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Two-Way Cancer Communication Created with New Tumor Board

PHOENIX, Ariz. – Oct. XX, 2014 – A new, collaborative Phoenix Breast Cancer Tumor Board is now available to help Phoenix cancer patient’s understanding and overall cancer care. A tumor board is a meeting where physicians involved in all aspects of a patient’s cancer care come together to discuss a patient’s case in detail to determine a treatment plan.

Breast cancer survivor and tumor board participant Janice Holden, 62, credits the Phoenix Breast Cancer Tumor Board for helping her make her informed treatment decisions confidently. She sought second and third opinions from physicians across the Valley, until she found the tumor board.

“Cancer is a very complex disease and there is so much information out there that it becomes incumbent on you to sort through everything and visit various specialists to figure it out,” says Holden. “Having all of my physicians in one room was a great opportunity. They gave me control back because they gave me all of the information specific to my case and let me make the final decisions about my treatment.”

Although tumor boards are found at treatment centers across the U.S., rarely are patients themselves invited to participate. Seeing the need to bridge that gap in care, Linda Liu, M.D., Board Certified Breast Surgeon with Comprehensive Breast Center of Arizona, brought together her peers in radiation oncology, medical oncology, radiology, and plastic surgery to create the Phoenix Breast Cancer Tumor Board.

“The Phoenix Breast Cancer Tumor Board combines multidisciplinary discussion and patient care by inviting patients and their family members to attend and play a crucial role in managing their treatment decisions,” says Dr. Liu.

“When you have several multidisciplinary cancer specialists all in one room, it allows us to discuss each case together and provide our individual opinions on the best course of treatment specific to each patient,” says Vershalee Shukla, M.D., Board Certified Radiation Oncologist with 21st Century Oncology.

“Patient’s really appreciate the transparency the tumor board can give them,” says Sommer Gunia, D.O., Fellowship Trained Breast Surgeon with Comprehensive Breast Center of Arizona. “It also allows for patients to ask questions to the group without having to make several individual appointments.”

Holden received a double mastectomy followed by immediate reconstruction surgery. Now going through daily radiation treatments, Holden is confident she made the best decision for her.

“You have to be happy with the treatment course you make,” says Holden. “When you talk to each physician individually, it’s tough to absorb all of the information. But with the tumor board, you get an audience of one.”

The Phoenix Breast Cancer Tumor Board meetings are held every other Wednesday at 4p.m. at the Comprehensive Breast Center of Arizona. Breast cancer patients anywhere in the Phoenix area can request to get involved with the Phoenix Breast Cancer Tumor Board by calling Dr. Liu or Dr. Shukla's office.

In addition to breast surgeons Dr. Liu and Dr. Gunia, and radiation oncologist Dr. Shukla, other physicians involved with the Phoenix Breast Cancer Tumor Board include: Dr. Christopher May, radiologist with SMIL Radiology, Dr. Robert Bajnrauh, plastic surgeon with PRACTICE NAME, Dr. Giraldo Kato, medical oncologist with Pinnacle Oncology Hematology, and Dr. Belinda Barclay-White, radiologist with Arizona Breastnet.

For more information about Dr. Shukla, visit www.21cOncologyArizona.com or call 480-945-6896.

For more information about Dr. Liu and Dr. Gunia, visit AzBreastCenter.com or call (480) 629.8390.

About 21st Century Oncology:

21st Century Oncology is the largest global, physician led provider of Integrated Cancer Care services. The company offers a comprehensive range of cancer treatment services, focused on delivering academic quality, cost-effective patient care in personal and convenient settings. The company operates 175 treatment centers, including 140 centers located in 16 states. The company also operates 35 centers located in six countries in Latin America. The company holds market-leading positions in most of its domestic local markets and abroad.

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