



**CancerExperts MD**

**Confused? Concerned? Need Confirmation?**  
CancerExpertsMD is a internet based service which provides confidential, individualized and convenient cancer case review for patients seeking reassurance that their concerns about their cancer diagnosis, prognosis and treatment have been thoroughly investigated. By simply submitting your case for online review you can access different cancer experts from around the world to comment upon your case.

**Go to: [www.CancerExpertsMD.com](http://www.CancerExpertsMD.com)**



*As our practice continues to grow, so does the need to accommodate our patients by expanding the number of hospitals in which we actively attend. Great Lakes Cancer Management Specialists is pleased to announce that our physicians have extended their hospital coverage to include staff privileges at the following hospitals:*

**St. John Hospital and Medical Center, St. John Macomb Hospital, Bon Secours and Cottage Hospitals, St. Joseph's Mercy of Macomb Hospital, and Troy Beaumont Hospital**

**GREAT LAKES CANCER MANAGEMENT SPECIALISTS  
PHYSICIANS**

- |                                   |                                   |
|-----------------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| Robert J. Leonard, M.D., F.A.C.P. | P. Thomas Porter, M.D., F.A.C.P.  |
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| Laura A. Biernat, M.D., F.A.C.P.  | Muhammad S. Shurafa, M.D.         |
|                                   | Wajahat A. Khan, M.D.             |

**VAN ELSLANDER CANCER CENTER**

19229 Mack Avenue, Suite 24  
Grosse Pointe Woods, Michigan 48236  
Tel: 313.884.5522 • Fax: 313.884.6054

**WASHINGTON CENTER**

11051 Hall Road, Suite 120  
Utica, Michigan 48317  
Tel: 586.991.0700 • Fax: 586.991.0701



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**Oncology HORIZONS**

Great Lakes Cancer Management Specialists

Compassion, Commitment and Competence

Fall 2004

**Excellence in Oncology**

This quarter's newsletter from Great Lakes Cancer Management Specialists [GLCMS] focuses upon the question every cancer patient asks himself, i.e., How can I be sure that my care is of the highest quality? Am I getting the best care available?

These questions and others like them are asked by every patient who visits the oncologist's office the first time. *Is my doctor any good?* Most patients are referred by their personal physician i.e., family practitioner or internist. This simple referral by their trusted family doctor is sufficient for most patients that any questions concerning the oncologist's ability are allayed. But today, even your family

physician cannot be completely familiar with the subtle dissimilarities of oncological care which exist in this specialty. Beyond obvious first impressions [such as: Is the oncology office spacious, clean, efficient and organized? or Does their staff treat me with consideration?] patients must assume an active role in assessing the quality of care they receive from their subspecialist. While patients have unprecedented access to information about their disease through the internet, this abundance of data helps little in deciding whether he/she will actually receive the highest quality of oncology care available.

*continued on page 2*

**NURSES CORNER**

**What is an Oncology Nurse?**

Oncology Nursing is one of several subspecialties within the nursing profession. An Oncology Nurse specializes in the care and treatment of patients with cancer and/or blood disorders. They must be clinically skilled in the safe administration of the many available complex cancer treatments. In addition, the Oncology Nurse must have a comprehensive understanding of each patient's cancer biology as well as an in depth familiarity with the various treatment modalities such as surgery, radiation, chemotherapy and biotherapy as they may pertain to an individual patient. The Oncology Nurse must be able to address patient care problems, manage symptoms, function as a patient advocate, and be attentive to each patient needs. The Oncology Nurse plays a pivotal and critical role in the care and management of every patient under treatment. They serve as the patient's main intermediary between their cancer treatment and their doctor. These kinds of responsibilities cannot be relegated to just any category of nurse. Years of training and arduous post graduate education constitute just the beginning of what defines an oncology nurse. Complementary qualities essential for success include dedication, commitment, competence and compassion. These are the requisites for a complete oncology nurse.

All the initials you see following a nurse's name are earned through extensive study and examination. An RN means the nurse is a Registered Nurse; BSN means she has earned a four-year Bachelor of Science Degree in Nursing, and OCN stands for Oncology Certified Nurse. RNs and BSNs must attain a certain number of accredited continuing education credits every year just to

retain an active license. Oncology Nurses must go a step further in this education process by studying and successfully passing a detailed certification exam which earns her the OCN accreditation. At Great Lakes Cancer Management Specialists we pride ourselves that all our nurses are RNs and are either OCN certified or eligible for certification.

Great Lakes Cancer Management Specialists' nurses are encouraged to attend workshops, conferences, seminars and symposiums to keep current their knowledge base of new drugs, policies, procedures, protocols and changes in drug administration techniques. Besides monitoring patient symptoms for treatment side effects each administered drug has its own peculiar catalog of potentially damaging side effects on vital body organs. Our Oncology Nurses must be aware of the relevance of monitoring kidney, liver, blood, lung and cardiac functions as it pertains to each patient's treatment protocol. This assures that the patient receives optimum benefits of a drug without having his physical well being compromised.

Every GLCMS nurse pledges that through dedication, competence, inspiration, guidance and compassion that she will successfully guide each and every patient through a most difficult life experience.



JoAnna Sheen, R.N., B.S.N., OCN

**BIOGRAPHY**

Wajahat A. Khan, M.D.

Wajahat A. Khan, M.D. specializes in Medical Oncology. He received his medical degree from Dow Medical College in Karachi, Pakistan and completed his residency in Internal Medicine and a fellowship in Medical Oncology



at William Beaumont Hospital in Royal Oak, Michigan. He was named Best Intern of the Year and has been ranked in the top ten throughout medical school. Dr. Khan is board certified in Internal Medicine and Medical Oncology. He has been actively involved in teaching medical students and has many presentations, publications and research projects to his credit.

Dr. Khan's professional memberships include the American Society of Clinical Oncology, the American Medical Association, and the American College of Physicians. He has actively been involved in various research activities and has given presentations at both the national and international level. Dr. Khan has served as an investigator in several clinical trials and has been very active in organizing tumor board conferences. He has taken an active role in community activities and has regularly participated in cancer support groups and assisted with the Delta County Cancer Alliance Program. Dr. Khan has served on various cancer committees and has assumed a leading role in implementing new treatment strategies for cancer patients.

**Next Issue:**

- A Dedication to Efrain R. Casas, M.D.
- Myelodysplasia and it's Treatment

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**Great Lakes Cancer Management Specialists**  
Excellence through Compassion - Competence - Commitment  
VAN ELSLANDER CANCER CENTER  
19229 Mack Avenue, Suite 24  
Grosse Pointe Woods, Michigan 48236



Before a patient accepts any treatment recommendation from their Oncologist they must first be confident that implementation of the treatment plan will be of the highest standards. First, let's us begin with the physician.

Great Lakes Cancer Management Specialists [GLCMS] operates a complete laboratory service at both office locations. Our labs, as well as the lab staff, have vital and integral roles with every visit that a patient makes to our office. Whether you come to the office for a doctor's exam, to see a nurse, or for chemotherapy your lab tests that are required for that visit are drawn and processed at our office. In most cases, if your insurance type allows labs to be done at our office, the results received in the lab. This enables the physician or nurse to review your lab results while you are in the office and can discuss them with you.

The lab staff at GLCMS is comprised exclusively of Medical Technologists (MT), Medical Laboratory Technicians (MLT), and phlebotomists. Medical Technologists earn a 4-year bachelor's degree and must complete an on-site inspection, compliance with all of COLA's laboratory criteria, documentation of successful Quality Control and Proficiency Testing, and no valid complaints against the lab. We are very proud of all these achievements.

GLCMS's Lab is equipped with modern and up to date laboratory instruments and computer software. We have relations with companies that are continually at the top of their industry. Our hematology instruments are Beckman Coulter MAXM's. The MAXM is a reliable, consistent bench top analyzer for mid-size volume labs and small hospitals. The MAXM's enable our staff to be efficient and productive when managing and reviewing your test results. For chemistry tests, both labs operate the Roche Integra 400+. The Integra is a bench top chemistry analyzer with quick turn around times that is flexible in that you can add specimens directly

## Patients Benefit from In-Office Labs

by Julie Hilton, MT(ASCP), Laboratory Supervisor

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GLCMS Lab is very proud of our accomplishments. These achievements let us provide the very best laboratory service to all of our patients. Our patients are very important to us and with our well-educated and talented lab staff, along with our state-of-the-art laboratory instruments and computer software, the lab is capable of accomplishing many things, all to benefit our patients.

GLCMS lab is very proud of our cutting edge" of technology in the clinical lab. We are always looking for ways to stay "on the lab results to your personal physician.

Upon approval of patient's lab values in Harvest the results are transmitted "real time" to the patient's electronic chart. This process allows the doctor or nurse to review your results very quickly and can discuss them with you, reducing the time you spend in the office. The use of this sophisticated lab software aids the lab in reducing errors and being more proficient. With this software data management of all lab results is made much easier. GLCMS is currently researching the use of Orchard Software's Web station, which is a web-based module that allows e-mailing lab results to your personal physician.

Our latest lab enhancement is our laboratory computer software. We use Orchard Software's Harvest Laboratory Information Systems (LIS) Application. Orchard Software's Harvest Laboratory Information Systems (LIS) Application, Orchard Software's Laboratory Improvement Amendments (CLIA). In 1993, the Health Care Financing Administration (HCFA) granted COLA "deeming authority" under CLIA. In 1997, the Joint Commission on Accreditation of Healthcare Organizations (JCAHO) also recognized COLA's laboratory accreditation program, so that labs that are accredited by COLA are recognized by JCAHO as meeting the same very high standards that are set for hospital and reference labs. The COLA certification process takes place every two years. For the last four years, both GLCMS labs have earned a Laboratory Excellence Award for successfully completing an on-site inspection, compliance with all of COLA's laboratory criteria, documentation of successful Quality Control and Proficiency Testing, and no valid complaints against the lab. We are very proud of all these achievements.

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Julie Hilton, MT(ASCP)

Every day we hear about how research uncovers new information about cancer and other serious diseases which offer hope for research to established routine human effects or risks that are not yet known

medications and therapies makes you the major linchpin connecting laboratory research to established routine human therapeutic practice.

Participation in clinical trials has its benefits and risks. Some of the potential benefits include:

- Access to promising new treatments that are not be routinely available
- More rigorous assessment of your health status such as response to treatment and side effects
- An opportunity to make a valuable contribution to cancer research and medical science
- You increase the likelihood that future cancer patients will have access to safe, effective treatments that may potentially extend their life or lead to cure
- Sometimes the clinical trial may be the best treatment option you have
- You may learn new information about your disease and meet others like you
- You take a more active role in your own health care

There are potential risks to participating also:

- The equipment and personnel implemented by POLs can vary widely. Great Lakes Cancer Nursing comprises the heart and soul of Management Specialists decided long ago that we will only use equipment which meets the higher hospital and commercial laboratory standards. In turn, we run and monitor all testing with only certified lab technicians [MLTs and MTs]. This is not the case for many POLs. In fact many POLs do not employ any MT's or MLTs to operate their lab. The physician [oncologist] assumes this responsibility for laboratory supervision and quality and hires anyone willing to be trained on the equipment. GLCMS simply does not believe that a busy oncologist has the time to oversee on a daily basis the complex lab testing done in the office. Patients should entrust their laboratory tests to be processed electronically medical records are essential to create the foundation for distinguished oncology care.
- The laboratory services performed in the doctor's office serve a critical role every day in assessing a patient's current health status. Lab services are subject to certification by Federal regulation. However all Physician owned labs [POLs] are not equal. While many physicians owned labs are certified by recognized agencies [COLA- see article on lab by J. Hilton] patients should be aware that

## EXCELLENCE IN ONCOLOGY

continued from page 2

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