



## Gynecologic Cancer Personalized Care for the Life of the Patient

Providing advanced, personalized treatment, regardless of an individual's circumstances, is critical to caring for MetroHealth's patients with gynecologic cancer, according to **Kimberly Resnick, MD**, director of gynecologic oncology.

As gynecologic oncologists "we're involved in every aspect of a woman's care, from the time of her diagnosis through follow-up, often for the remainder of her life," says Dr. Resnick. While her patients often have diverse socioeconomic and cultural backgrounds, they typically all share concerns about maintaining their quality of life as they contend with their illness. Dr. Resnick juggles all these factors as she creates her patients' treatment plans.

### PROVIDING STATE-OF-THE-ART CARE

Because MetroHealth delivers great care to everyone regardless of coverage, Dr. Resnick often treats patients who had been receiving treatment elsewhere until their insurance was no longer accepted.

Whether a treatment plan includes minimally invasive robotic surgery or novel therapies in a clinical trial, "my

goal is to provide the very best, cutting-edge care regardless of a patient's ability to pay," she says.

Because MetroHealth serves a diverse patient population, being culturally competent is also critical to ensuring that every individual receives excellent care, says Dr. Resnick. "Patients may face social stressors and concerns that the rest of us can't even imagine, but we need to communicate in a way that shows them compassion and understanding."

### OFFERING SOCIAL SERVICES AND SUPPORT

Sometimes Dr. Resnick's patients face challenges with basic needs such as having enough food, adequate shelter and access to transportation. "This is where social services become integral to care," she says.

A full-time social worker can help patients organize transportation and find resources such as food banks and housing assistance. An American Cancer Society patient navigator is also available to help patients move through the MetroHealth system, ensuring access to high quality care.

Other services such as massage therapy, reiki, support groups and a wig bank that provides free wigs to patients may also be part of comprehensive care, she said.

### RESPECTING QUALITY OF LIFE GOALS

Because of Cuyahoga County's aging population, Dr. Resnick sees many patients in their 70s. "I don't take for granted that these women have lived amazing lives," she says. "I want them to remain independent and live on their own if that's what they desire. They often just want to be able to spend time with their grandchildren and other loved ones."

Dr. Resnick has direct but empathetic discussions with her patients about their expected lifespan and their quality of life goals. A malignancy like ovarian cancer has a five-year survival of 40 to 50 percent. "In some cases, it may be time to stop treatment to avoid toxicities and to focus on lifestyle," she says.

Despite their illness, many women want to continue to live their lives as mothers, daughters and wives. "My patients never cease to amaze me," she says.



CONTRIBUTOR  
**KIMBERLY RESNICK, MD**

**"My goal is to provide the very best, cutting-edge care regardless of a patient's ability to pay."**

# CANCER CENTER UPDATES

Our Parma and Cleveland Heights locations are expanding services to offer hematology and oncology services, including Infusion Centers.

Additional specialists will be providing care at the following locations:

## MetroHealth Cleveland Heights Medical Offices

Yiping Wang, MD

## MetroHealth Parma Medical Offices and Surgery Center

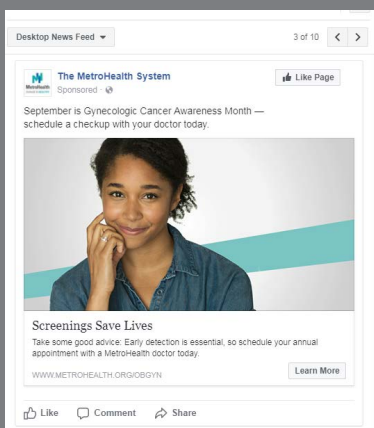
Paul Hergenroeder, MD  
Gloria Minella, MD  
Yiping Wang, MD

## Welcome New Staff

Gloria Minella, MD, Medical Oncologist  
Ashley Sekhon, MD, Radiation Oncologist

## Screenings Save Lives

Prevention is a priority. The Cancer Center recently launched a digital campaign to build awareness around the importance of screening to prevent or detect cancer early. The campaigns ran to coincide with Gynecological Cancer Awareness Month in September and Breast Cancer Awareness Month in October.



# Beyond Intensive Treatment

## Palliative Medicine and Hospice Care Offer Invaluable Support



Part of the mission for a cancer center is to improve the quality of life and provide comfort to patients with advanced or terminal cancer.

Traditionally, cancer treatment has been focused on treatment over

comfort, regardless of the prognosis. Palliative medicine and hospice care take a more human approach that includes a dialogue with patients and their families about their goals and their unique needs. Helping patients understand and navigate the complexities of palliative medicine and hospice care requires empathy and ongoing, open communication. This is especially true for patients nearing end of life, when intensive treatments are unlikely to provide further benefit.

Palliative care that includes pain relief and other symptom management, psychosocial services and spiritual support can address patients' physical and emotional needs. In some cases, palliative care not only helps to improve quality of life in cancer patients, it can also extend it. Dr. Michael Harrington and Dr. George Gelehrter are two of our specialists in palliative care who are part of our cancer center.

Hospice is an invaluable part of caring for our patients as they near the end of life. In addition to meeting patient needs, hospice readies families and other loved ones for the process of dying. MetroHealth closely collaborates with local

hospice organizations to improve the patient experience and to increase the likelihood that people will die in the comfort of their own homes. Hospice of Western Reserve has a representative on campus to help facilitate referral of care for its services.

Having a thoughtful conversation with patients and their families, in which oncologists carefully listen to patient preferences, is critical to determining the best route of care, whether this is more therapy, palliative care or hospice. In addition, providing patients with ready access to our outstanding palliative medicine and hospice care specialists can make these conversations all the more beneficial.

These providers can help patients and their loved ones understand the limitations and side effects of intensive treatments, as well as the full spectrum of available palliative or hospice resources.

Our goal is to provide patients with the best possible care, comfort and support, regardless of their prognosis.

**Benjamin D. Li, MD, FACS**  
**Cancer Center Director**

# WHY I CHOSE METROHEALTH



**Ashley Sekhon, MD**, radiation oncologist, was grateful for the breadth of experience she acquired during her residency at Ohio State University. However, when the time came to find her first position as a practicing clinician, she had a sense of the kind of hospital she wanted to work for — one with a profound sense of community.

**Q: With your wide experience in treating a full spectrum of malignancies, including rare and complex cases, what is your treatment philosophy?**

A: I always seek a balance between delivering the most effective therapy and ensuring that quality of life is not compromised. I of course want to do what's best in regard to treatment, but also respect their wishes and how they want to live their life.

**Q: What are some of the techniques you bring to MetroHealth?**

A: I am so appreciative of the clinical training that I've received, and I am looking forward to applying what I've learned at MetroHealth, including stereotactic body radiation therapy (SBRT), brachytherapy, and gamma knife radiosurgery.

**Q: Do you have a special area of interest or focus?**

A: I treat all disease sites, but I have a special interest in breast cancer. My residency research was focused on mitigating potential long-term complications associated with breast radiotherapy, and I was awarded an RSNA Resident Research Grant during my final year for a project that aims to develop a semi-automatic, objective scoring tool to assess cosmetic outcome for patients receiving breast

conservation therapy on trial. I hope to become involved in clinical research at MetroHealth as well.

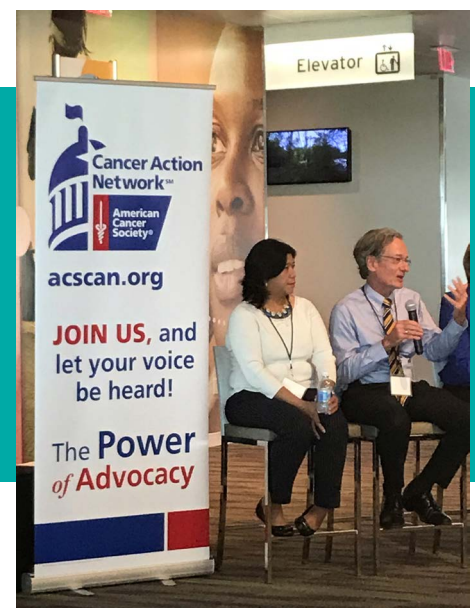
**Q: What was one of the first things that struck you coming to MetroHealth?**

A: I was immediately impressed by MetroHealth's commitment to providing quality patient care regardless of an individual's socioeconomic, cultural, or religious background. I also knew that I would be joining a wonderful group of oncologists at the Cancer Center. Everyone I have had the opportunity to meet has been so welcoming and approachable, and this dynamic is what really drew me in.

**Q: What else drew you to the Cleveland area?**

I do have personal reasons for practicing here. I am originally from the Cleveland area and appreciate the opportunity to be close to friends and family. I wanted to come back to what I consider home.

At the American Cancer Society-Cancer Action Network Cleveland IT Roundtable on August 9, 2017, Dr. Paul Hergenroeder and Elvira Ordillas, RN, presented the progress being made at MetroHealth on the Survivorship Care Plan and Cancer Care Summary.





# 2017 Cancer Center Pilot Grant and NAPBC Accreditation

The 2017 Cancer Center Pilot Grant has been awarded to Kimberly Resnick, MD, with co-investigators Sareena Singh, MD, Joram Sawady, MD, and Susanna Syriac, MD, for their study titled "Prognostic Implications of Somatic BRCA 1 Mutations Detected by Immunohistochemistry in African American and Caucasian Patients with High-Grade Serous Ovarian Carcinoma."

Congratulations to Dr. Resnick and her team. Thank you to those who submitted proposals. Please start preparing now for next year's call for proposals, which will be announced in January 2018. We encourage everyone involved in all types of cancer research to apply.

MetroHealth Medical Center has been granted a three-year/full accreditation designation by the National Accreditation Program for Breast

Centers (NAPBC), a program administered by the American College of Surgeons. Accreditation by the NAPBC is given only to those centers that have voluntarily committed to provide the highest level of quality breast care and that undergo a rigorous evaluation process and review of their performance. MetroHealth's Breast Center has held this designation since 2011.

"We are fortunate to have a multidisciplinary breast care team comprised of such talented, dedicated individuals," says Natalie Joseph, MD, Medical Director of MetroHealth's Breast Center and Breast Program leader.



**Receiving care at a NAPBC-accredited center ensures that a patient will have access to:**

- Comprehensive care, including a full range of state-of-the-art services.
- A multidisciplinary team approach to coordinate the best treatment options.
- Information about ongoing clinical trials and new treatment options.
- Quality breast care close to home.

For more information about the National Accreditation Program for Breast Centers, visit [accreditedbreastcenters.org](http://accreditedbreastcenters.org).

## Signature Events Support Cancer Center

This summer, three signature events raised proceeds for cancer-related programs and services offered at MetroHealth. Each event was spearheaded by members of MetroHealth's Cancer Vision Advocacy Council (VAC) – a group formed to raise awareness and funds for MetroHealth's Cancer Center.



**Many thanks to Jim Cahoon, Ellena and Jim Muraco and Dr. Kimberly Resnick for their leadership in executing these events.**

### JUNE 2017

The Brett Altieri Golf Outing raised approximately **\$14,000**

### AUGUST 2017

OROC (Outrun Ovarian Cancer) raises thousands of dollars each year resulting in approximately **\$26,000** a year in support of MetroHealth's Cancer Center

### SEPTEMBER 2017

Courts for Cancer netted over **\$15,000**

**Thank you to all of our donors and special event participants, as well as members of the Cancer VAC.**

To learn more about joining the Cancer VAC, contact Beth Darmstadter at **216-778-1630** or [bdarmstadter@metrohealth.org](mailto:bdarmstadter@metrohealth.org).



Connect with  
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