



ESSENTIA HEALTH CANCER CENTER

EAST MARKET - 2018 ANNUAL REPORT



Essentia Health

CANCER CARE LIKE NOWHERE ELSE

Focusing on the 2018 Essentia Health Strategic Plan and strategies of Improve the Patient Experience and Be the Best Place to Receive Care, one of our primary goals as we looked at our patients' needs was determining how we enhance the care we offer here at Essentia Health.

A number of these initiatives featured in this report include training of our team members in integrative health practices to allow them to not only better care for patients, but also themselves.

Our Radiation Oncology team has continued their work through their Performance Improvement team focusing on streamlining care for patients and ensuring scheduling practices are optimized to ensure patients are able to access services.

Our team takes pride in evaluating and identifying methods to best care for patients. Part of this is ensuring our patients have access to the services they need, where they need them. In 2018 we expanded physical therapy and health psychology services to be offered within the Cancer Center. This expansion not only brings the services closer to patients, it encourages communication and collaboration between teams.

Continuing to not only strive to enhance care within our Cancer Centers we also continued our dedication to our communities. In the following you will read about our 5K series dedicated to raising cancer awareness in our communities while raising compassionate care funds to better support our patients receiving care at our centers.

Finally, in our One Essentia section you will read about work being done throughout Essentia Health Cancer Centers as we continue to collaborate with our colleagues across Essentia Health.

Looking back on 2018 we reflect on the care we have provided and the work our teams have accomplished to create a more robust support network for patients while continuing to grow the relationships amongst teams.

Jennifer Dobbs | Operations Administrator





FIGHTING CANCER TOGETHER

The three girls never would have met at school because they live in different communities. Their ages – 10, 12 and 14 – may have been a barrier. But fighting cancer has made them good friends.

Ella Mahnke, Ella Smith and Nathalia “Nat” Hawley call themselves the “8 West Club” because they met on that floor at Essentia Health-St. Mary’s Children’s Hospital in Duluth. Each girl spent lots of time there receiving cancer treatments, dealing with side effects or fighting illnesses caused by a compromised immune system.

While some stays were scheduled for treatments, others were serendipitous. One girl got sick and headed to hospital only to find another one already there. Soon the girls and their parents were keeping in touch, both in and out of the hospital.

“It’s nice to come here and still have your friends. You have someone to talk to and do things with,” said Nat Hawley, a now 15-year-old Duluthian who was diagnosed with osteosarcoma, a form of bone cancer.

One of Nat’s recent hospitalizations coincided with a treatment session for Ella Smith, whose room was just next door. The girls move easily between each other’s rooms, always aware when someone doesn’t feel well enough for a visit. They chat, watch videos and play games. Often, they head to the unit’s new solarium where they can do the arts and crafts that all three love.

“It’s hard for all of us, but it’s easier to do it together,” explained Nat. “You feel a need to talk to somebody so it’s great to have

people like the Ellas – somebody you can talk to like a regular friend who sees this as normal. That’s what makes it easy.”

“It’s nice that we’re friends because we relate on all this treatment-related stuff but we can also normalize things for each other,” said Ella Smith, who is 12 and lives near Cook, Minn. She was diagnosed with leukemia.

“When I tell my other friends, it’s awkward because they can’t imagine how it feels,” explained Ella Mahnke, who is the youngest at age 10 and lives in Proctor, Minn. She was diagnosed with Ewing’s sarcoma.

Dr. Ross Perko, a pediatric oncologist and hematologist at Erick Peter Person Children’s Cancer Center in Duluth, says he and the hospital staff encourage their young patients to interact if they’re feeling up to it. “The biggest thing is that they feel they’re not alone, especially when they’re preteens and teens,” he says.

Dr. Perko explained children can become isolated during treatment, especially when their compromised immune systems mean they can’t go to school or be around friends. While kids and parents often get to know one another during hospital stays, he said this trio has formed a special bond.

Gwyn Schrecengost, Ella Smith’s mom, says being together is comfortable and the girls feel accepted. “They’re not afraid of each other’s bald heads or tubes or IVs,” she said. “At their age, girls are self-conscious and they’re not being looked at as funny. They fit in. They don’t stand out.”

“The girls don’t have to hold back with one another, they can open up and be who they are,” said Katy Augusta, Nat’s mother. “They’ve found someone who truly understands and whom they truly trust.”

“The girls have bonded quite well,” said Brian Mahnke, Ella’s father.

The trio enjoys spending time together outside the hospital. They’ve attended camp and joined each other’s birthday parties. They celebrated the end of Ella Mahnke’s chemotherapy with a surprise party in the Pediatric Unit’s solarium. Nat decided to fill balloons with confetti. “We popped the balloons and the confetti flew everywhere,” she recalled. Among the party photos on Dr. Perko’s phone is one that shows just his red athletic shoes and a floor covered with confetti. “That’s was a really good day,” he said with a smile.

“If I hadn’t gotten sick -- which would have been great -- I never would have been able to meet all these wonderful people,” says Ella Smith. “What we learned mainly from each other is we all go through hard things but we help each other remember that we can do it and we’ll be fine. We’ll live. We’ll be good.”



INTEGRATIVE NURSING

A pilot project spearheaded by Essentia's Integrative Health Department in Duluth trained Essentia Health East Oncology nurses and other caregivers in practices that deepen healing for patients in cancer treatment and recovery. The goals are to enhance the patient experience within oncology care, improve the well-being of the caregivers and eventually expand the practices to other departments and markets.

Grants from the Miller-Dwan Foundation and the Essentia Health Foundation funded the training of 160 registered nurses, licensed practical nurses, certified nursing assistants and clinical assistants who work in inpatient and outpatient Oncology. The project includes eight full-day sessions with room for 20 people each. In addition, there will be six follow-up sessions.

The focus of the project was to train enough of the Oncology staff to be able to say, 'this is part of the care Essentia provides in Oncology'.

Participants learned the foundation of integrative/holistic care for their patients and themselves. This includes aromatherapy, acupuncture for symptom relief, massage, guided imagery, soothing music and oshibori – the use of warm, damp towels on the skin for comfort. Staff will learn to integrate these practices into their patient care and will teach patients how to apply them in their own homes.

We hope to demonstrate an impact on our HCAHPS and CGCAHPS (patient experience) scores, reduction of 'as needed' medications and improvement of patients' symptoms. We also aim to enrich self-care for our staff. An important part of our vision for Integrative Health is to create initiatives that have multiple benefits for both patients and our teams.

PEDIATRIC ONCOLOGY

The care of children with cancer in our region is one of Essentia's greatest privileges and responsibilities. Keeping families closer to home during cancer treatment is the least we can do to optimize support and minimize time away from school and work. It was the reason Dr. Peter Person, our former CEO, and his wife Judge Carol Person established the Erick Peter Person Children's Cancer Center in 2002. In keeping with their vision, the program has grown to full capacity, with a multi-disciplinary team that can offer care from diagnosis to long-term survivorship. The team includes three board-certified pediatric hematologist/ oncologists, an oncology RN, an oncology child-life specialist and school liaison, and a psychosocial support team including child psychology, chaplaincy, and social work.

In collaboration with the University of Minnesota, Children's Oncology Group trials are available for patients from infancy through young adulthood. Over the past year, 22 study enrollments were completed, enabling children, adolescents and young adults in our area to be treated on the latest treatment protocols offered at specialized centers across the US. Families also recognize the intangible benefit of contributing to research and improving survival for children diagnosed with cancer in the future.

Year-round, the Erick Peter Person Children's Cancer Center holds events to celebrate and support our patients and their families. A parent support group was established in January, and meets monthly. The young adult support group also meets monthly for fun events and dinner. In May, a bereavement event

was held at Faith's Lodge in Danville, Wisconsin, to provide ongoing support for grieving families. In September, patients and their families were treated to a Fall fest train ride and party at Duluth's Depot. In November, artwork submitted by patients was featured on cards/ calendars sold to benefit the Erick Peter Person Fund which supports families whose children are going through treatment. Looking forward, the program hopes to continue growing in our capacity to support children and their families as they journey through a cancer diagnosis or live with a blood disorder.





ONCOLOGY REHABILITATION

Cancer patients have unique needs with symptoms caused by chemo which are not seen in other specialties. Ensuring patients have access to oncology rehabilitation services is an important part of the care we offer. Goals of oncology rehabilitation services include helping patients improve their daily function and overall quality of life in all areas including physical, emotional and social.

Weakness, fatigue, peripheral neuropathy and balance issues can significantly impact activities of daily living. By having a Physical Therapist rounding in the Cancer Center two half days per week we brought physical therapy services to a population of patients in great need of these services.

Often patients don't recognize the onset of symptoms as they can increase slowly, yet significantly diminish function over time. Our Physical Therapist will round on patients and conduct assessments in the infusion center or exam rooms with optional follow-up offered in the Duluth Fitness and Therapy Center. Identifying social, cognitive, emotional, and vocational status is important to being able to best determine additional resources needed.

RADIATION ONCOLOGY

The Performance Improvement team in Radiation Oncology is made up of a member from all disciplines within the department including a Manager, Radiation Therapist, RN, and Front Desk Scheduler. The team meets on a bimonthly frequency and their goal is to enhance the care provided to patients as well as ensure the highest levels of safety are maintained within the department.

Ideas for improvement initiatives may come from the patient suggestion box located in their lobby, PRC patient satisfaction surveys and survey comments, treatment or plan variances documented in the department or any team recommendations.

This year one of the process improvements was to optimize the patient scheduling process to ensure patients have prompt access to care, minimize appointments being canceled, and maximize use of team resources. Under current scheduling processes it was found that 42% of CT simulation appointments scheduled on the same day as an initial patient consult were canceled.

The team together with the physicians developed an algorithm to more accurately predict when a CT simulation would be needed following an initial patient consultation. The new process has reduced appointment cancellations to 12% thus allowing more flexibility in the schedule to ensure patients receive the care when they need it.



TRIPLE CROWN 5K

The Essentia Health Foundation 5K series expanded this year to the HOPE-Courage-Strength series with the addition of Strength in Chequamegon 5K in Ashland. The 5K fundraising began in 2013 with HOPE Springs in Hibbing and expanded in 2015 with Quad Cities Courage in Virginia. Each 5K raises funds for their local community's cancer center.

The HOPE Springs 5K was launched to promote cancer awareness within Hibbing and the surrounding communities as well as to better support our patients. The tremendous success of the Hope Springs led to the expansion of the series to Courage 5K in Virginia, MN and Strength 5K in Ashland, WI.

A cancer diagnosis not only causes emotional and physical strain on patients and their families, but a financial strain as well. Essentia Health Foundation Compassionate Care Funds raised through these three races support patients during

cancer treatment. Compassionate care funds are used in many ways. From providing gas cards, bus passes and grocery cards, massage therapy in the cancer center for patients and their care givers, or housing during treatment. The reach is wide.

In 2018 the series raised over \$100,000 in 5K registrations and participant fundraising. Our goal is ensuring that the compassionate care funds will continue, aiming to provide HOPE, Courage, and Strength for those seeking care at our community cancer centers.

Did You Know?

100% of your donation supports Essentia Health Foundation's patient-centered mission?

ROLE OF THE APC

Advanced Practice Clinicians are an integral member of the oncology care team and have long supported patients within the Essentia Health Cancer Center who are receiving care for a cancer diagnosis as well as patients seeking cancer prevention services. Advanced Practice Clinicians include Nurse Practitioners, Physician Assistants, and Clinical Nurse Specialists.

Advanced Practice Clinicians can perform examinations, diagnose and treat illnesses, order diagnostic tests, and advise and educate patients.

This year we welcomed two new Nurse Practitioners to the Essentia Health East Cancer Care Team. Sue Barningham and Brittany Oberhelman are domiciled in our regional communities. Sue supports patients who receive care in Ashland, WI and Brittany supports patients who received care in Virginia, Hibbing and Deer River, MN.

The functions of the Nurse Practitioners, Physician Assistants, and Clinical Nurse Specialists vary. Tom Warden who is domiciled on our 9W Oncology floor at St. Mary's Medical Center works in conjunction with both the hospitalist service and the medical oncologists to coordinate the care for patients who are hospitalized or receiving care on 9W. Anne Skwira-Brown, Sue Barningham and Brittany Oberhelman work in the clinic teaming with the medical oncologists to care for patients who are going through chemotherapy, in routine follow-up for their cancer diagnosis, or providing survivorship care plans to patients completing active care. Courtney Senich works side by side with Dr. Colleen Evans in our Gynecology Oncology department

providing both clinic visit support to patients as well as assisting in surgeries for patients requiring surgical procedures. Pam Lincoln is domiciled in our Breast Health Center working in conjunction with Family Practice physicians and Radiologists caring for women who are seeking breast health care or have a concern found on a mammogram. Pam also delivers survivorship care plans to breast cancer patients and has launched a high risk clinic to support patients who believe they may have an elevated risk of developing breast cancer. Marie Sullivan works on the Pediatric floor in the hospital providing care to our pediatric oncology patients and families. Marie also provide expertise and support to nurses caring for patients at the bedside, helping to ensure the use of best practices and evidence-based care to achieve the best possible outcomes.



WHAT HEALTH PSYCHOLOGY SERVICES OFFER CANCER PATIENTS

Health psychology is a specialty focus that helps people adjust, adapt and manage the impact of health issues on their lives.

Specifically, Health Psychology can help the cancer patient to:

- Prepare for treatment with pre-surgical optimization
- Address concerns with adherence to treatment
- Emotionally adjust to diagnosis and treatment that often has a big impact on their world and self-view through emotional awareness, coping skills and support
- Improve quality of life
- Help patients manage the common side effects of cancer and cancer treatment including:
 - Fatigue
 - Pain
 - Body and self-image
 - Sleep issues
 - Sexual health issues
- Manage depression and anxiety which may be pre-existing or result from the cancer diagnosis/and treatment

- Address family dynamics with the patient and family/caregivers
- Treat family members/caregivers who are struggling with adjustment and grief

Treatment Modalities: Cognitive Behavior Therapy (CBT), Acceptance and Commitment Therapy (ACT), Eye Movement Desensitization and Reprocessing (EMDR), Mindfulness, Relaxation Techniques, Behavior Activation, and Motivational Interviewing.

This year two Health Psychologists from Essentia Health's Health Psychology department began seeing patients within the Cancer Center. It was identified that our cancer patients have specific psychosocial needs that were not consistently being met.

By embedding Health Psychologists in the Cancer Center a barrier to patients being able to receive this important care was removed. Other goals of inviting Health Psychology into the Cancer Center include an increase in team collaboration and communication.

IMMUNOTHERAPY UPDATE



Ersin Selcuk Unal, MD, PhD
Hematologist/Oncologist

Today, we are using immunotherapy agents to treat a vast majority of tumors including, but not limited to, malignant melanoma and cancers of the lung, kidney, bladder, colon, head & neck and breast. In carefully selected patients, intravenous administration of these drugs result in long-term, durable disease remission rates. Unlike conventional chemotherapy regimens, a unique feature of immunotherapy is the

continued tumor killing effect even though the treatment is discontinued.

Immunotherapy uses certain parts of a person's immune system to fight cancer. Some tumor cells resist, or escape, the innate response of the immune system and continue growing, which may result in metastasis. This occurs through a process called immune evasion. Hence, multiple treatment methods were developed to increase the power of the immune system to fight against and eliminate cancer in the field of cancer immunotherapy. Continued scientific and technological innovations have resulted in major breakthroughs in recent years. This is mainly due to the demonstration of the interacting molecules on immune cells and cancer cells resulting in inhibition of T-cell function. The most studied molecules involved in the evasion process are either expressed by the T-cells, such

as CTLA-4 (cytotoxic T-lymphocyte-associated protein 4) and PD-1 (Programmed Death 1) or the tumor cells, such as PD-L1 (Programmed Death Ligand 1). The inhibition of the immune system by the tumor cells are blocked by currently used immunotherapy drugs, which are antibody molecules against CTLA-4, PD1 or PD-L1. In this treatment method, a person's own immune system cells are stimulated to attack the cancer cells by removing the brakes placed on them by the tumor cells.

Although immunotherapy agents are generally better tolerated than cytotoxic chemotherapy, they do have specific side effect profiles. As expected, the side effect profile of immunotherapy agents occurs mainly due to the increased activity of T-cells. Patients require close clinical and laboratory follow-up during the treatment course since the off-target accelerated inflammatory reaction(s) triggered by immunotherapy may affect normal human tissues such as the lungs, gastrointestinal tract, endocrine organs and skin.

An extensive amount of research is ongoing in the field of immunotherapy and hundreds of clinical trials are in progress. There is a significant need for the development of more accurate biomarkers/predictive factors and the establishment of the optimal use of immunotherapy/chemotherapy combinations. Hopefully, these studies will improve current treatment protocols and further increase high quality, cancer-free lives with loved ones.

CLINICAL TRIALS



Bret Friday, MD
Hematologist/Oncologist

Essentia Health cancer patients benefit from a generous partnership with the University of Minnesota.

Nearly half of all Minnesotans will be diagnosed with a potentially life-threatening cancer during their lifetime. Essentia Health patients will soon have better access to new cancer treatments and enhanced care thanks to a new state-funded partnership between University of Minnesota and the state's major

health systems, including Essentia Health.

As part of the Minnesota Discovery Research and Innovation (MnDRIVE) partnership with the State of Minnesota, the University is launching the Minnesota Cancer Clinical Trials Network (MNCCTN) with multiple locations across the state. Led by the Masonic Cancer Center, University of Minnesota, the goal of the MNCCTN is to improve cancer outcomes for all Minnesotans through greater access to cancer clinical trials in prevention, treatment, and survivorship. The partnership will provide Essentia \$500,000 to support expanding access to clinical trials.

Cancer patients in northern Minnesota have already benefited from access to clinical trials at Essentia Health's Cancer Centers in Duluth, Brainerd and Fargo. "The State's cancer research network will augment the work we are currently doing at Essentia's cancer

clinical trial program to provide our patients greater access to the ground-breaking research from institutions in Minnesota," says Dr. Bret Friday, a hematologist/oncologist at Essentia Health's Cancer Center in Duluth.

56 percent of Minnesotans have fewer options for treatment because they live more than 30 miles from a hospital or clinic that offers access to clinical trials. By bringing cancer clinical trials to those living in Greater Minnesota, the MNCCTN will increase access to potentially lifesaving and life-changing therapies and treatments, strengthen healthcare systems, create more equitable access to care, and could improve cancer outcomes throughout the state.

"Our long-term goal is that every cancer patient in northern Minnesota has access to clinical trials close to home" says Dr. Friday. With the inception of the State's cancer research network, Essentia has expanded access to cancer trials at multiple clinics, including Virginia, Hibbing, Deer River, Detroit Lakes, Park Rapids, and Fosston. Additional centers will be added in the future. The cancer network is currently funded for two years.

The Essentia Health Community Cancer Research Program has been a national leader in clinical trials research for more than 35 years. Communities within the Essentia Health catchment area have access to state-of-the-art cancer care through participation in National Cancer Institute (NCI) supported clinical trials as part their program. For more information about EHCCRP clinical trials visit: <http://www.cancerhelpessentiahealth.org>



CANCER SCREENING GUIDELINES

Knowing your family history is key and can help determine at what age some screenings should start*

Colon and Rectal Screening

Most people should start at age 50. Ask your doctor when you should start and what test is best for you. You may need to start sooner if you have risk factors such as:

- You are African American
- Someone in your immediate family has had colon cancer

Lung Cancer

You should consider being screened with a low-dose CT scan if you have all three of these risk factors:

- You are 55-77 years old
- You are a current smoker or a former smoker who quit less than 15 years ago
- You have a smoking history of at least 30 pack-years (This means 1 pack a day for 30 years or 2 packs a day for 15 years)

Skin Cancer

Know the melanoma ABCDE's:

- **Asymmetry:** One half is unlike the other
- **Border:** Irregular, scalloped or poorly defined border
- **Color:** Varied from one area to another, shades of tan & brown, black: sometimes white, red or blue
- **Diameter:** Melanoma's are usually greater than 6mm (pencil eraser), but can be smaller
- **Evolving:** A mole or skin lesion that looks different from the rest or is changing shape or color

Breast Cancer Screening

- 40 and older: annual mammogram and clinical breast exam
- Some individuals have a higher risk of developing breast cancer. The ideal screening routine for these women is best determined individually with a physician



Cervical Cancer Screening

- Women age 21 to 29 years with Pap test every 3 years
- Women between 30-65 years, screen with a combination of HPV and Pap test every 5 years
- Women in menopause should report any unexpected bleeding to their doctor

Prostate Cancer

- Starting at age 45, men should talk to a health care provider about the pros and cons of testing so they can decide if testing is the right choice for them
- If you are African American or have a father or brother who had prostate cancer before age 65, you should have this talk with your health care provider starting at age 45

Tips for Reducing Your Cancer Risk

What is known about cancer prevention is still evolving. However, it's well-accepted that your chances of developing cancer are affected by the lifestyle choices you make. So if you're concerned about cancer prevention, take comfort in the fact that some simple lifestyle changes can make a big difference.

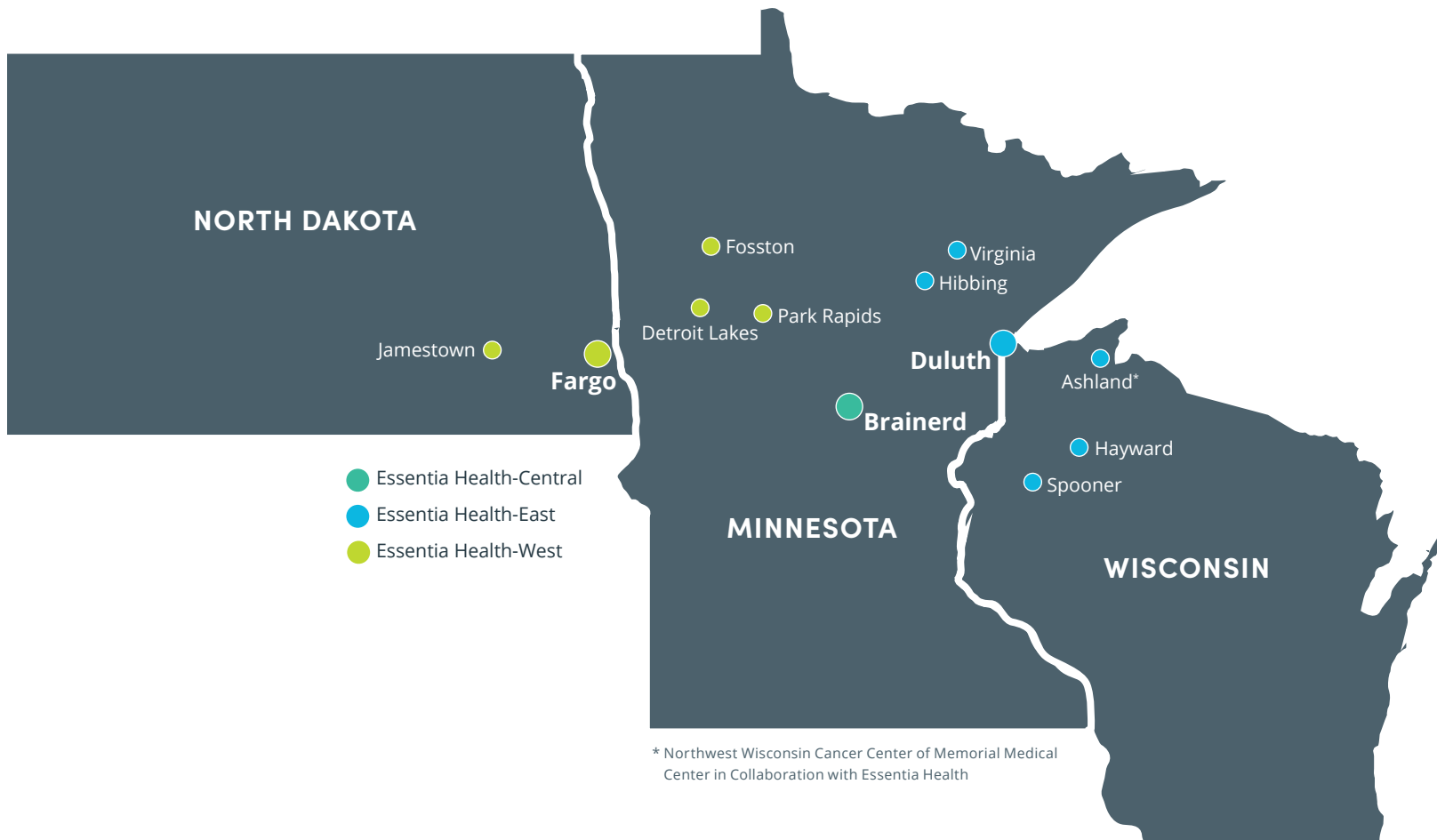
Consider these cancer prevention tips:

- Avoid tobacco
- Eat a healthy diet
- Maintain a healthy weight and be physically active
- Protect yourself from the sun
- Get immunized
- Get regular medical care

CANCER CARE AT ESSENTIA HEALTH

The Essentia Health Cancer Center offers a comprehensive cancer care program throughout Northwestern Wisconsin, Northern Minnesota and Eastern North Dakota. From diagnosis to treatment and after-care, our teams listen to you and offer you personalized, state-of-the-art care.

Our cancer care teams work together across all of Essentia Health on ways to offer additional treatments, services and resources to our patients and their caregivers, such as Psychosocial Distress Screening, Nurse Navigators and the expansion of our clinical trials.





Essentia Health

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