



CancerCare

Hematology & Infusion Services

Tejas Lodhawala, MD
Board Certified in Internal Medicine and
Hematology/Medical Oncology

Dr. Lodhawala holds office hours in CancerCare & Hematology Services on the second floor



Meet Patient Navigator Debbie Dilley

What is the Patient Navigator Program?

The Patient Navigator provides one-on-one guidance and assistance to patients, families and caregivers, and helps with the many needs that can arise. The principal function of the Patient Navigator is to eliminate any

barriers to timely screening, diagnosis, treatment and supportive care for each individual. She also promotes smooth and timely continuity of care for all patients.

How can the Patient Navigator help me?

- ★ **Arrange transportation** to and from appointments
- ★ **Identify resources** for financial assistance including medication, co-pay assistance and community resources
- ★ **Coordinate home health care** as needed
- ★ **Assist with keeping track** of doctor visits, tests, labs and other appointments relating to your healthcare
- ★ **Help complete medical forms** including those relating to insurance, Medicaid and Medicare
- ★ **Provide information on and assistance with Advance Directives** (Living Wills and Healthcare Power of Attorney forms)

How may I contact the Patient Navigator?

The Patient Navigator office is located on the second floor near the Oncology, Pharmacy and Respiratory Departments. Office hours are Monday - Friday from 8:30 a.m. to 5:00 p.m., but appointments can be made earlier or later in the day. For more details, phone 419-294-4991, ext. 4159, or e-mail ddilley@wyandotmemorial.org.



Navigating patients through healthcare challenges one step at a time

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Wyandot Memorial Hospital



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CancerCare In Our Own Words

For Audra Riedlinger, Easy Access to Doctor “L” Made Cancer Treatment Simpler

A diagnosis of cancer can throw anyone off-course, so anything to make the journey a bit easier is welcome. For Audra Riedlinger of Nevada, easy access to her doctor and driving only seven miles for appointments and treatment was a tremendous relief.

“He gave us his card with his cell phone number, and told us to call anytime,” Audra reported of her experience with Oncologist Tejas Lodhawala, MD – known as Dr. L. to patients.

“When I first started chemo, I became very sick on a Saturday,” she shared, “and my husband Gary was worried and called Dr. L.”

She said Dr. Lodhawala directed them to report to the ER at WMH, and he personally phoned the ER physician to discuss Audra’s illness and treatment.

“We could ask Dr. L. a question, and he’d take an hour to explain until we understood,” Audra stated of her doctor’s patience and understanding. She added that he was so familiar with her treatment regimen and its effects that he precisely predicted when her hair would fall out.

“And he was right on,” she noted. “He’s an amazing man.”

Audra’s experience with cancer started quite by chance last fall. Her mother’s mammogram indicated an area of concern, so she accompanied her to the appointment for a biopsy. It was there that Audra was asked by the mammography technologist when her last mammogram had been performed. It had been awhile, she admitted.

“I told her ‘I don’t have time right now,’ but she scheduled me for a mammogram just a couple of days later,” Audra said.

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Audra's Easy Access

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A suspicious spot was found on Audra's mammogram, so she, too, had a needle biopsy for a definitive diagnosis.

"We went for our test results on the same day," she noted. "I was hoping that if one of us was getting that diagnosis, that it would be me. Mom had already dealt with uterine and kidney cancer within that past year."

While her mother's biopsy was negative, the results indicated that Audra did indeed have breast cancer.

No time was wasted for her treatment. General Surgeon Peter Schuler, MD, performed a double mastectomy; Plastic/Reconstructive Surgeon Arthur Kumpf, MD, started reconstruction procedures right away and Dr. Lodhawala, prescribed chemotherapy.

Audra was glad to be able to have her surgery and treatment at WMH, and found the doctors and staff members to be "super, super awesome!"

"People around here don't realize how great the hospital and the oncology department are," Audra continued. She remarked that any interactions she's had with staff at every level have been positive.

"Everything has been so wonderful ... and we've only had to drive seven miles," she emphasized. "We're so fortunate."

Audra is also grateful to her "great support system" of her husband, son Lance and other family members.

That support system is again rallying – this time for Audra's mom, who learned that she has breast cancer.

The daughter is now guiding her mother through a similar journey with cancer.

Thank you, Thiel's Wheels & The Boxcar Tavern, for your generous donations to help CancerCare patients!



CancerCare Director Says They Never Felt Alone

Some people will think I am telling this story because I work in the CancerCare Department at Wyandot Memorial Hospital. Nothing could be farther from the truth. When it comes to taking care of my family I would go to a facility in Antarctica if I felt they had the best treatment center. Where I work makes no difference. I chose Wyandot Memorial Hospital.

My father was diagnosed with bladder cancer following a scope of his bladder by Dr. Concepcion (urologist) at Wyandot Memorial Hospital. Following this devastating news we had two appointments: one with a urology oncology surgeon at The James

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Cancer Hospital at Ohio State University and the other with Dr. Tejas Lodhawala, oncologist at Wyandot Memorial's Oncology Department. Dr. Lodhawala saw us within days. We were worried because our appointment date with The James wasn't for another 6 weeks. We expressed this concern to Dr. Lodhawala. He called OSU and our appointment was within two weeks. In the meantime Dr. L (as we call him) ordered additional lab tests and scans and discussed some of our treatment options. He basically prepared us for our James appointment.

Dr. Lodhawala and The James surgeon collaborated and decided on the following treatment plan ... chemotherapy and then surgery.

The oncology nurses at Wyandot Memorial became part of my Dad's family. He saw them weekly for months. They spoiled him with lunches, his favorite pieces of pie and a great joke here and there. He learned about their children, their hobbies and they knew his life as well. He loved having his own treatment room and either watched TV or did crossword puzzles waiting for the chemo to finish. It was a convenient 10 minute drive from home and I was thankful my Mom wouldn't be driving weekly in Columbus traffic.

There were two occasions we needed Dr. L after normal working hours. Since Dr. L gives his chemotherapy patients his cell number we only needed to make a quick phone call. Prescriptions were called in at 7:30 at night and the problem was taken care of.

The chemo was completed and the surgery day arrived. Although the chemo had held the tumor at bay the surgeon found the tumor to be very aggressive. More treatment options and even hospice were discussed. My father chose to restart chemotherapy but this time to buy more time. A cure was not in his future.

Not every cancer patient has a bad outcome. There are remissions and cures. I know these patients. But for those patients like my father, tough as nails, hopeful and wanting more time, you put all your faith in God and your oncology team.

There was never a time we felt alone. We had the knowledge and support of Dr. L and the nurses. When you're fighting for your life you need well trained people that care about you in your corner.

I tell my coworkers...we can't always control the outcome but we can control the journey. Everyone there made my Dad's journey compassionate and dignified. I couldn't have asked for anything better.

- Val Peiffer