based medicine enable us to provide superior patient care.

The Wilmot Institute provides clarity and visibility to a growing cancer-care network, just as UR Medicine serves as a mantle for a growing list of hospitals, comprehensive patient services, and affiliated institutions with the University of Rochester.

Back in 2008 when the James P. Wilmot Cancer Center opened its doors, we had approximately 22,000 patient visits and about 400 faculty and staff. This year, partly as a result of an in-house reorganization and our new partnerships, we have twice as many faculty and staff and expect approximately 64,000 patient visits. We continue to increase our volumes significantly; some weeks, Wilmot accepts as many as 100 new patients for cancer care.

Linear accelerator at Sands Cancer Center

Genetic testing at the microarray laboratory

Aligning a network of community clinics with the Wilmot Cancer Institute is more convenient for patients who do not live near the University campus, yet it still gives them access to our clinical trials, the UR Medicine e-record system, and provides a cost advantage when it comes to purchasing medications and other supplies for treatment.

The Wilmot Cancer Institute brand also grants a stamp of excellence for the way oncology is practiced and delivered at each of its satellite locations.

For example, after the acquisition of the Pluta Cancer Center in December of 2012, and the merger with Interlakes Oncology in 2013, Wilmot was required to bring quality and safety at each office into compliance with the gold standards set by The Joint Commission, the nation's premier accrediting body for health care and for all of UR Medicine's affiliates. Physicians at all of Wilmot's satellite facilities can now connect through the Internet or in person for weekly tumor board sessions, and patients can receive personalized genomics testing in many cases.

"Cancer care is so complex these days," Friedberg said. "It's more than your oncologist or your nursing team. It starts with the diagnostic process – which involves highly specialized technology and skills – and continues through treatment decisions, follow-up care, and through survivorship and palliative care if needed. Our Institute brings that comprehensive level of service every step of the way, in a setting that's convenient no matter where you live."

"We want our patients to see 'Wilmot Institute' an breathe a sigh of relief," he added, "because they know they're getting the best care possible."

Geriatric cancer and exercise specialists consult with a patient

An oncologist and physician's assistant meet at Interlakes

## A Change of Pace

Noteworthy changes at Wilmot during the past two years:

- Jonathan Friedberg, M.D., became the new director, leading a transformation that accelerated growth;
- Research took a front seat. Under the direction of Hartmut "Hucky" Land, Ph.D., we reorganized Wilmot's research portfolio and regrouped the 100-member scientific team into four programs: Hallmarks of Cancer (biology), Blood Cancers, Solid Tumors, and Cancer Control & Survivorship;
- We acquired or merged with regional cancer centers that already had terrific brand recognition in the Rochester area – Pluta and Interlakes. This extended our reach across western New York. Additional expansion plans in the region are underway.
- We recruited nearly a dozen new clinicians and scientists, who are already making a difference in research and treatment;
- We opened the 5th floor of the inpatient cancer hospital, completing the vertical expansion of Wilmot's modern, light-filled building;
- New services such as palliative care and social work were added or expanded, with more planned for the future.
- We created a comprehensive clinical survivorship program, with a goal to maximize quality of life after therapy for patients throughout the region.

# *Letter from the Co-Director*

When we talk about "precision medicine" at Wilmot, science carries the discussion. Whether we're working on a more precise, personalized diagnosis through genetic testing, or developing new, targeted treatment options, the Wilmot Cancer Institute is unique in the region because of our ability to proactively impact cancer care every day through research.

Precision medicine is a broad term that has different interpretations. In my world, it relates to the scientific analysis of cancer mutations and specific molecular information that points us toward better treatments.

By being precise on a molecular scale, our goal is to categorize cancer in new ways. A patient might think of his or her disease as "colon cancer," for example, but in the laboratory we're investigating networks of genes that not only fuel colon cancer but many other types. When we can pinpoint the mechanisms common to many cancers and find drugs that disrupt cells at that juncture, we will impact the lives of many more patients.

Another important aspect of precision medicine involves repurposing safe and effective drugs that already have years of scientific discovery behind them. For example, we're studying the antibiotic doxycycline as a possible treatment for lymphoma. Based on research from the Wilmot lab of Jiyong Zhao, Ph.D., one of our clinicians, Carla Casulo, M.D., designed a clinical trial to explore whether doxycycline can help with relapsed lymphomas. We've already begun to enroll patients and expect that 20 people will participate in this study in the coming months.

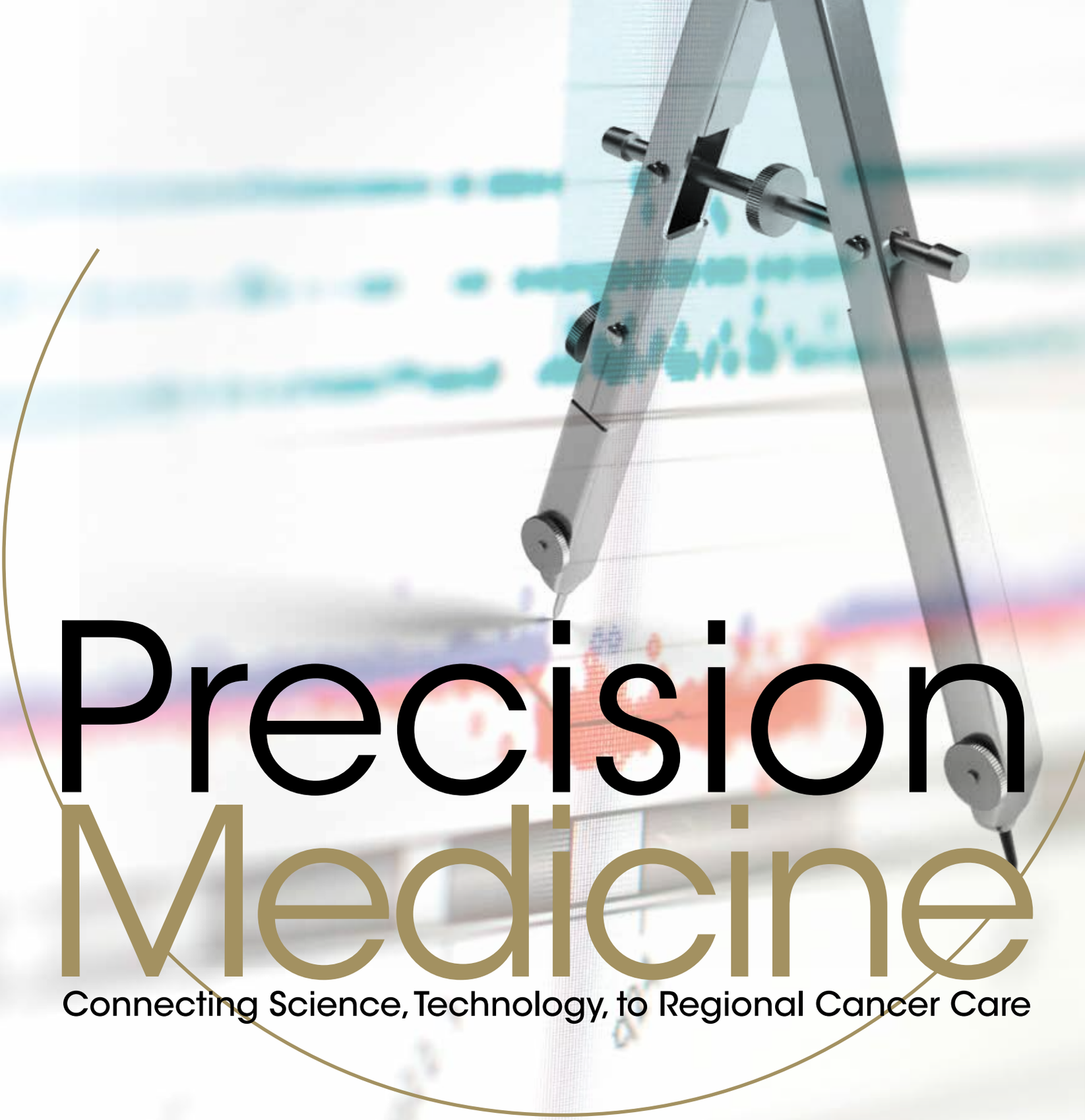
Doxycycline has been around for decades as a treatment for malaria, Lyme disease, pneumonia, and other infections. Others have investigated its use in rare subsets of lymphomas. But we're taking a broader approach. Our goal is to get results quickly, allowing us to seek funding that will continue the support of this interesting project. I'm proud of our nimbleness, and our research team's close collaboration with their clinical counterparts. It's an exciting time in medicine and technology; thank you for standing with the Wilmot Cancer Institute as we learn and grow.

Sincerely,

Hartmut "Hucky" Land, Ph.D.

*Robert and Dorothy Markin Professor, Director of Research, and Co-Director of the Wilmot Cancer Institute*

RESEARCH



# Precision Medicine

## Connecting Science, Technology, to Regional Cancer Care

Not so long ago, cancer was viewed as a single villain with a standard treatment – chemotherapy and radiation for nearly everyone.

Fast forward a few generations and the sledgehammer is being replaced by a completely new set of tools so sophisticated that they're changing how we approach cancer and continually teaching us new applications for the future.

"Precision medicine" is the term widely used to describe the gains from 30 to 40 years of achievements in science and technology. In the world of patient care, precision medicine translates into better and more precise drugs; the ability to clarify a diagnosis or predict cancer's path based on gene sequencing and other modern methods; precision radiation techniques and equipment that spares healthy tissue and organs from damage; precision surgery with fewer complications; and even follow-up routines for survivors tailored to an individual's unique circumstances.

"Everything we're doing can be described as taking a 'precision' approach," said Jonathan Friedberg, M.D., director of the Wilmot Cancer Institute. "No longer is cancer a one-size-fits-all disease. And by recognizing this and building our research and patient care around this concept, we are at the cutting edge of cancer discovery, diagnosis, and treatment."

In Rochester and the Finger Lakes region, Wilmot is the only place with the tools and expertise to carry out this approach.

"The possibilities are endless and what we're doing now in the clinic is a direct result of what we're learning in our laboratories," added Hartmut "Hucky" Land, Ph.D., director of research at the Wilmot Cancer Institute. "Precision medicine is always a moving target. We have many projects in motion that will result in diagnosis and treatment that is highly patient-specific."

## The "deep sequencing" form of testing allows specialists to match the ideal treatment to faulty genes found in each cancer.

Soon, for example, Wilmot plans to begin deep sequencing of lung cancer and melanoma tumors, in collaboration with Roswell Cancer Institute in Buffalo. "Deep sequencing" is an expensive process where scientists perform gene testing on the same region of a biopsy sample multiple times, to get the most precise analysis possible. This advanced form of testing allows specialists to match the ideal treatment to faulty genes found in each cancer.

By gaining this level precision on a molecular scale, scientists also can begin to group patients in new ways. A patient might be diagnosed with a tumor that has a "BRAF mutation" rather than melanoma, for example. Viewing cancers through a molecular lens allows Wilmot researchers to study entire gene networks and discover the ways in which they drive the growth of tumors. The goal is to disrupt a vast network of mutations common to many cancers, rather than a single mutation specific to only one cancer type. Technology plays a major role in precision medicine, and our long-term plans call for investment in this area.

Our faculty is creatively forging ahead to apply what's available in new ways. Anwar Iqbal, Ph.D., associate professor of Pathology and Laboratory Medicine and director of UR Medicine's Microarray CGH Laboratory, for example, designed a cancer chip that's used in the genetic analysis of a pre-leukemia condition known as myelodysplastic syndrome (MDS). The disease is difficult to diagnosis because the symptoms (weakness, tiredness, low blood counts) are common to many other illnesses.

Iqbal recognized the clinical problem and, with colleagues, developed a genomics study to clarify the diagnosis of suspected cases of MDS. Other data from his lab also show the detection of precise targets in kidney cancer more effectively.

Blood cancers present more opportunities, too. Science has taught us, for example, that some younger leukemia patients with a favorable genetic profile can skip a bone marrow transplant, a difficult treatment that replaces diseased bone marrow with healthy stem cells but also carries the risk of serious complications and even death.

Lindsey Wittmeyer, medical technologist works with Anwar Iqbal, Ph.D., to analyze the DNA from patient tumor samples.


Wilmot hematologist Clive Zent, M.D., is also doing genetic characterizations for chronic lymphocytic leukemia patients, and then grouping them into categories from low risk to extremely high risk. Based on the risk profiles, Zent is better able to prescribe the most appropriate, personalized treatment.

One of Zent's patients, Gerald Kressman, 80, of Rochester, is appreciating a better quality of life as a result of Zent's care. Last December, Kressman said, he was bedridden at home and so sick with CLL that his family had begun the process of saying goodbye. A friend advised him to visit Wilmot, and on Jan. 2, 2014, Kressman started a customized treatment plan under Zent's guidance, after receiving genetic profiling and other tests.

"Within three days I started to feel better," Kressman said. "I even got up to walk a bit. It was like I was reborn." Now, Kressman rises early every morning to take advantage of each day, enjoying cooking, shopping, and spending time with family and friends.

Christine Hall, 47, of Caledonia, N.Y., also understands the value of precision medicine. She was diagnosed with early stage breast cancer at age 35. After completing treatment she was monitored with regular mammograms for 10 years but began having chest pain in the spring of 2013.

Ultimately she was diagnosed with stage 4 breast cancer. Quickly and precisely, however, Wilmot pathologists led by David Hicks, M.D., also discovered an amplification of a key biomarker in her tumor, HER2/neu or human epidermal growth factor receptor 2.

Since the HER2 gene had not been amplified in her earlier bout with cancer, the new information changed her outlook and allowed Hall to immediately begin taking a targeted therapy, which pinpoints the HER2 gene.

In the past, when doctors in the Rochester region had a questionable HER2 case, they had to send the tumor samples to facilities as far away as California, delaying the diagnosis. Wilmot began offering HER2/neu testing locally in 2013 – and Hall's case was among the first.

"It's very reassuring and it was a turning factor when we learned I was definitely HER2 positive," Hall said. "It gave me a more optimistic outlook and more options. We did high fives all around the office when the tests came back."

W. Richard Burack, M.D., Ph.D., director of Hematopathology at UR Medicine, oversees gene testing for all types of cancer at Wilmot – and relishes the impact that advanced testing has on patient care.

"To be able to tell somebody: 'We know exactly what disease you have,' is hugely important," Burack said. "This is an example of precision medicine that sets us apart from many other institutions."

Above: Clive Zent, M.D.

Right: Gerald Kressman, Rochester, who feels "reborn" after starting a new treatment.

# Gentle Yoga,

# Comprehensive Breast Care: A Perfect

Breast cancer patients, perhaps more than any other group, seem to crave an extra dimension to their care. Exercise and nutrition guidance, meditation, stress- and symptom-management – these holistic elements are what give many women the strength to carry on.

This month UR Medicine's Comprehensive Breast Care at Pluta opened its doors. In addition to a formal rebranding of the operation, the new center expands on the excellent multidisciplinary program that Wilmot had already built in recent years.

"We need to always put the patient at the core of everything we do, and that is what's driving us as we move forward," said Patti Murray, associate director of clinical services at the Wilmot Cancer Institute, the umbrella organization for all cancer services including the Pluta location.

Breast cancer patients who had been treated at Wilmot are now receiving care at 125 Red Creek Drive in Henrietta. During the past several months the Wilmot and Pluta staffs merged operations, a result of the University of Rochester Medical Center's acquisition of Pluta in December of 2012.

Kristin Skinner, M.D., a UR Medicine breast cancer surgeon and director of the center, said the move to Pluta made perfect sense. "We're very proud of our program at Wilmot, which has become a model for breast centers nationally," said Skinner, who joined the UR in 2006 after helping to build a similar breast program at New York University. "We've always tried to foster a holistic view, and that meshes very well with Pluta's philosophy. Moving in together, we can offer a better patient experience by capitalizing on Pluta's history of compassionate and integrative care while maintaining the multidisciplinary care for which Wilmot is already known."

Left: Kristin Skinner, M.D.

Above: Montha Chang, Penfield, stretches at a yoga class at Pluta.

# Anyone?

## Blend of Quality and Amenities

The Pluta facility has three floors, with space for an array of services including radiation oncology, chemotherapy infusion, medical and surgical check-ups and consultations, an on-site lab for blood work, social work services – as well as massage therapy, tai-chi classes, cooking demonstrations, and gentle yoga tailored for survivors. All patients will have access to clinical trials and a clinical survivorship program through the Wilmot Cancer Institute.

Some of these services are unique to upstate New York. In radiation oncology, for example, patients can receive treatment in the prone position, as opposed to the traditional supine position. Recent studies suggest the prone setup better shields the heart and lungs from inadvertent radiation toxicity. Radiation Oncologist Marilyn Ling, M.D., began using the prone technique in 2012, after generous fundraising from a local donor and Wilmot breast cancer survivor, Megan MacKenzie, paid for the purchase of two breast prone boards.

Right: Yoga instructor Susan Meynadasy, Webster.

Locating all staff, physicians and nurses with a specialty in breast cancer in the same building also fosters a team environment. The merged operation has approximately 75 employees, with plans to hire another breast oncologist this summer. As staff and medical teams improve their coordination of services, patients will benefit with fewer, more productive visits.

Comprehensive Breast Care at Pluta has big plans for the future as well. The team would like to renovate the ground floor into a state-of-the-art space for integrative medicine activities. Karen Mustian, Ph.D., an associate professor at UR who specializes in studying how exercise benefits cancer patients, is involved in the expansion plans and has given presentations to the Pluta board of directors and to patient-advisory councils.

"Breast cancer patients are among the most educated cancer patients, and they're looking for extra resources on the path to wellness," Murray said. "Our new comprehensive center is the best of Wilmot and the best of Pluta – thriving under one roof."

# NEW FACULTY

**1 Frank Akwaa, M.D.,** is an instructor in Medicine and hematologist specializing in blood disorders. He was recruited after completing his fellowship in hematology/oncology at Wilmot, where he received the Wilmot Cancer Research Fellowship Award. This is a distinction given to candidates who intend to pursue an academic career in clinical, translational or basic cancer research; Akwaa was selected for his research with Laura Calvi, M.D., and Michael Becker, M.D. Akwaa received his medical training at the University of Rochester School of Medicine and Dentistry, and graduated with a distinction in community service.

**2 Sophia Balderman, M.D.,** is an instructor in Medicine, who joined the Wilmot team after completing the Hematology Fellowship Program at the University of Rochester Medical Center. She currently works in Laura Calvi's lab investigating the role of the bone marrow microenvironment in myelodysplastic syndrome. Balderman has a Wilmot fellowship grant, and received her medical training from SUNY Upstate Medical University.

**3 Kevin Bylund, M.D.,** an assistant professor in the Department of Radiation Oncology, completed his medical training and a residency at the University of Rochester School of Medicine and Dentistry. A recipient of the 2012 RSNA Roentgen Resident, he specializes in prostate cancer treatment.

**4 Emily Carmody Soni, M.D.,** an assistant professor of Orthopaedics, was recruited from Georgetown University's MedStar Washington Cancer Institute. Her research is focused on synovial sarcoma, a rare subtype of bone and tissue cancer for which she has developed a laboratory model. Carmody Soni earned her medical degree from the University of Rochester School of Medicine and Dentistry, and graduated with a distinction in research.

**5 Rachel Farkas, M.D.,** an assistant professor of Surgery, is a breast surgeon who was recruited after completing both her clinical fellowship and residency in surgery at the University of Rochester Medical Center, where she served as chief surgical resident from 2010–2011. She is studying photoacoustic breast imaging, a technology that may allow radiologists to detect and see breast tumors with improved accuracy without exposing patients to radiation. Farkas received her medical training from New York Medical College.

**6 Marcus Noel, M.D.,** instructor in Medicine, specializes in gastrointestinal cancer at Wilmot. He received his medical training at Rutgers' Robert Wood Johnson Medical School and was recruited after completing an internship, residency, and fellowship at Univeristy of Rochester. Noel was awarded a Wilmot Cancer Center Research Fellowship in July 2013 for his research on hepatobiliary cancers under the direction of Aram Hezel, M.D.

**7 Clive Zent, M.D.,** professor of Medicine, specializes in chronic lymphocytic leukemia (CLL), and is nationally recognized for his research in this area. Wilmot leaders recruited Zent from the Mayo Clinic in Rochester, Minn. He is investigating the autoimmune complications of CLL to determine if increasing the ability of a patient's own immune systems can kill CLL cells targeted by therapeutic antibodies.

# *the new* 5th Floor

## Fifth Floor Opening Completes Inpatient Expansion

As the winter winds howled, the atmosphere inside the Wilmot Cancer Center was bright and warm on March 4, the day the newly renovated fifth floor opened its door to patients. The 27,000-square-foot space boasts 28 private rooms, the latest in medical technology, and comforts such as sleeper sofas, large windows, spacious family waiting areas, and a solarium.

Wilmot sought input from patients and families while designing the space, which completes a vertical expansion and pulls all cancer clinical services from across the University campus to a central location.

Wilmot opened its new facility adjacent to Strong Memorial Hospital to in 2008. Soon afterward it began a second phase of construction, completing floors six and seven in July of 2012 for patients that need to be hospitalized. Those floors house the Blood and Marrow Transplant Unit and Adult Hematology/Oncology. The fifth floor makes room for post-surgical oncology patients from urology; GI cancers; head and neck cancers; and orthopaedic cancers. Most fifth-floor patients will stay in the hospital two to seven days.

# Community Members Glimpse at Cancer Care in 21st Century

The Wilmot Cancer Institute hosted "Medical School for an Evening" on April 3, an event attended by 75 community guests who learned more about the Institute's progressive approach to cancer care.

An opening panel discussion, moderated by Jonathan Friedberg, M.D., director of Wilmot, gave the community a better understanding of "precision medicine," a buzzword in cancer that describes a focus on genomics and other tools used to provide personalized treatment for patients. With more precision, patients are seeing better results with less toxicity than ever before – and the faculty at Wilmot is working hard to make sure this improves in the future.

The precision panel included clinicians, physician-scientists, and basic scientists: Aram Hezel, M.D., Helene McMurray, Ph.D., Michael Milano, M.D., and Clive Zent, M.D.

Event participants also were able to choose from three breakout sessions: Diagnosing Cancer in a Molecular Era, led by David Hicks, M.D., and Richard Burack, M.D., Ph.D.; Cancer Care and Older Adults, led by Supriya Mohile, M.D., and Karen Mustian, Ph.D.; and the Next Generation of Personalized Treatments, a Vision from the Laboratory, led by Hucky Land, Ph.D., and Mark Noble, Ph.D.

# Wilmot Involved in Latest FDA-Approved CLL Therapy

The Wilmot Cancer Institute played a role in the U.S. Food and Drug Administration's recent expanded use of the drug ibrutinib for chronic lymphocytic leukemia (CLL), by participating in a nationwide phase III study that accelerated approval of the drug.

Paul Barr, M.D., director of the Wilmot Clinical Trials Office, is also part of the national team invited to present ibrutinib data at the American Society of Clinical Oncology (ASCO) annual meeting May 30 to June 4 in Chicago. This is the largest gathering of oncologists in the country.

One of Barr's patients, Charles Valik, 74, of Greece, N.Y., knows firsthand the value of clinical research. After being diagnosed in 2010 with an aggressive form of CLL, he went into remission following multiple rounds of chemotherapy. But in the fall of 2013 when routine blood work began to show signs of a relapse, he started taking ibrutinib (a pill) under Barr's supervision — and his health quickly stabilized.

"I'm even back at the YMCA exercising five days a week," Valik said. "The drug is wonderful and I'm able to look forward now."

Charles Valik

# Seeds of Hope Donations Soar

The Rochester community has once again stepped up to support seed grants for research at the Wilmot Cancer Institute by pledging $112,000 – more than doubling the amount raised at last year's event.

The annual Planting Seeds of Hope telethon took place Jan. 28–29, 2014, in the lobby of UR Medicine's Strong Memorial Hospital, hosted by 13 WHAM's Adam Chodak, and Kimberly and Beck from 98.9 The Buzz radio.

Seeds grants are extremely important. They enable researchers to launch new pilot projects, or allow them to gather the scientific data they need to apply for larger government grants or foundation funding that would support their next phase of study. Particularly for younger researchers, the seed grants are a pivotal part of setting their careers in motion.

Kovalsky-Carr Electric Company matched all gifts made during the Seeds of Hope event. The Wilmot Cancer Institute would like to thank everyone who made this occasion a huge success.

Top: Luke Peppone, Ph.D., talks about the importance of cancer research funding.
Right: Ed Messing, M.D., does a radio interview.

# Community Focus

2013 Outrun the Sun check presentation

Keeping Hope Alive at Flaherty's Three Flags Inn

The 2013 'Outrun the Sun' event raised $25,000 for melanoma research in August 2013.

At Flaherty's Three Flags Inn in Macedon, the 'Keeping the Hope Alive' event on Feb. 9, 2014, raised $10,000 for breast cancer research.

The Pancreatic Cancer Association of Western New York raised $75,176 for pancreatic cancer research through their 4th annual 'Step It Up To Cure Pancreatic Cancer' walk.

The 'All in for STEEL Lillies Dinner' on Feb. 8, 2014, raised $75,662 for sarcoma research.

Brockport Rotary raised $5,000 from their BBQ and Music Festival.

The Occhipinti and Fico families raised over $3,000 for the Wilmot's 'Patient Needs' fund in memory of Barbara Occhipinti. They held an inaugural Pong Tournament at the Webster Knights of Columbus on Feb. 15, 2014.

Pittsford resident Stacey Bolger's fruit and vegetable stand, 'Stand Against Cancer,' raised more than $13,000 for cancer research with support from White's Farm Market in Bloomfield.

'Cocktails and Couture,' a fashion show held at Von Maur at Eastview Mall on Nov. 10, 2013, raised more than $14,000.

Dado Boutique's Fall Fashion Show on Oct. 25, 2013, raised more than $38,000 for breast cancer research.

Megan MacKenzie's birthday party raised $5,367 for breast cancer research in September 2013.


Brockport Rotary

The Pancreatic Cancer Association of Western New York

All in for STEEL Lillies Dinner

Occhipinti and Fico Families

# Wilmot Cancer Institute
# **Calendar of Community Events**

**Sunday, June 1, 2014 –- 2nd annual Warrior Walk**
Erie Canal near University of Rochester
All proceeds from the Warrior Walk benefit the Judy DiMarzo Survivorship Program at Wilmot. For more details please visit: *http://teamraiser.rochester.edu/warrior-walk-2014*

**Sunday, June 8, 2014 – All In For STEEL Lillies 5k**
Webster Recreation Center
Benefits sarcoma research at the Wilmot Cancer Institute. For more information please visit: *www.steellillies.org/.* The Recreation Center is located at 1350 Chiyoda Drive, Webster.

**Sunday, June 22, 2014 – KM Memorial Golf Tournament**
Mills Creek Golf Course
Benefits brain cancer research at the Wilmot Cancer Institute. For more information please contact Bea Slizewski at *beareads@gmail.com.* The golf course is located at 128 Cedars Ave., Churchville.

**Sunday, July 13, 2014 – For Pete's Sake Golf Tournament**
Victor Hills Golf Club
Supports Cholangiocarcinoma. For more information please contact Kaitlyn Osterling at *Kaitlyn_Osterling@URMC.Rochester.edu.* The golf club is located at 1397 Brace Road, Victor.

**Monday, July 14, 2014 – 5th Annual Michael F. Contestabile Memorial Golf Tournament**
Shadow Pines Golf Club
Benefits Pancreatic Cancer Research. For more information contact Frank Pettinaro at *fpettina@rochester.rr.com.* The golf club is located at 600 Whalen Road, Penfield.

**Friday, August 1, 2014 – Outrun the Sun 5k**
Webster Park
Benefits melanoma research. For more information please visit: *www.melanomaaction.org/Rochester_Melanoma_Action_Group/Welcome.html*

**Monday, August 18, 2014 – Survivor's Night with Rochester Red Wings**
Frontier Field
Come out to the ballpark for this celebration of cancer survivors; this event is for anyone who has been touched by cancer. Game starts at 7:05 pm. For tickets and more information contact Derek Swanson at *dswanson@redwingsbaseball.com* or 454-1001.

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