

2021 Letter from the Director of the Cancer Institute

It is with great pleasure we present the Cancer Institute's 2021 Annual Report and offer you a peek into the outstanding work that has been accomplished throughout the past year, and what is to come in 2022. Not only do we have exciting updates to share showcasing our programs' growth, advancements, and research, but we also highlight the dedication and extraordinary expertise of our clinicians and team members who are vital to the success of our programs.

The Power of Perspective

Continuing to serve our patients through year two of a global pandemic has presented numerous challenges.



John L. Bell, MD, FACS

Our dedicated team of physicians and care providers worked to reduce the risk of COVID-19 exposure, while ensuring that our patients were able to continue with regular office visits, treatments, and ongoing care. We continued to respond to changes in COVID-19 related visitor restrictions and recommendations for oncology care. Staffing challenges hospital-wide due to variant surges, and various supply chain issues added a layer of difficulty that required our teams to be nimble and steadfast as we continued to provide the care needed for our oncology population.

As we reflect on the past two years, the difficult times could shadow our view. However, when we focus on the perseverance of our team, our perspective shifts. During a sobering time in healthcare where COVID-19 related stress and burnout has led to an all-time high for [RN turnover of 18.6% in 2020](#), the Cancer Institute's nursing turnover for 2021 was 4.8%.

We are beyond proud of the entire Cancer Institute team who has tirelessly shown up to serve our patients, going above and beyond to offer the highest quality care for our patients and their families.

Milestones in 2021

The Cancer Institute achieved several noteworthy accreditations in 2021, reaffirming the quality of our team and strengthening our mission to lead the way in the prevention, early detection, diagnosis, treatment and research of cancer. Accreditations earned in 2021 include a three-year continuation of our Commission on Cancer (CoC) Accreditation, a three-year continuation of our National Accreditation Program for Breast Centers (NAPBC) accreditation, and a new four-year American Society for Radiation Oncology (ASTRO) APEX Accreditation for Excellence.

The University of Tennessee Medical Center

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We announced the second round of Oscar Roe and Bettie Lane Bamhill Bragg Cancer Research Endowment grant awards in 2021. You will find a summary of the research in one of the following articles.

We've grown our team with expert physicians and care teams who bring new services to the region like our Comprehensive Lymphedema Program, liver and pancreas robotic surgery offerings, the Transplant and Cellular Therapy program, and new providers in surgical oncology, radiation oncology, medical oncology, otolaryngology, cardiothoracic surgery, neurosurgery, and palliative care. Keep reading the following articles in this report for more details on our growth.

Vision in 2022

As we move into 2022, we have much to look back on, and even more to look forward to. In Q2 of 2022, the Advanced Orthopaedic Center of Excellence will move out of the 2nd floor of the Cancer Institute, allowing our team members and services to occupy an additional 22,000 sq ft of space. The renovation of that space will allow us to further meet the needs of our patients and their families by adding more space for chemotherapy infusion, exam rooms, and clinical trials.

We will also be expanding our Radiation Oncology program by adding on to UT Medical Center's existing Regional Health Facility in Lenoir City. This satellite location will allow the Radiation Oncology program to expand its reach and serve a greater number of patients in our region.

Our new Transplant and Cellular Therapy program has experienced tremendous growth in a short period of time, confirming that this service met a great need in our region. We are excited to watch this program stretch its wings, allowing more patients in need a chance to receive their treatments while staying close to home.

We will continue recruiting top providers of cancer care in 2022, including the launch of a Medical Oncology Fellowship, and the recruitment of an oncology specific geneticist that will allow us to expand our offerings for genetic testing with a focus on pharmacogenetics.

The team members who make up the Cancer Institute and the patients and families we serve are not only the center of what we do, but why we do it. Through the growth we will experience in 2022 both in our physical space and our team, we will make sure more people in our region have access to unique care and services than ever before. I am extremely proud of our team in the Cancer Institute, and I'm excited about the future.

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As always, I remain open to hearing for you. If you have any questions or comments about this report or anything related to the Cancer Institute, please do not hesitate to contact me directly. I would love to share more with you about the services we offer and the great care that happens every day in the Cancer Institute.



John L. Bell, MD, FACS
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