



ISSUE 3 / 2024

Stay Healthy

YOUR RESOURCE
FOR HEALTHY LIVING
AND WELLNESS

Still climbing

UHS patient summits mountain after two
hip replacements and cancer treatment

TRANSFORMING LUNG CANCER DIAGNOSIS

Experience precision in lung care with Ion robotic
bronchoscopy at UHS

EVERY STEP OF THE JOURNEY

UHS offers comprehensive outreach program for
cancer patients



Wellness starts with a proactive approach

Encouraging people to be proactive about their health is important to us here at UHS. We counsel our patients to have regular health screenings, practice good preventive care and arm themselves with the knowledge they need to maintain wellness at any age.



One of the most inspiring stories in this issue of *Stay Healthy* features Binghamton native Harold Jones IV, who climbed Cascade Mountain in the Adirondacks—a remarkable feat given that not long ago, a cancer diagnosis cast doubt on his future. His story is a testament to the resilience of the human spirit and the power of proactive healthcare.

At UHS, we understand a cancer diagnosis brings a whirlwind of emotions and decisions. Our dedicated team of professionals are here to support those living with cancer every step of the way. From new technologies like the Ion robotic bronchoscopy—our cutting edge tool for lung biopsies—to our comprehensive outreach program, we strive to provide both advanced medical care and emotional support to our patients and their families. This issue also highlights our teams' incredible work to stay innovative in cancer treatment, showcasing the progress and achievements that are driven by our commitment to patient care and that pave the way for future advancements in the field.

Thank you for being part of our community and for taking steps to stay informed about your care. Your health and well-being are at the heart of everything we do at UHS. We are here to help you achieve wellness and live your best life today and in the future.

John M. Carrigg
PRESIDENT AND CEO OF UHS



Expanding innovative cancer care

UHS introduces Gamma Knife radiosurgery for effective, safe neurologic care

At UHS, our commitment to offering comprehensive, state-of-the-art treatment options is a top priority. We believe in empowering patients to make the best decisions for their health when faced with a life-threatening diagnosis.

UHS Neurosurgery now offers Gamma Knife radiosurgery for patients with certain brain diseases and disorders. This revolutionary technique delivers highly-focused beams of gamma radiation to target abnormal tissues in the brain without the need for a traditional surgical incision. Unlike conventional brain surgery, Gamma Knife treatment is noninvasive, significantly reducing the risks and recovery times associated with surgery.

In partnership with SUNY Upstate Medical University, our UHS Neurosurgery team performs the procedures in Syracuse, New York. Dr. Simone Betchen, UHS' Chief of Neurosciences and attending neurosurgeon, says, "Gamma Knife radiosurgery treatment provides us an additional treatment option for our patients who need comprehensive neurologic cancer care and allows patients to receive the most advanced care available close to home."

The precision of Gamma Knife allows doctors to treat tumors with remarkable accuracy, sparing and minimizing damage to surrounding healthy brain tissue. Some conditions that may benefit from Gamma Knife treatment include benign and malignant brain tumors, arteriovenous malformations and trigeminal neuralgia. Patients typically undergo the procedure in an outpatient setting, and many can return to their normal daily activities within a day or two, without the need for hospitalization or lengthy recovery periods.

We are committed to providing high-quality care for our patients. Gamma Knife technology is backed by decades of research and success in neurosurgery. With a high success rate in stopping tumor growth and, in some cases, even shrinking tumors, we are confident this new addition to our services will provide our patients with a superior option for brain tumor treatment.

TO LEARN MORE about UHS Neurosurgery, please visit nyuhs.org/care-treatment/neurosciences.



Wilson Main Tower's FIRST 100 DAYS

UHS President and
CEO John M. Carrigg
shares his reflections

WHAT WAS YOUR MAIN PRIORITY IN THE DEVELOPMENT OF THIS NEW HOSPITAL?

The Wilson Main Tower was designed with patient privacy as the driving force. The modernization of the UHS Wilson Medical Center campus, with private patient rooms and bathrooms, makes a huge difference in the healing and recovery process. In addition to the 120 new private patient rooms, we also set out to expand and modernize the Emergency and Trauma Center and create an in-house MRI suite with the latest innovations and diagnostic tools.

WHAT WAS THE OVERALL SENTIMENT ON TAKING ON THE LARGEST EXPANSION AND INVESTMENT IN UHS HISTORY?

We knew that we needed to transform our delivery of care on the Wilson Medical Center campus. The global pandemic slowed us down a bit; however, we recognized that re-envisioning our flagship hospital was essential. Our team of employees across the system came together like never before to bring this project to life.

THE HOSPITAL OPENED ON JUNE 26, 2024, AFTER A YEARSLONG PLANNING AND CONSTRUCTION PROCESS. WHAT HAD TO BE ADJUSTED DURING THAT TIME?

We faced numerous challenges throughout the design and construction process, especially since much of that time was also spent navigating the pandemic. Ensuring patient privacy and the clear division between clinical care areas and staff support spaces was a top priority, now reflected in the Wilson Main Tower.

HOW DID YOU FEEL ON OPENING DAY?

I felt a huge sense of accomplishment for the UHS team that made this happen. Team UHS persevered through a challenging period



✦ Building a legacy of excellence and innovation: UHS employees are confident that this state-of-the-art clinical facility will attract top-tier talent, shaping the future of healthcare.

and I couldn't be prouder of what we delivered to the community.

HOW DID THE WILSON MAIN TOWER IMPROVE UHS?

The Wilson Main Tower brings together many healing elements:

- Privacy for patients and families
- Quieter clinical environment
- An abundance of natural light in each inpatient room

The tower features a more modern clinical facility, including:

- A rooftop helipad
- An inpatient MRI
- An expanded Emergency Department and Trauma Center

With its strategic location facing Main Street, the tower is easily accessible, offering convenient options such as:

- Free valet parking
- Easy drop-off and pick-up
- A Main Street Café
- Ambassadors to guide patients and visitors

Lastly, our new hospital acts as a dynamic recruitment tool for skilled healthcare professionals. Prospective employees will see this tower as evidence of UHS's commitment to healthcare, patient care, and investment in a state-of-the-art facility for our staff, providers and community. We are confident that this exceptional clinical building will attract top-tier talent.

WILL THERE BE ANY ADDITIONS OR ENHANCEMENTS?

Our teams continue to work diligently to get Wilson Main Tower 5 open in November for our oncology patients, and Main Tower 6 will open by the end of the year for our cardiology patients.

WHAT ARE YOUR FEELINGS NOW THAT YOU HAVE PASSED THE FIRST 100 DAYS?

I'm so glad that we pushed through the pandemic and kept our commitment to create our new hospital in Johnson City! The UHS Wilson Main Tower represents a new era in healthcare. 🌱

READ a digital-exclusive interview with CEO John Carrigg as he goes more in-depth on the first 100 days of Wilson Main Tower at stayhealthyuhs.org.



✦ UHS President and CEO John M. Carrigg introduces the new Wilson Main Tower.

STILL *climbing*

UHS patient summits mountain after two hip replacements and cancer treatment

On April 19, 2024, Binghamton native Harold Jones IV climbed Cascade Mountain in the Adirondacks, like thousands of others do annually. This was truly a remarkable feat—because Mr. Jones might not have been alive to make the journey at all.

Five years ago, Mr. Jones was a lifelong UHS patient with one hip replacement under his belt when he noticed a lump in his neck. UHS' ear, nose and throat (ENT) specialists diagnosed it as tonsil cancer. "The clinical staff recognized my anxiety and were so caring and competent, providing honest, direct answers to my questions," Mr. Jones says.

Anxiety and other strong emotions—like sadness, anger or depression—can affect many people facing a cancer diagnosis. And different people experience different levels of distress. Some can change their behavior or find healthy ways to cope. Others may have a harder time coming to terms with the disease. A cancer program like the one at UHS offers support at all stages of a patient's cancer journey.

EMPOWERING COMPREHENSIVE CARE

An aspect of support patients receive is to have as much control over their care as possible. For example, when Mr. Jones sought a second opinion at Roswell Park Comprehensive Cancer Center, UHS ENT provided encouragement, medical records and treatment plan recommendations for those doctors to review. "It was wonderful to hear from the Roswell Park oncologists that they agreed with the UHS plan and that I would receive the same care at home as I would with them," he commented. Confident in his choice, he scheduled a radical tonsillectomy at UHS Wilson Medical Center.

On the day of surgery, Mr. Jones realized the additional value of getting care in one's hometown: Extra TLC from people you know. "I was alone and saw a nurse who was a classmate of my son's," he said. "Colleen Smith saw how scared and nervous I was and stayed with me while my





✦ Strength through support: Mr. Jones holds the UHS flag with gratitude for the medical team that guided him through cancer recovery and hip replacements.

“They thought it through with me. They had me climbing up and down 24-inch steps while holding weights, exactly the interval I needed to get up and down Cascade.” HAROLD JONES IV

sedation was administered. This is the high standard of care anyone experiencing a serious medical event hopes for, and I received that kind of comprehensive, world-class healthcare right here in Greater Binghamton.”

Radical tonsillectomy is more invasive than the standard version of having one’s tonsils removed. The surgeon described it as “taking an ice cream scoop to the tonsils,” Mr. Jones noted. Following the surgery, Mr. Jones took the recommendation from his radiation oncologist and underwent 36 radiation treatments that targeted both sides of his throat, even though the cancer was present on only one side. The radiation was challenging for Mr. Jones. By the end of the treatment, he had lost 59 pounds and was receiving intravenous fluids.

REACHING NEW HEIGHTS

Cancer-free and in remission for more than three years, Mr. Jones said his most recent medical adventure was the replacement of his other hip. Based on his positive experience with his first hip replacement, he chose the same orthopedic surgeon, Lawrence Wiesner, DO, and the UHS Rehabilitation team to take care of him again. In the years between Mr. Jones’ first and second hip replacements, Dr. Wiesner traveled to Paris to learn a new technique from which his patients can benefit. “I love the smaller incision scar and that local physicians are traveling the world to learn techniques and bring them home,” Mr. Jones commented.

The physical therapists at the UHS Orthopedic Center—right across the road from Mr. Jones’ office—tailored his three-days-a-week therapy sessions to his recovery goal: Summiting Cascade Mountain 90 days after surgery. “They thought it through with me. They had me climbing up and down 24-inch steps while holding weights, exactly the interval I needed to get up and down Cascade,” he noted. And the program worked. He summited the mountain on Day 106 after his hip surgery. He posed for a photo holding a UHS flag as a thank you to the many medical professionals who helped him to recover from cancer and hip replacements and to be strong enough to make the trip.

CHERISHING MOMENTS

Today Mr. Jones works as a supervisor, focused on sharing his knowledge of the local electrical grid with a new generation of line-workers. Outside work, he looks forward to hosting his granddaughter for their weekly play dates. As he described it: “She goes through and knocks everything over, and I spend the next day picking it all up. It’s awesome. I’m so glad to be here for it.” 🍷

LEARN MORE For more information about services provided at UHS, visit nyuhs.org/care-treatment.

TRANSFORMING *lung cancer diagnosis*

Experience precision in lung care with Ion robotic bronchoscopy at UHS

At UHS, our teams are dedicated to innovating care, from diagnosis to treatment. We are proud to offer the Ion, a robotic-assisted bronchoscopy tool used to perform lung biopsies with precision.

Physicians use Ion to access all 18 segments of the lungs to assist in the early detection of lung cancer. The system is equipped with an ultra-thin and highly maneuverable catheter, which facilitates navigation into the far reaches of the peripheral lung. This advanced technology improves access, stability and precision compared to traditional manual techniques, offering a more effective approach to diagnosing and treating lung conditions.

“Quite honestly, it’s the latest and greatest in technology in terms of bronchoscopy,” says Trevor Flanagan, MHA, BS, RRT, manager of Pulmonary Services at UHS.

For the Pulmonary Department, the Ion gives physicians a chance to intervene and diagnose cancer early, before symptoms occur, for those who have regular screenings—ultimately saving lives.

Candita Lee believes that’s exactly what happened to her after she received the Ion robotic bronchoscopy this summer. Ms. Lee was admitted to the hospital for a gastrointestinal bleed. Yet, when a CT scan of her abdomen showed a mark of concern in her lung, exploration began.

THE ROLE OF ION TECHNOLOGY

A pulmonologist recommended she have a bronchoscopy and PET scan to determine if the mark from her CT scan was indeed cancer. With the help of the Ion, the pulmonary and cardiothoracic teams were able to detect and remove the tumor and the lobe, leaving her cancer-free with no need for radiation.

“I know a lot of people just shy away from and won’t get any procedures done, and that’s just not the answer because it turned out the tumor I had was very aggressive,” says Ms. Lee. “So it was by luck that they found it, and I’m glad it’s gone.”

With a prior surgical history, Ms. Lee expected a difficult path toward recovery. However, the Ion procedures ensured that she had little to no discomfort after waking up from general anesthesia.

“I would never have known I had a procedure done,” she says. “No sore nose, throat or chest pain. No vomiting, no nausea, no problem.”

The Ion gives patients like Ms. Lee a minimally invasive chance to catch cancer, even in previously hard-to-reach areas of the lung. After visiting with a pulmonologist in an outpatient setting, patients are scheduled for the procedure and given an official pathology diagnosis just a week post-op.

“Most people that have lung cancer don’t have symptoms early on in the disease process. Our goal is to screen as many high-risk patients as possible, find those asymptomatic nodules, and intervene and diagnose cancer at early stages in order to treat and save lives,” says Mr. Flanagan. 📺



Candita Lee

“I would never have known I had a procedure done. No sore nose, throat or chest pain. No vomiting, no nausea, no problem.”

CANDITA LEE



✦ Muhammad Imtiaz, MD, (left) and M. Farhan Nadeem, MD, (right) are pioneering the use of the Ion robotic bronchoscopy tool in the early detection of lung cancer, offering patients renewed hope for a healthier future.

IF YOU ARE AT RISK FOR LUNG CANCER,

request a lung screening with UHS for early detection at nyuhs.org.

Every step of the JOURNEY

UHS offers comprehensive outreach
program for cancer patients

When someone is facing a cancer diagnosis, it can be a challenging time. There are a lot of new physicians to see, tests to take and decisions to make. Fortunately, UHS has a team of dedicated professionals whose sole focus is to help patients along their cancer journey. The comprehensive outreach program provides robust support services for cancer patients, assisting individuals and families as they work through the challenges of a cancer diagnosis.

Jennifer Zeggert, manager of Oncology Services, shared several features of the program. “We have a wide array of support services to help patients who are diagnosed with cancer as they receive chemotherapy or radiation treatments and beyond,” she says.

Social and emotional support for cancer patients—in addition to outstanding clinical care—represents UHS’ commitment to excellence in oncology services. Ms. Zeggert points out that support from social workers, nurse navigators and others is an aspect of the accreditation from the Commission on Cancer that UHS has maintained for nearly 10 years.

This outreach initiative underscores UHS’ commitment to holistic and patient-centered care, ensuring that cancer patients have access to the support they need for their health and well-being. This program is open to current patients and those considering UHS for their treatment needs. 🌱

FOR MORE INFORMATION on the outreach program, please visit nyuhs.org/cancersupport.

KEY FEATURES OF THE PROGRAM

Oncology Social Workers

UHS offers emotional support through each stage of the cancer journey. Oncology social workers provide personalized guidance and resources from the moment of diagnosis, throughout treatment and into recovery. Assistance is available not just for the patient, but for family members and caregivers as well.



Oncology Nurse Navigators

Patients receive comprehensive coordination assistance from the skilled nurse navigators. These professionals ensure seamless transitions as patients move from one service to the next, maintaining continuity of care and support.



Financial Advocates

Understanding medical bills and insurance can be overwhelming. Our patient financial advocates are available to help patients decipher their healthcare costs, interpret insurance policies and explore financial assistance options.



CHECK it out

Getting regular cancer screenings can save your life

Preventive cancer screenings are an essential tool in the fight against cancer, providing early detection that can save lives. With an estimated 122,990 new cancer cases expected in New York State in 2024, staying informed about the benefits and timing of these screenings is more crucial than ever.

WHO SHOULD GET CANCER SCREENINGS AND WHEN?

Regular screenings can detect cancer before symptoms appear, increasing the chances of successful treatment. Here's when different age groups should consider screenings for various types of cancer:

WOMEN	
Cervical Cancer	Women should begin cervical cancer screening at age 21, with a Pap test every three years or an HPV test every five years after age 30.
Breast Cancer	Women aged 40 and above should have a yearly mammogram. Those with a family history of breast cancer may need to start earlier.
Colon Cancer	Find out if you are at higher risk for colon cancer due to family history, genetic disorders or other factors. If you are at increased risk, consult a healthcare provider about when to start testing and which tests are best for you. Otherwise, women aged 45 and older should start screening with a colonoscopy every 10 years or a stool-based test yearly.
Lung Cancer	Adults aged 50 to 80 years with a history of heavy smoking should have an annual lung cancer screening with low-dose CT.
Skin Cancer	Conduct personal checks monthly.

MEN	
Prostate Cancer	Men aged 50 and above should discuss screening options with their healthcare provider, particularly if they are at high risk.
Colon Cancer	Find out if you are at higher risk for colon cancer due to family history, genetic disorders or other factors. If you are at increased risk, consult a healthcare provider about when to start testing and which tests are best for you. Otherwise, men aged 45 and older should start screening with a colonoscopy every 10 years or a stool-based test yearly.
Lung Cancer	Adults aged 50 to 80 years with a history of heavy smoking should have an annual lung cancer screening with low-dose CT.
Skin Cancer	Conduct personal checks monthly.

Always consult a healthcare professional, such as a UHS oncologist, to tailor screening schedules based on personal and family medical history.

OTHER PREVENTIVE MEASURES

While screenings are critical, other lifestyle changes can further reduce your risk of developing cancer:

- **Maintain a Healthy Diet:** Focus on a diet rich in fruits, vegetables and whole grains while limiting processed foods and red meat.
- **Exercise Regularly:** Aim for at least 150 minutes of moderate intensity exercise each week.
- **Avoid Tobacco and Limit Alcohol:** Smoking is a leading cause of cancer, and excessive alcohol intake increases risk as well.
- **Protect Your Skin:** Use sunscreen and wear protective clothing to reduce the risk of skin cancer. 🌿

GET SCREENED For more information, visit nyuhs.org to learn how you can schedule your screening appointment today.