The Robert H. Lurie Comprehensive Cancer Center of Northwestern University at Northwestern Memorial Hospital
Dear Colleagues:

We are pleased to present our 2009 Cancer Annual Review highlighting accomplishments of the Robert H. Lurie Comprehensive Cancer Center of Northwestern University at Northwestern Memorial Hospital. Recognized as a national leader in cancer care, the Lurie Cancer Center is proud to be a recipient of the American College of Surgeons’ national Commission on Cancer’s Outstanding Achievement Award for 2009, an honor that recognizes our cancer committee leadership, cancer data management, research, community outreach and quality improvement.

The Lurie Cancer Center is one of only two programs in Illinois and among 40 in the nation to be designated by the National Cancer Institute as a Comprehensive Cancer Center. We are a founding member and the only Illinois representative in the National Comprehensive Cancer Network. In 2009, there were more than 127,000 outpatient visits and more than 5,000 inpatient cancer admissions.

This past year, we enhanced our radiation therapy services and in doing so, have become one of the few Comprehensive Cancer Centers in Illinois and one of only 66 in the world with Gamma Knife® Perfexion™ technology for brain radiosurgery, allowing patients to be treated with precise beams without an incision. We also have installed new body radiotherapy equipment to treat spine, lung, liver and other localized cancers.

To support the delivery of the best care and service to patients with cancer, we centralized our comprehensive women’s cancer care services in the Maggie Daley Center for Women’s Cancer Care, which is located on the fourth and fifth floors of Northwestern Memorial’s Prentice Women’s Hospital. Our comprehensive supportive oncology services, along with the outpatient treatment center for breast oncology and gynecologic oncology, moved to a new space within Prentice, a world-class facility that provides dedicated space, service and support to patients treated through the Lurie Cancer Center. Also, in a separate American College of Surgeons’ survey, Northwestern Memorial’s Lynn Sage Comprehensive Breast Center received accreditation.

In this year’s annual review, we feature our comprehensive women’s cancer care services by highlighting advances in the diagnosis and treatment of patients with gynecologic cancers. Under the leadership of Julian C. Schink, MD, a dedicated team of distinguished cancer specialists provides patients with the most advanced therapies available in a compassionate environment that is enhanced through our collaboration with Northwestern University Feinberg School of Medicine. Our shared emphasis on providing exceptional care is supported by research and clinical trials that contribute to the discovery of new scientific knowledge and the ability to offer patients new treatment options.

William Small, Jr., MD
Chair of the Committee on Cancer
Northwestern Memorial Hospital

Steven T. Rosen, MD
Director of the Robert H. Lurie Comprehensive Cancer Center
of Northwestern University
Nationally, more than 80,000 new cases of gynecologic cancers were diagnosed in 2009, according to the National Institutes of Health. The medical and support staff at Northwestern Memorial Hospital, Northwestern University Feinberg School of Medicine and the Robert H. Lurie Comprehensive Cancer Center of Northwestern University offer innovative clinical treatments for gynecologic cancers in combination with a variety of support services designed to treat a patient’s needs related to mind, body and spirit. While advanced clinical care is the first step in treating cancer, studies show that patients feel relief from symptoms such as nausea and fatigue and experience better pain management when they are treated with a holistic approach.

**Ovarian Cancer**

Ovarian cancer affects about one in 70 women and it carries the highest mortality among gynecologic cancers. At diagnosis, 70 to 80 percent of cases are at Stage III or IV, which increases the probability of a recurrence after treatment. While breakthroughs in cancer therapy have succeeded in extending survival, ovarian cancer is fatal in more than half of all cases.

“Having good outcomes depends on doing many things right, not just chemotherapy or skillful surgery, but doing the best possible job every step of the way,” says Julian C. Schink, MD, chief of Gynecologic Oncology at Northwestern Memorial, professor of Obstetrics and Gynecology at Feinberg and associate director of Clinical Affairs at the Lurie Cancer Center. Aggressive surgery is a major component of ovarian cancer treatment at Northwestern Memorial, which is why physicians achieve optimal cytoreduction, or removal of most of the tumor, in 85 percent of their patients.

Aggressive treatment also includes a forward-thinking approach to chemotherapy. Northwestern Memorial’s intraperitoneal chemotherapy program has evolved from treatment for recurrent ovarian cancer or persistent microscopic disease to a post-surgical protocol as initial treatment. Additionally, cancer specialists here have found that modifying the therapeutic agents and shortening the infusion duration allows them to administer the treatment on an outpatient basis rather than requiring a two-day inpatient stay. Tracking outcomes over time in three randomized clinical trials demonstrated the outpatient regimen had considerably lower toxicity with survival exceeding that reported in previous studies, according to John R. Lurain, MD, gynecologic oncologist on the medical staff at Northwestern Memorial and John and Ruth Brewer Professor of Gynecology and Cancer Research at Feinberg.

Because there are no effective screenings for early stages of ovarian cancer, prevention, including identifying high-risk patients, is important.

If a detailed family history indicates a strong risk, women usually are tested for the BRCA gene mutation. If that test is positive, it is essential to develop a detailed personalized plan. “The most important step in risk reduction is removing the ovaries and fallopian tubes when childbearing is completed,” explains Deborah S. Lindner, MD, a gynecologist on the medical staff at Northwestern Memorial and clinical instructor of Obstetrics and Gynecology at Feinberg. Bilateral salpingo-oophorectomy substantially reduces the risk of ovarian cancer.

“Through the Northwestern Ovarian Cancer Early Detection and Prevention Program, we provide women with tailored risk assessment and prevention plans including nutrition, lifestyle and pharmacologic options,” says Diljeet Singh, MD, a gynecologic oncologist on the medical staff at Northwestern Memorial and co-director of the early detection program at Feinberg. “Women found to be at increased risk for ovarian cancer can also participate in promising multimodal screening programs.”

**Endometrial Cancer**

In 2009, the Lurie Cancer Center treated nearly 100 women with endometrial cancer. In more than 90 percent of cases, the cancer can successfully be eliminated.

Northwestern Memorial offers one of the few dedicated robotic surgery programs for gynecologic oncology in the country and surgeons perform nearly 80 percent of surgeries for endometrial cancer robotically. Northwestern maintains a database on many aspects of the robotic surgeries performed to determine how patients benefit and how to improve patient care. Based on hospital data, robotic surgery outcomes are superior to traditional open and laparoscopic surgeries for endometrial and cervical cancer treatment, says M. Patrick Lowe, MD, director of the Gynecologic Oncology Robotics and Minimally Invasive Surgery Program at Northwestern Memorial and assistant professor of Obstetrics and Gynecology at Feinberg.
Radiotherapy

One of the most significant transformations in radiation treatment of gynecologic malignancies is in the technology to improve precision in reaching the tumor and reduce toxicity. Intensity-modulated radiation therapy is an advanced method of high-precision radiotherapy. A computer-controlled linear accelerator delivers radiation that conforms more precisely to the tumor, sparing adjacent normal tissues and allowing higher doses. Image-guided radiation therapy uses various imaging technologies to help radiation oncologists more accurately treat patients on a daily basis. Image-guided brachytherapy is being used here for definitive treatment of cervical cancer.

Beyond technological advances, research here is exploring modifications to treatment for gynecologic cancers. “We are looking at unique combinations of systemic therapy with radiation for cervical and endometrial cancers,” says William Small, Jr., MD, a radiation oncologist on the medical staff at Northwestern Memorial, professor and vice chairman of Radiation Oncology at Feinberg and associate medical director of the Lurie Cancer Center. One study is investigating vaginal brachytherapy administered along with chemotherapy or pelvic radiation to determine if chemotherapy can be an effective substitute for pelvic radiation and if either combination reduces the risk of metastatic disease.

Looking Ahead

Physicians and scientists at Northwestern continue to look for more effective, less toxic forms of treatment for gynecologic cancers. One area of investigation is the use of biologic agents, either alone or in combination with conventional chemotherapy. These agents are targeted more closely to tumor behaviors and are often less toxic.

In order to predict which chemotherapeutic agents will be effective for specific patients, new studies are examining ways to personalize treatment through a trial combining chemosensitivity testing with a multi-gene assay to characterize tumors. The goal is to identify the patients who are resistant to certain agents before treatment begins, rather than after it has failed.

Supportive Oncology

Through supportive oncology, we provide many services to meet the needs that occur before, during and after a woman’s medical treatment. The goal is to improve quality of life by addressing emotional and practical needs and any physical and functional limitations.

Women with cancer who are treated at the Lurie Cancer Center in Northwestern Memorial’s Prentice Women’s Hospital have access to psychosocial, integrative and rehabilitative oncology therapies through the Maggie Daley Center for Women’s Cancer Care. The services are designed to meet a woman’s needs beyond cancer treatment. “The women who come through our doors carry a heavy burden and it’s our responsibility to help lighten that burden as much as we can,” says Rebecca Caires, administrative director at the Lurie Cancer Center.

“IF YOU WANT TO TAKE CARE OF THE WHOLE PATIENT, YOU NEED TO PROVIDE, IN ONE CENTRAL LOCATION, THE TREATMENTS THEY NEED BEYOND CHEMOTHERAPY, RADIATION AND OTHER PRIMARY TREATMENT COMPONENTS.”

— Julian C. Schink, MD

Issues faced by women with gynecologic cancers require individualized and supportive care. Hair loss, skin challenges such as pigment changes and red spots, changing family roles and altered body image are the most common reasons women are referred for supportive care. They also may experience side effects from treatment and diagnosis including pain, fatigue and stress. Depending on individual needs, patients can be referred to Northwestern Memorial’s Center for Integrative Medicine and Wellness for targeted therapies. Acupuncture has been shown to help chemotherapy-induced neuropathy or nausea. Other women find that massage or energy therapy, such as Reiki, reduces anxiety. “Integrative oncology moves beyond curing the patient to healing the whole person,” says Melinda R. Ring.
Centrally located in Prentice is the Maggie Daley Center for Women’s Cancer Care, which offers services for cancer treatment such as an infusion suite (left) that overlooks Lake Michigan and a Healing Boutique (above) where women have access to private consultations about hair care, makeup techniques and skin issues that can result from cancer treatment.

**Oncofertility: Life After Cancer Treatment**

About 68,000 women younger than 45 years old are diagnosed with cancer each year. These women face the knowledge that lifesaving medical treatment can leave them infertile.

Physicians and researchers at Northwestern are working to save their lives as well as their fertility. Teresa Woodruff, PhD, Thomas J. Watkins Professor of Obstetrics and Gynecology at Feinberg, and her team of physicians and researchers are leading a national effort to better understand the impact of cancer treatment on fertility and to identify new technologies to preserve it. This new and expanding discipline is referred to as oncofertility.

The Lurie Cancer Center brings together oncologists and fertility experts to help patients conceive after treatment. Soon after diagnosis, a patient navigator, who is knowledgeable in fertility and oncology, explains the impact cancer treatment may have on fertility and helps women pursue referrals for options to preserve their fertility. At Northwestern, more than 300 patients have been counseled about treatment and their fertility. More than 100 women have taken steps before cancer treatment, including in vitro fertilization with embryo banking, to preserve their fertility. Once a woman is considered cancer free, she can return to Northwestern to have her embryos thawed and attempt a pregnancy. Three women have reached this survivorship milestone, had their embryos transferred and delivered a child.

However, embryo banking is not always feasible because of the type of cancer, how rapidly treatment must begin or the patient’s age. Oncofertility research is advancing beyond established techniques to investigational areas such as growing human follicles to provide fertility restoration.

Dr. Woodruff led a team of researchers to stimulate human follicles to maturity in the laboratory. Using donated ovarian tissue, the team grew follicles in a three-dimensional hydrogel matrix. After 30 days, the follicles had developed and the eggs grew to normal size. Subsequent experiments in mice resulted in live, healthy births.

Another option being investigated is removing one ovary and freezing the tissue for re-implantation. At that point, the patient’s fertility is restored as well as the possibility to conceive naturally.
Facilities for patients treated at the Robert H. Lurie Comprehensive Cancer Center of Northwestern University were further enhanced with the buildout of space for a women’s cancer program on the fourth and fifth floors of Prentice Women’s Hospital, adjacent to the Lynn Sage Comprehensive Breast Center. This 24,000-square-foot expansion provides the capacity for comprehensive care for women in a single location, accommodating the relocation of Breast Medical Oncology and Gynecologic Oncology, as well as comprehensive Supportive Oncology services including psychiatry, psychology, social work, nutrition, rehabilitation and integrative medicine.

Regular multidisciplinary conferences provided prospective treatment planning for patients in the following areas:

- Breast cancer
- Gynecologic oncology
- Genitourinary cancers
- Hematologic diseases
- Head and neck cancers
- Neurological oncology
- Melanoma

A wide range of education, support and outreach programs were offered.

Professional education programs were provided through the Lurie Cancer Center, including the 10th Annual Lynn Sage Breast Cancer Symposium and the 11th Annual Oncology Nursing Conference, as well as annual programs in basic sciences, pain and palliative care, lymphoma and ASCO and ASH reviews. Intramural programs included monthly Schwartz Center Rounds for clinical faculty and staff, weekly Cancer Center Grand Rounds and a weekly Cancer Biology Seminar Series for research faculty.

A full complement of patient education and support services was offered, including support groups, inpatient case management and an outpatient Supportive Oncology team providing psychiatry, psychology, social work, nutrition, rehabilitation and integrative medicine services. The Supportive Oncology team is complemented by two full-time American Cancer Society patient navigators and a full-time health educator. In fiscal year 2009, a program addressing the survivorship needs of breast cancer patients (SUCCEED Program) was implemented.

Community education and outreach programs were offered, including disease-oriented presentations, the Breast Cancer Town Hall Meeting with nearly 400 in attendance and cancer survivorship initiatives including the 16th Annual Cancer Survivors’ Celebration and Walk with nearly 4,000 participants. Special health disparities programs also were offered.

New faculty recruitments to multidisciplinary care and research teams included:

- Shuo Ma, MD, was recruited to the Division of Hematology/Oncology following completion of her fellowship in the division. Her clinical and research efforts are in hematologic malignancies.
- Hala Nimeiri, MD, was recruited to the Division of Hematology/Oncology following completion of her fellowship at the University of Chicago. Her focus is in gastrointestinal oncology.
- C. Shad Thaxton, MD, PhD, was recruited to the Department of Urology following completion of his residency at Northwestern. His clinical and research efforts focus on prostate cancer and nanotechnology in therapeutics.
- Mehmet Dokucu, MD, was recruited to the Department of Psychiatry and Behavioral Sciences from Washington University in St. Louis. He is engaged in consultation/liaison services and research for cancer patients.
- Malcolm DeCamp, MD, was recruited from the Beth Israel Deaconess Medical Center and assumes the key leadership role of chief of the Division of Thoracic Surgery in the Department of Surgery.
- Nagendra Koneru, MD, was recruited to the Department of Radiation Oncology from Waukesha Memorial Hospital. His focus is thoracic oncology and stereotactic body radiosurgery.
- Samir Sejpal, MD, was recruited to the Department of Radiation Oncology from the MD Anderson Cancer Center. He will help develop the Proton Radiotherapy Program.

The Lurie Cancer Center was awarded a $13.5 million five-year Physical Sciences and Oncology Center (PS-OC) grant from the National Cancer Institute. One of only 12 such grants awarded nationally, the PS-OC grant, coupled with the existing Center for Cancer Nanotechnology Excellence grant, reflects the unique research strength of the Lurie Cancer Center in bringing together investigators from the biological sciences, chemistry and engineering.

The Lurie Cancer Center maintained its position as the only Illinois member of the National Comprehensive Cancer Network (NCCN), a consortium of 21 of the nation’s leading cancer centers committed to the development of cancer treatment guidelines and enhancing access to the most advanced treatment options for patients. Al Benson III, MD, an oncologist on the medical staff at Northwestern Memorial and a professor in the Division of Hematology/Oncology at Feinberg, serves as the chairman of the NCCN board.

Through the Clinical Research Office (CRO) of the Lurie Cancer Center, a comprehensive clinical trials program continued to be available to patients. Under the direction of Timothy Kuzel, MD, hematologist/oncologist on the medical staff at Northwestern Memorial and professor of Medicine, Hematology/Oncology at Feinberg, the CRO continued to conduct and coordinate Phase I through Phase III clinical trials sponsored by federally funded national cooperative groups and the pharmaceutical industry as well as investigator-initiated institutional trials developed by faculty members at Feinberg. Physicians on the medical staff at Northwestern Memorial and the Lurie Cancer Center are leaders in national cooperative group studies and in working to develop, test and accelerate access to new treatments. A total of 769 patients at Northwestern were enrolled in 229 interventional therapeutic and non-therapeutic clinical trials.
2008 Registry Report

The Northwestern Memorial Hospital Tumor Registry, under the direction of the Committee on Cancer, is an integral component of the Cancer Program. The tumor registry systematically collects, maintains and disseminates detailed cancer case information to help guide, evaluate and implement cancer control activities. It is the largest registry in the state of Illinois and sends data to the Illinois State Cancer Registry, the National Cancer Data Base and the American Cancer Society for reporting and survival statistics. The registry currently follows 45,841 patients yearly.

2008 Registry Activities and Accomplishments

- Added 3,574 new cases to the registry.
- Achieved 91 percent follow-up for cases diagnosed within the past five years.
- Completed 33 requests for data to monitor, improve and evaluate patient care and survival trends.

Primary Site Tabulation For 2008

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<tr>
<th>PRIMARY SITE</th>
<th>TOTAL</th>
<th>CLASS A</th>
<th>N/A</th>
<th>SEX</th>
<th>% of Cases</th>
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| Oral Cavity         | 77    | 73      | 4   | 55  | 22         | 2.0
| Digestive System   | 498   | 450     | 48  | 266 | 232        | 12.6
| Esophagus           | 34    | 29      | 5   | 31  | 13         | 0.3
| Stomach             | 36    | 33      | 3   | 19  | 17         | 0.3
| Colon               | 159   | 149     | 10  | 72  | 87         | 0.3
| Rectum              | 73    | 68      | 5   | 29  | 44         | 0.3
| Anus/Anal Canal     | 19    | 17      | 2   | 13  | 6          | 0.3
| Liver               | 84    | 75      | 9   | 53  | 31         | 0.3
| Pancreas            | 53    | 45      | 8   | 23  | 30         | 0.3
| Other               | 40    | 34      | 6   | 26  | 14         | 0.3
| Respiratory System  | 267   | 238     | 29  | 125 | 142        | 6.7
| Nasal/Sinus         | 9     | 8       | 1   | 5   | 4          | 0.3
| Larynx              | 18    | 17      | 1   | 15  | 3          | 0.3
| Lung/Branchia       | 231   | 206     | 25  | 99  | 132        | 5.4
| Other               | 9     | 7       | 2   | 6   | 3          | 0.3
| Blood and...        |       |         |     |     |            |    
| Bone Marrow         | 246   | 173     | 73  | 131 | 115        | 6.2
| Leukemia            | 125   | 83      | 42  | 67  | 58         | 5.4
| Multiple Myeloma    | 105   | 82      | 23  | 57  | 48         | 5.4
| Other               | 16    | 8       | 8   | 7   | 9          | 0.3
| Bone                | 12    | 10      | 2   | 6   | 6          | 0.3
| Connect/Soft Tissue | 22    | 20      | 2   | 9   | 13         | 0.5
| Skin                | 212   | 196     | 16  | 109 | 103        | 5.4
| Melanoma            | 199   | 184     | 15  | 103 | 96         | 5.4
| Other               | 13    | 12      | 1   | 6   | 7          | 0.3
| Breast              | 907   | 865     | 42  | 5   | 902        | 22.9
| Radiation Therapy   | 152   | 127     | 25  | 77  | 45         | 1.5
| Other/Ill-defined   | 19    | 18      | 1   | 6   | 13         | 0.5

Since 2004, there has been a 15 percent increase in the number of analytic cases seen at Northwestern Memorial Hospital, from 3,103 cases in 2004 to 3,574 cases in 2008.

Number of cases excluded: 24
This report excludes carcinoma in-situ cervix cases, squamous and basal cell skin cases and intraepithelial neoplasia cases.
* Analytic (a) are newly diagnosed cases that have received part or all of first course of treatment at Northwestern Memorial.
** Non-analytic (n-a) are cases that received all first course of treatment elsewhere and came to Northwestern Memorial for subsequent treatment.
Committee on Cancer

Medical Staff Members
COMMITTEE CHAIR
William Small, Jr., MD
Radiation Oncology

CANCER LIASON PHYSICIAN
Jeffrey D. Wayne, MD
Surgical Oncology

CARDIOTHORACIC SURGERY
Matthew G. Blum, MD

NEUROLOGICAL SURGERY
James P. Chandler, MD
Kenji Muro, MD

OTO/LARYNGOLOGY/HEAD and NECK
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Harold J. Pelzer, DDS, MD

UROLOGY
James M. Kozlowski, MD

SURGICAL ONCOLOGY
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General Surgery
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Steven Newman, MD
Judith Pace, RN, PhD
Steven T. Rosen, MD
Jamie H. Von Roenn, MD

GYNECOLOGIC ONCOLOGY
Julian C. Schink, MD

NEURO-ONCOLOGY
Jeffrey J. Razer, MD

RADIOLOGY
Riad Salem, MD, MBA

PATHOLOGY
William B. Laskin, MD

Psychiatry/Supportive Oncology
Mehmet Dokucu, MD, PhD
Lynne Wagner, PhD

Integrative Medicine
Melinda Ring, MD

Oncology/Rehabilitation
Gail Gamble, MD

PHARMACY
Desi Kotis, RPh

STATISTICS
Alfred Rademaker, PhD

ADMINISTRATIVE MEMBERS
Julie Bryant, RHIA
Medical Records/Information Systems
Rebecca Caires, MBA
Robert H. Lurie Comprehensive Cancer Center of Northwestern University
LaKeshia Carter, RHIT, CTR
Tumor Registry
Michael Childers, CTR
Tumor Registry
Patricia Duffy
Tumor Registry
Kristen Huber, MSW, LCSW
Social Services
Jayne Jedlicka, RHIA, CTR
Tumor Registry
Scott A. Kerth
Clinical Quality Management
Susanne R. Kessler, RHIT, CTR
Medical Records

Patricia Murphy, RN, MSN, MBA
Oncology Services
Christina Perez, RHIT
Tumor Registry
Alex Zafirovski
Radiation Oncology and Gamma Knife
Mary Gillaspie
Health Learning Center
Greta Nelson, RN, MS
Home Hospice
Mary Pranica, MS
Health Learning Center
Lisa Stucky-Marshall
Oncology Clinical Research
Renée Webb, MA, CCRC
Robert H. Lurie Comprehensive Cancer Center of Northwestern University
Mary Weiss, LCSW
American Cancer Society/Health Learning Center

SUBMITTED BY
William Small, Jr., MD
Chair, Committee on Cancer
Patricia Murphy, RN, MSN, MBA
Director, Oncology Services
Susanne R. Kessler, RHIT, CTR
Medical Records

UNDER THE MANAGEMENT OF
Michelle A. Janney, RN, PhD, NEA-BC
Senior Vice President and Wood-Prince Family Chief Nurse Executive
Northwestern Memorial Hospital
Timothy R. Zoph
Senior Vice President and Chief Information Officer Northwestern Memorial Hospital
Nick Rave
Interim Vice President of Operations Northwestern Memorial Hospital

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Contact Information

Robert H. Lurie Comprehensive Cancer Center of Northwestern University
Prentice Women's Hospital
250 E. Superior St., Floors 14, 15 and 16
Chicago, IL 60611

Main Hospital Number
312-926-2000

Web site
nmh.org

Health Learning Center Satellite
(Focused on the specific needs of patients with cancer)
312-926-7377

Physician Access Line
800-638-3737

Tumor Registry
312-926-0379

Robert H. Lurie Comprehensive Cancer Center of Northwestern University
Clinical Cancer Center
675 N. Saint Clair St., Galter Pavilion, Floor 21
Chicago, IL 60611

Maggie Daley Center for Women’s Cancer Care
250 E. Superior St., Floors 4 and 5
Chicago, IL 60611
312-695-0990
866-LURIECC

Web site
cancer.northwestern.edu

Robert H. Lurie Comprehensive Cancer Center of Northwestern University
Administrative Offices
303 E. Superior St., Suite 3-125
Chicago, IL 60611

Administrative Office
312-908-5250

Clinical Research Office
312-695-1301

Lynn Sage Comprehensive Breast Center
Prentice Women's Hospital
250 E. Superior St., Floor 4
Chicago, IL 60611

Scheduling Number
312-926-3522

Radiation Oncology and Gamma Knife
Northwestern Memorial Hospital
675 N. Saint Clair St., Galter Pavilion, Lower Concourse,
Room 178
Chicago, IL 60611

Prentice Women's Hospital
250 E. Superior St., Lower Concourse
Chicago, IL 60611

Scheduling Number
312-926-2520