

HOSPITAL OF THE MONTH

Putnam Hospital Center



Donna M. McGregor
Putnam Hospital Center's
President and CEO

By Lisa Winn

Picturesque Putnam County, filled with historic landmarks, is located in the lower Hudson Valley. The county's 246 square miles encompasses several towns and municipalities and according to the Census Bureau, the county's population is continuously increasing.

Putnam Hospital Center located in Carmel, also serving northern Westchester and southern Dutchess counties, is the area's only major medical hub for over 150,000 people. PHC met its responsibility to expand with the swelling number of inhabitants and one of the fastest growing areas in the state by recently opening a new patient wing equipped with advanced medical technology to accommodate the healthcare needs of the community.

On June 26, a ribbon-cutting ceremony officially opened the \$34 million Camarda Care Center, a new five-story, 113,000-square-foot building adjoined to the main hospital. This new facility houses a new cancer center with radiation therapy, 70 private patient rooms, physician offices and conference center.

"We had a capital campaign called the Campaign for Tomorrow which helped to raise the funds for the new building," said Marge Schneider, director of marketing. "As of this date we raised nearly \$16 million through the campaign."

"It was coming together as community," she said as the public recognized the need and benefits of the new wing. Funds were also received through structured borrowing.

The building was named after Carmel developer Paul Camarda, who donated \$600,000 to the hospital.

Located on the first floor of the Camarda Care Center is a specialized care unit, the Wagner Cancer Pavilion, a state-of-the-art 9,890-square-foot cancer center with enhanced radiation therapy services in the Agarwal Center for Radiation Oncology.

With the cutting edge Varian Medical Systems Trilogy Linear Accelerator for radiation therapy in position at the center, after a cancer diagnosis, patients no longer need to travel for radiation treatment.

Typical radiation therapy can run five times a week for six to eight weeks. Having to travel long distances can be a threat to patients' immune systems. The Camarda Care Center is a one-stop solution.

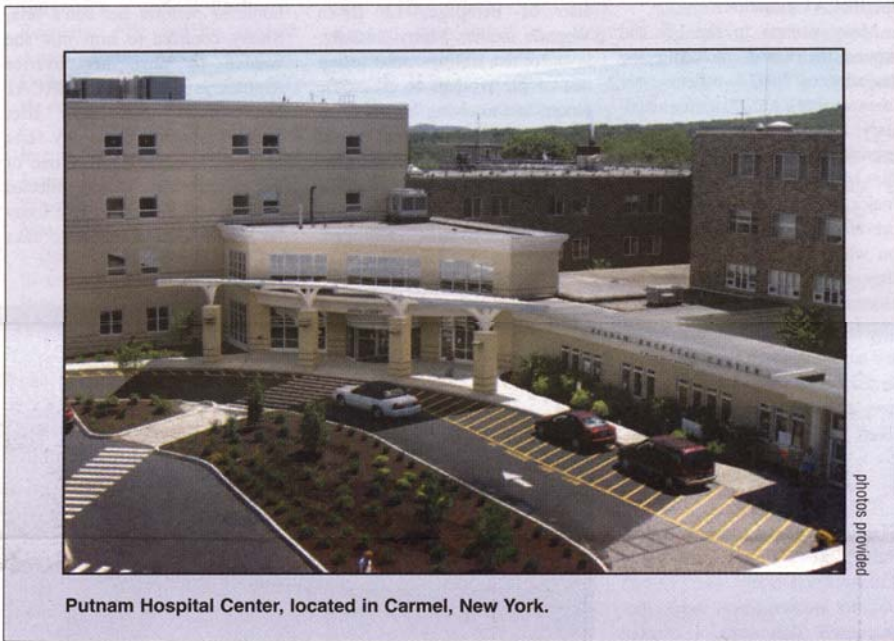
A multidisciplinary team of medical, radiation and surgical oncologists, pathologists, radiologists, oncology nurses, genetic counselors, pharmacists, physical therapists, nutritionists and case managers work collaboratively to render leading-edge cancer therapy to patients.

A full range of cancer diagnostic and treatment services is available including: a dedicated 4-slice CT scanner and workstation for treatment planning; screening and diagnostic digital mammography; ultrasound; needle biopsies; surgical biopsy and pathology for all types of cancer, as well as chemotherapy and surgery.

PHC's cancer program is accredited with commendation by the American College of Surgeons' Commission on Cancer and received an outstanding achievement award.

Approval by the CoC is given to facilities that voluntarily provide the best in diagnosis and treatment of cancers. PHC had to pass a rigorous evaluation process and performance review in order to receive the Commission's endorsement, placing PHC in the top 15 percent of cancer programs in the country indicating a high level of quality in patient care.

A CoC-approved Cancer Program ensures patients will receive services including: quality care close to home; comprehen-



Putnam Hospital Center, located in Carmel, New York.

photos provided

sive care offering a range of state-of-the-art services and equipment and a multi-specialty team approach to coordinate the best treatment options available to cancer patients.

"Another focus of this new building is on the top two floors. We moved 35 semi-private rooms in the main hospital into 70 private patient rooms in the new hospital. What that does is enhance treatment and management of patient care. It provides privacy and helps in infection control. It is what patients want," said Schneider. "They do not get charged any more for a private patient room. This is becoming an industry standard."

The new private rooms are double the size of the semi-private rooms. All color-coordinated rooms are individually temperature controlled and have flat-screen televisions with cable and Internet access. Private baths are equipped with shower seats for safety and have ample storage space for patients' personal effects among other amenities.

Space on the center's other floors are dedicated to physician offices and the 96-seat Michael T. Weber Community Auditorium opened for hospital and community usage.

The freed space in the main hospital will be renovated as administrative offices and used for other medical units.

The innovative Camarda Care Center is another way that the 164-bed hospital has distinguished itself from other community hospitals by committing to quality healthcare services that most community hospitals do not offer.

PHC, a Health Quest affiliate, offers unique services including a 20-bed adult in-patient psychiatric unit and partial hospitalization program—an intensive outpatient program—and a homecare department to help discharged patients acquire additional homecare personnel and assistance.

As with most community hospitals, PHC offers many outpatient services—radiology, wound care, pain management, and rehabilitation—in addition to a birthing center, stroke center and a diabetes self-management program.

Yearly, PHC's ambulatory surgery unit performs a full range of surgeries for over 5,000 patients. Since 2004, the ambulatory surgery services have ranked in the top 10 percent in New York State for patient satisfaction, as measured by Press Ganey Associates and recently, a New York State Department of Health study noted the hospital's surgical infection prevention rate was the highest in the region.

PHC's 10,000-square-foot 24-hour emergency department is the region's most advanced emergency care facility staffed with residency trained, board certified emergency medicine physicians using the latest high-tech equipment to aid in diagnoses and treatment.

The hospital is the largest employer in the county. There are over 300 physicians, in all the major sub-categories, that round out a 1,000-person staff. There are over 300 volunteers—250 adults and 50 youths—who do many jobs around the hospital, from greeting guests at the front desk to transporting patients and working in the thrift shops.

"The hospital is very active in the community. We do screening, programs and special events," said Schneider. "In September, we held a Kids' Day, where kids learned things about health and safety." Several thousand children along with their parents participated in the day's free exhibits and demonstrations.



Varian Trilogy System linear accelerator for radiation therapy.