



During fourteen months of breast cancer treatment, Emma E. Houston worked with many Huntsman Cancer Institute (HCI) nurses as she received a combination of surgery, radiation, and chemotherapy. Her opinion about the care she received? “HCI should go around the world training people how to take care of cancer patients,” she says.

After her surgery, Emma spent a week at Huntsman Cancer Hospital. “The nurses were on top of everything my family and I needed,” she says. “They must see a lot of pain and anger in their work, yet through it all they maintain a great attitude.”

The infusion nurses were “lifesavers” in working through difficulties while always keeping Emma’s comfort in mind. “They warmed my arms and gave me blankets during treatments,” she says. But the nurses’ warmth went even deeper.

“I love high-heeled shoes,” Emma says. “Even when I was sick enough that my husband brought me for treatments in a wheelchair, I wore them because they make me feel beautiful. The infusion nurses always noticed—‘I love those shoes’—every time.”

“I know people show up in my life for a reason,” says Emma. “The people at HCI helped me get through the experience of cancer. I could relax and enjoy the benefits of their expertise.”

Nursing and Patient Care

progress

Expert care integrated with the expertise of the entire multidisciplinary team—that’s a key goal of the nurses at Huntsman Cancer Institute (HCI). Whether at bedside or in the clinic, nurses have direct contact with patients throughout the HCI experience. They provide much of the hands-on care a patient receives, assuring that treatments are properly administered, monitoring the patient’s condition, and offering advice on health-related questions. They work with everyone—family members, doctors, social workers, dietitians, pharmacists, even housekeepers—to give each patient a smooth continuum of care.

Many patients receive all their cancer care—diagnosis, treatment, and follow-up—at HCI. A patient may come to the outpatient clinics for screening or tests, then have surgery and, if necessary, an inpatient stay at Huntsman Cancer Hospital (HCH). They may later return to the clinics for radiation treatment, chemotherapy, and checkups.

“Throughout, nurses work diligently to make the patient’s experience of these transitions as seamless as possible,” says Mary Scott, RN, MS,

director of nursing and patient care services at HCI.

That care has helped place HCH in the 99th percentile for patient satisfaction among more than 1,000 hospitals nationwide, according to Ray Lynch, HCH’s executive director.

“What has made us successful in patient care is not only the expert skills of the nurses, but the fact that our staff has immediately at hand what they need to provide the best care,” says Scott. “This was built into the design of the research hospital, but even more, it depends on the excellent support that nurses in all settings receive from the HCH pharmacy and materials management.

“Every aspect of teamwork is crucial to our success. Everybody is integral in our multidisciplinary approach,” she adds.

