and so we FIGHT

TEXAS CHILDREN'S CANCER CENTER®

Texas Children’s Hospital®
Gazing in the mirror
I see a warrior’s face.
Fully clothed in armor
No fear and no disgrace.
A tear it never offers
A smile it always gives
No sadness does it show
But what a life it lives.

Needles going in
As blood is taken out
But still no sign of pain
No cries to make you doubt.
Each day you see this person
And think they’re so brave
Each day you see us laughing
The tears are ours to save.
So when you see our armor
And think we’re calm and mild
Remember this one thing
The warrior is a child.

“The Warrior is a Child”

by Terro Phillips, Texas Children’s Cancer Center patient
At Texas Children’s Cancer Center, we are proud to say we help children fight and defeat cancer every single day. When we opened in 1954, only one in every 10 children with cancer survived. We’ve made considerable progress in improving outcomes for children with cancer since then. Today, more than 80 percent of children who are diagnosed with cancer will successfully fight the battle and be cured. However, the war with cancer will not be over until we have a cure for each and every child who is impacted by this disease.

The good news is, tremendous progress has been made. With powerful new weapons in our arsenal and incredible breakthroughs in technology, immunology and cancer genetics, every day we uncover more information about what causes cancer and how to beat it, because losing even one child to cancer is still too many.

and so we fight
Since the 1950s, Texas Children’s has waged war on childhood cancer. In six decades, we went from having no cures, no specialists and little knowledge about the disease to possessing a staggering amount of knowledge about what causes pediatric cancer and how to treat it.

In the early days, one of the primary difficulties facing researchers and physicians was that there weren’t enough children with the same type of cancer at any one center to perform meaningful clinical trials. To combat this, regional and national cooperative research groups, such as the Children’s Oncology Group, were formed. By pooling resources, adopting common standards and enrolling patients in large enough numbers to develop the necessary anticancer drugs and treatment protocols, the overall pediatric cancer survival rate increased dramatically over just a few decades. This unprecedented story of collaboration is considered one of the greatest feats in modern medicine.

At Texas Children’s Cancer Center, we’re proud of the many contributions our team and our leaders have made over the past 65+ years that have helped push the science — and the survival rates — of pediatric oncology to new heights.

**Dr. Susan Blaney**

Dr. Susan Blaney is director of Texas Children’s Cancer and Hematology Centers and section chief of Hematology/Oncology for BCM. She is also the executive director of the Children’s Oncology Group, a National Cancer Institute (NCI) supported clinical trials group and the world’s largest organization devoted exclusively to pediatric cancer research.

Dr. Blaney is a board-certified pediatric hematologist-oncologist whose career over the past 25 years has focused on the development of new agents and therapeutic strategies for children with recurrent or refractory cancer. She has played a leadership role in the development of numerous clinical trials of novel agents for the treatment of childhood cancer.

Dr. Blaney has served as a mentor to many pediatric medical students, residents, fellows and faculty who are current or developing leaders in the field of pediatric oncology. Her influence in the field also extends to numerous national and local advisory and leadership roles. She has published more than 200 articles in peer-reviewed journals, has authored numerous book chapters, and is a co-editor for the leading textbook in pediatrics, *Rudolph’s Pediatrics*, as well as editor of the leading textbook in pediatric oncology, *Pizzo and Poplack’s Principles and Practice of Pediatric Oncology*.

**Dr. Donald Williams (Will) Parsons**

Dr. Donald Williams (Will) Parsons is deputy director of Texas Children’s Cancer and Hematology Centers. He is a board-certified pediatric hematologist-oncologist who also serves as co-director of the Brain Tumor, Cancer Genetics and Genomics programs and director of the Center for Precision Oncology at Texas Children’s Cancer Center. Dr. Parsons has distinguished himself as one of the country’s leaders in the field of cancer genetics and the use of precision oncology approaches for the diagnosis and treatment of children with high-risk and relapsed cancers.

In addition to conducting innovative translational research in pediatric cancer genetics, Dr. Parsons and his team are making important contributions to the clinical care of childhood cancer patients. He established the Precision Oncology Consultation Service at Texas Children’s Cancer Center to provide recommendations for the use and interpretation of clinical genomic testing for pediatric cancer patients nationwide. He also plays leadership roles within NCI’s toddler and small pediatric brain tumor consortia as well as within the National Cancer Institute’s Scientific Review Board.

**PEDIATRIC CANCER SURVIVAL RATE** in the U.S.

80% in 2020

10% in 1954
Receiving a diagnosis of cancer for a child is one of the worst moments in any parent’s life. There are a million questions that come to mind, a fear of the unknown and many other mixed emotions. Families want to know that their child is being cared for by the best experts in the field and receiving the most advanced therapies available.

At Texas Children’s Cancer Center, we offer every child state-of-the-art treatment, honesty, transparency, compassion and guidance through each step of the journey—based on a wealth of knowledge and experience.

As one of the best pediatric cancer centers in the world, with access to the most innovative treatments, research and clinical trial networks in the world, we’re uniquely equipped to provide this kind of care.

If there’s anything our patients need, we’ll get it for them. It’s all part of our promise to be there, fighting this battle with our patients and their families as if it were our own.

So, to the parents who are in the grips of that unspeakable fear, we can honestly say: “There’s no better place for your child than right here.”

“Nothing can prepare you for the moment you’re told your child has cancer. First comes the longing for survival—then an unspeakable fear. Fear for your child’s future. Fear for their pain and suffering. Fear for your potential future without your child.”

— Laurie DeClaire, mom of patient
46 children and adolescents in the U.S. are diagnosed with cancer daily
16,850 children and adolescents in the U.S. are diagnosed with cancer annually
>40,000 children and adolescents in the U.S. undergo cancer treatment annually
6 is the average age of a child at cancer diagnosis

PREVALENCE BY TYPE

- Leukemia: 30%
- Brain/spinal cord tumors: 26%
- Other pediatric cancers: 17%
- Rhabdomyosarcoma (soft tissue): 3%
- Wilms (kidney) tumors: 5%
- Neuroblastoma (nervous system): 6%
- Lymphoma: 8%
- Other pediatric cancers: 17%
- Retinoblastoma (eye): 2%
- Bone cancers: 3%
- Neuroblastoma (nervous system): 6%
- Wilms (kidney) tumors: 5%
- Other: 46%

CAUSES OF NON-ACCIDENTAL DEATH IN CHILDREN AND ADOLESCENTS

- 22% Cancer
- 12% Congenital Anomalies
- 10% Heart disease
- 6% Respiratory Disease
- 4% Flu/pneumonia
- 46% Other

NAT SDR, 2018
CDC, Cancer
CDC, National Vital Statistics Report, 2018
PREVALENCE BY TYPE

PED paiatric CANcer by the numbers
There is a multidisciplinary approach that brings in a village to take care of the patient and even the family. Taking care of a cancer patient can be complicated, and you have to have all these specialists working together as a team with one singular purpose: caring for your child.”

– Asha Virani, mom of patient
Located in Houston, Texas, at the largest medical center in the world, Texas Children’s Hospital is consistently ranked by U.S. News & World Report as one of the best children’s hospitals in the nation. For over 60 years, Texas Children’s has garnered widespread recognition for its expertise and breakthroughs in pediatric and women’s health. As a regional, national and international referral center, the hospital is equipped to provide the highest level of care to patients with the most complex diagnostic and medical issues.

With more than 970 licensed pediatric beds, 2,000 physicians, 14,000 staff members, 40 pediatric subspecialties and 4.7 million patient encounters annually, it is the largest children’s hospital in the United States.

Texas Children’s Hospital is affiliated with Baylor College of Medicine, one of the top-ranked medical schools in the country.

about Texas Children’s Hospital

“We have the best and the most innovative scientists, clinicians and educators who have brought forward to the clinic countless new treatments and treatment approaches for children with all forms of childhood cancer – even the rarest.”

– Dr. Susan Blaney, Director, Texas Children’s Cancer Center

TEXAS CHILDREN’S CANCER AND HEMATOLOGY CENTERS

by the numbers

Consistently ranked by U.S. News & World Report as one of the best pediatric cancer programs in the U.S.

Approximately 500 new cancer patients diagnosed each year

120 bone marrow transplants yearly

250+ active clinical trials

80% of patients enrolled on clinical trials

95 inpatients per day

Patients from 50 states and 56 countries

1,000+ dedicated staff members
With expertise in every type of pediatric cancer, we have developed a wide array of programs and centers aimed at treating and curing children who come to us for help.

**BRAIN-TUMOR PROGRAM**
Brain tumors cause more childhood cancer deaths than any other pediatric solid tumor. Our researchers are actively investigating ways to improve diagnosis and treatment of these complex, high-grade tumors of the brain and central nervous system. They have developed and characterized the molecular level of the most comprehensive preclinical model of pediatric brain tumors in the world. These models are used to investigate promising new therapeutics, including cellular and other immune-based approaches, with the goal of developing more effective, less toxic treatments for children with brain and spinal cord tumors.

**THE RUSSELL AND GLENDA GORDY CENTER FOR INNOVATIVE THERAPIES**
The Gordy Center is dedicated to the development of innovative new therapeutic approaches for children’s cancers. The Center uses genome sequencing to identify unique molecular abnormalities in children’s cancers to subsequently develop molecular or cell-based immune therapies to specifically target these abnormalities.

**EPIGENETICS PROGRAM**
Childhood cancers are frequently characterized by alterations that change the activity and level of cancer-causing genes; an emerging field called cancer epigenetics. Texas Children’s has one of the largest brain tumor programs in the country, with prestigious and researchers who are nationally and internationally recognized leaders in the field. The program is focused on developing new therapeutic strategies for the treatment of leukemia, including chimeric antigen receptor (CAR) therapies, based on laboratory-based research discoveries. Our program leaders develop and conduct clinical trials of the most promising new treatments for childhood leukemias.

**FAYEZ SAROFIM LYMOPHOMA CENTER**
Although the outcomes for lymphoma have improved tremendously, a subset of patients still suffer, often as a result of tumor drug resistance. As the only program in the country to treat childhood lymphoma and lymphoproliferative disorders, we are the leader in developing new therapeutic approaches to combat the challenges associated with the treatment of these diseases, including multiple myeloma that have shown very promising clinical results.

**THE SKY HIGH KIDS CANCER IMMUNOTHERAPY CENTER**
The Sky High Immunotherapy Center focuses on pre-clinical and clinical research strategies to discover and develop new immunotherapies/approaches for the treatment of the most challenging childhood cancers. These novel approaches, which harness the patient’s own immune system to fight cancer, are specifically developed for the most common pediatric solid tumors and are designed to work in new and unique ways to improve cure rates without long-term side effects.

**LEUKEMIA PROGRAM**
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**BONE TUMOR PROGRAM**
The Bone Tumor Program at Texas Children’s is one of the largest programs in the country. We offer care to children and adolescents with bone tumors, including highly aggressive and difficult-to-treat tumors. Our bone tumor treatment team is second to none worldwide in treating aggressive bone tumors. Our center was one of the first in the country to offer magnetic hyperthermia for young patients with bone tumors, opening the door of this field to research to explore clinically impactful applications.

**LIVER TUMOR CENTER**
As the only dedicated pediatric liver tumor center in the southwest, we have established a team of world-class experts in the treatment of liver tumors that includes prominent researchers and experts in the pathology and biology of liver tumors, surgical oncologists, and radiologists. Our team collaborates with numerous other subspecialties to deliver the best care for children with liver tumors.

**NEUROBLASTOMA PROGRAM**
Advanced neuroblastomas remain one of the most difficult childhood cancers to treat and cure. We offer treatments for all stages of neuroblastoma, including MIBG therapy, which is a targeted radioactive agent. As one of the top referral centers in the country, we have developed novel treatment strategies to help identify those children who can effectively be treated and cured with less intensive therapy. Our team’s annual goal is to increase the 5-year survival rate, improve cure rates and quality of life for children with neuroblastoma.

**RARE TUMORS PROGRAM**
As the largest rare tumor program in the country, we work closely with our pediatric subspecialists in this cutting-edge molecular research to offer the most advanced and personalized care to patients with rare or undiagnosed conditions. Our program provides state-of-the-art diagnostic and comprehensive clinical care to children with bone tumors, soft tissue sarcomas, and undifferentiated pleomorphic sarcomas.

**RETINOBLASTOMA CENTER OF HOUSTON**
Retinoblastoma is a cancer of the eye affecting infants and children. Although it is usually successfully treated, cure may require the loss of one or both eyes. The Retinoblastoma Center, which brings together clinicians and researchers from Texas Children’s Center, MD Anderson Cancer Center, Houston Methodist Hospital, and Baylor College of Medicine, is working to develop new treatments and treatment strategies that can successfully achieve cure without removing the eye.

**SOFT TISSUE SARCOMA PROGRAM**
Soft tissue sarcomas, a rare group of solid tumors diagnosed in children, adolescents and young adults, are very challenging to treat and are rare. Our team of experts is dedicated to providing the best care for patients with soft tissue sarcomas. We also have a national referral center for diagnostics and second opinions.

**THYROID CANCER PROGRAM**
Many thyroid tumors in children and adolescents are rare, yet slightly increasing in incidence. Texas Children’s is one of the few referral centers in the country for patients with rare thyroid tumors. Our team of experts uses a multi-disciplinary approach that includes endocrinologists, surgeons, radiologists, and pathologists to provide the best care for all patients.

**STOMACH TUMOR PROGRAM**
Stomach tumors are very rare. They can be found anywhere in the body. Soft tissue sarcomas, such as gastrointestinal stromal tumors, require complex treatments by a multidisciplinary team that includes oncologists, surgical oncologists, pathologists and precision oncology specialists. Our comprehensive clinical care and state-of-the-art diagnostic tools and techniques is dedicated to offering the best care for children and adolescents with stomach tumors.

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BONE MARROW TRANSPLANT

Hematopoietic Stem Cell Transplant also known as bone marrow transplant, has long been the treatment of choice for relapsed leukemia patients. Its use has now expanded to include children with difficult-to-treat solid tumors, including medulloblastomas and brain tumors. We have been successful in finding donors for almost every patient who needs a stem cell transplant. If a perfect match is unavailable, we are able to perform cord blood transplants or use donors other

LONG-TERM SURVIVOR PROGRAM

Our Long-Term Survivor Program monitors more than 1,800 patients for delayed side effects and complications caused by their previous cancer therapies. Our program is one of only a few pediatric programs in the U.S. to provide care throughout a patient’s entire life. We have also designed and implemented an innovative web-based program, Passport for Care®, that serves nearly 40,000 survivors and their physicians through provision of information on health concerns and recommended screening tests and schedules based on their treatment history.

PALLIATIVE CARE

Pediatric care focuses on alleviating suffering and improving the quality of life for those with life-threatening illnesses. Texas Children’s Hospital is a leader in palliative care, with board-certified pediatric palliative care physicians, nurse practitioners and specialists who address symptoms such as pain, fatigue, nausea, anxiety and depression. Palliative care can be integrated into any phase of treatment and has positive physical and emotional benefits for patients and their families.

CANCER PREVENTION AND SCREENING CLINIC

Our first-of-its-kind clinic focuses on the genetic predisposition to childhood cancer. A comprehensive evaluation, which may include DNA diagnostic studies and screening tests, as well as genetic counseling services, is provided for at-risk families. We follow children who have an increased risk for developing cancer so we can identify tumors sooner, which may allow us to treat with less intensive therapy and ultimately improve quality of life and survival rates. Over time, the data we collect will allow us to better assess the effectiveness of current screening methods and help us compare new tests and technologies as they are developed.

CELL AND GENE THERAPY

Our Cell and Gene Therapy Program helps rapidly translate laboratory discoveries to develop novel cell and gene therapy products. Our faculty are leaders in the discovery and development of CAR-T and natural killer-T (NK-T) cell therapies, which use the patient’s own immune system to kill cancer cells instead of (or in addition to) chemotherapy, radiation and other treatments. Our researchers are also leading cutting-edge translational research studies to understand the role of NK-T cells in tumor immunity and their interactions with the tumor microenvironment. Our research has led to the development of novel strategies to use CAR-T and NK-T cells for many childhood cancers.

DEVELOPMENTAL THERAPEUTICS

Our Developmental Therapeutics Program is internationally renowned in the development of new anticancer drugs with a particular focus on targeted therapies or specific molecules that interfere with cancer cell growth and survival. As such, they work closely with our Precision Oncology team, which evaluates the tumor for genetic mutations so that personalized therapies can be identified. Texas Children’s participates in every major pediatric oncology and pharmacology cooperative group, providing our patients access to cutting-edge therapy for their underlying cancer.

PRECISION ONCOLOGY

Texas Children’s Cancer Center is a leader in the use of precision oncology strategies for the care of children with rare, relapsed, refractory or high-risk cancers—patients with limited treatment options who are most in need of novel therapeutic approaches. Pediatric cancer researchers have learned that each child’s tumor is unique, with different underlying genetic mutations and sequences. Our physician scientists are leading cutting-edge studies to understand how genome sequencing can be used to identify tumor mutations and implement patient-specific treatments to improve outcomes for each childhood cancer patient. We are one of only a few centers in the U.S. with the capacity to analyze patient tumor samples with state-of-the-art genomic sequencing.
advanced technologies

- Advanced bioinformatics facility
- Cell and gene therapy
- Interventional radiology and radiofrequency ablation
- Proton and PET radiation
- Robotic, laparoscopic and MRI-guided surgery
- Tumor, tissue and stem cell banking
- Whole exome DNA and tumor sequencing
- Xenograft production facility

gaining ground

Our size and scope, as well as our depth and breadth of expertise, allow us to offer the best of both worlds, with highly specialized teams focused entirely on one type of pediatric cancer and highly versatile teams capable of treating even the rarest forms of pediatric cancer.

Our physician scientists have pioneered many pediatric cancer treatments. They have developed innovations in hematopoietic stem cell transplants and led local and national clinical trials to identify the optimal drugs, therapies, designs and delivery methods for the treatment of childhood cancers.

They have also led studies to show that less invasive diagnostic procedures and therapies can be used for some patients while more aggressive frontline therapies are required for others. Such studies are vital to minimizing treatment-associated toxicities while simultaneously increasing cure rates.

Today, we’re working relentlessly to create the most effective, least toxic treatments for tomorrow and provide our patients and their families access to all of the newest and most innovative therapies, many of which are only available at Texas Children’s Cancer Center.
In the United States, more than 80 percent of children with cancer survive. Worldwide, the survival is not nearly that high. An estimated 175,000 children under the age of 15 get cancer each year, and more than 100,000 of them will die because they don’t have access to adequate care.

In Sub-Saharan Africa, the childhood cancer mortality rate is estimated to be as high as 90 percent. In some countries, there’s essentially no available care for children with cancer. No diagnosis, no chemotherapy and no palliative measures.

This is due in large part to an inadequate health care infrastructure and a paucity of physicians, nurses and other health care workers trained to provide the complex care childhood cancer patients need.

In 2006, at the request of the Government of Botswana, Texas Children’s Cancer Center sent the first pediatric oncologist to The Princess Marina National Referral Hospital in Gaborone, Botswana. This marked a new era for Texas Children’s Cancer Center and would provide an opportunity to expand across the continent to provide quality pediatric cancer treatment to thousands of children, while training a cadre of local healthcare professionals.

Launched in 2017, as a program of Texas Children’s Hospital and Baylor College of Medicine, and supported by a $50 million foundational investment from Bristol-Myers Squibb Foundation, Global HOPE is a transformational initiative that is improving the diagnosis and treatment of children with cancer and blood diseases in sub-Saharan Africa. Work is already underway in Uganda, Botswana, and Malawi and plans for expansion are underway to other African nations including, Eswatini, Lesotho, Rwanda, and Tanzania.

Since its inception, Global HOPE has treated over 12,000 patients and trained over 4,000 healthcare professionals with remarkable success. Pediatric cancer survival rates have dramatically improved with over 85% of patients surviving the first month. In Uganda, Global HOPE established the first ever Pediatric Cancer Fellowship Program in 2015 to build a critical mass of African pediatric hematology-oncology specialists. Eight clinical fellows have graduated from the fellowship and are all working as trained pediatric hematologists-oncologists (PHO) in sub-Saharan Africa, and an additional 12 PHO fellows are currently enrolled in the program.

“It’s our obligation to take what we do so successfully to the overwhelming number of children around the world who have little or no access to cancer treatment. We are putting our medical boots on the ground and treating children in Sub-Saharan Africa as well as training their health professionals to care for children with cancer.”

— Dr. David Poplack, Director, Texas Children’s Global Hematology-Onco Pediatric Excellence (HOPE)
Children who are battling cancer need every bit of strength and support their families can provide. But parents and family members are also under enormous stress and strain.

Our model of care puts the patient and family at the center of everything we do and surrounds them with the layers of support that they need.

Beyond the physicians and staff who take care of the patient’s medical needs, our care teams are comprised of highly trained specialists who provide for the child’s holistic needs.

Team members include social workers, child life specialists, psychologists, financial counselors, teachers, chaplains and other support staff.

In addition, everything about our facilities, from the layout of our outpatient center to our innovative inpatient care unit, are designed with the patient and family’s comfort, safety and convenience in mind.

“When a child is diagnosed with cancer, the entire family is affected. Our goal is to have a healthy, psychologically strong, optimistic child. We’re truly successful if we can keep the whole family unit that way.”

– Dr. ZoAnn Dreyer, Co-Director, Texas Children’s Long-Term Survivor Program
“Our goal is to make sure children are able to continue being children throughout their cancer journey.”

– Quinn Franklin, Assistant Director, Texas Children’s Cancer Center
Psychosocial Division

At Texas Children’s Cancer Center, we provide comprehensive psychosocial care that targets the social and emotional needs of our patients, their siblings and their families. Once a child receives a cancer diagnosis, the entire family’s stress and anxiety increases to new levels and their lives are forever changed.

Our trained specialists work alongside the medical team to support the patients and their families as they adjust and cope with cancer. The services provided are not only comprehensive but also individualized to meet the child and family’s needs throughout their journey – from diagnosis to survivorship, and for some families through end-of-life.

In addition to the clinical services provided, Texas Children’s Cancer Center offers an extensive array of programming, camps and special events to provide opportunities for play, creativity, self-expression and normalization, as well as memory-making, thus allowing a child to still be a child.

psychosocial support

- Adolescents and Young Adults
- Animal-Assisted Therapy
- Art Therapy
- Arts in Medicine
- Camps and Retreats
- Camps, Patient and Sibling Groups
- Child Life
- Education and Learning
- Grief and Bereavement
- Psychology
- Ronald McDonald House Houston
- Social Work
- Survivors’ Celebrations
our programs

ADOLESCENTS AND YOUNG ADULTS

The Adolescent and Young Adult Program brings teens, young adults and long-term survivors of all diagnoses together to facilitate friendships, provide support, answer questions and talk about their experiences. Throughout the year, participants enjoy a variety of social events, retreats and an annual Celebration of Life.

ARTS IN MEDICINE

The Periwinkle Arts in Medicine Program provides fun and educational children’s art experiences to help patients develop coping skills. These experiences, which occur in both the inpatient and outpatient clinical settings, are often led by visiting community artists. By reducing stress, loneliness and helping patients express their fears and emotions, arts in medicine programs have been shown to improve the patient experience and have a positive impact on health outcomes.

Every year, the artwork and poetry produced by Texas Children’s Cancer and Hematology Centers’ patients and siblings are exhibited and presented in the community by the Periwinkle Foundation. The extraordinary display then travels around the world for the rest of the year, raising awareness and providing unique insight into the inner lives of children touched by cancer and blood disorders.

Purple Songs Can Fly is a unique program for our patients and their siblings that provides a musical outlet for expressing their thoughts and feelings. Children work with professional composers to write and record their own songs in an in-house studio or at the bedside. They are then able to share their music in the form of individual purple CDs that are flown by participating passengers, pilots and astronauts to different places on earth and in space.

CAMPS AND RETREATS

We offer several free camps for all patient families: Camp Periwinkle, a weeklong summer camp for patients and their siblings; Family Camp, a weekend retreat for the whole family; and Camp VOLU, a weekend retreat for teens. With a full medical staff on duty 24 hours a day, children on therapy can continue their treatment while experiencing the joy of family life. We also offer Camp Periwinkle Days, which brings the camp experience to Texas Children’s Cancer Center for the patients who are unable to get away.

CHILD LIFE

Evidence-based research shows that child life specialists can help reduce the stress and anxiety that many children and adolescents experience in hospital and health care settings while simultaneously enhancing their ability to cope with stressful situations. Child life specialists provide age-appropriate therapeutic medical and diversionary play and educate patients about their diagnoses and the medical tests and procedures they will undergo. They partner with parents and members of the child’s treatment team to help improve their overall experience. In addition, as a part of Texas Children’s Precious Play Program, our animal-assisted therapy dog works alongside a child life specialist to provide goal-oriented, therapeutic interventions and emotional support for the patients and families.

RONALD MCDONALD HOUSE HOUSTON

The Ronald McDonald House Houston, a home away from home for families, is located approximately one-half mile from the hospital and has 70 private bedrooms and van transportation to the hospital. Volunteers provide frequent meals and family activities. The House runs a Houston Independent School District school room for patients and school bus transportation for siblings. Additionally, Ronald McDonald Family Rooms are located in Texas Children’s Cancer Center.

SOCIAL WORK

Having a child with cancer can produce an extraordinary strain on a household. Because we want families to be entirely focused on helping their child get better, we do everything we can to help improve and relieve the stress. Social workers assist patients and their families with nonmedical and emotional needs. In addition, social workers can help families locate community resources and address concerns about financial issues, transportation, helping or educational needs. All of our social workers are Licensed Master Social Workers, specially trained to be part of the patient’s treatment team.
At Texas Children’s Cancer Center, we pride ourselves on our extraordinary staff. There’s something in the atmosphere here—whether it’s the bond between patients and staff, the effortless teamwork or the thrill of scientific discovery—that helps us attract the best, brightest and most caring people.

Although our nationally recognized programs and strong culture, vision and leadership have a lot to do with it, ultimately it’s the patients who capture the hearts of our team.

Cancer patients and their families often have close relationships with their care teams that last long after treatment is completed. It’s an honor and privilege to be their partners on this journey, to celebrate their triumphs and to have them show us—day in and day out—the precious value of life.

“This is a very special place to work because of the people who surround us and the passion they bring to their jobs. We have strong and effective leadership whose vision extends across the nation and the globe. Our workplace culture greatly values collaboration, bringing a talented and powerful team together towards our goal of advancing cures.”

— Dr. Rajkumar Venkatramani, Director, Clinical Division, Texas Children’s Cancer Center
As a clinician and educator, I am proud to know that our patients receive the best care possible in one of the best pediatric hospitals in the country. There is no better care available anywhere. I am also proud that we are training the next generation of pediatric oncologists who will continue our mission.”

– Dr. Philip Steuber, Director, Professional Education Division, Texas Children’s Cancer Center
As a teaching hospital, in partnership with Baylor College of Medicine, our mission is to provide world-class training and education for current and future leaders in the field.

We offer the largest accredited fellowship program in the nation, with 24 board-eligible/board-certified pediatricians training to become subspecialists in pediatric hematology-oncology each year.

The large clinical service and advanced research programs at Texas Children’s and Baylor College of Medicine provide uniquely fertile training grounds. With a focus on creating physician leaders in clinical, research and educational settings, the core areas of our program include patient care, medical knowledge, practice-based learning and improvement, interpersonal and communication skills, professionalism and systems-based practice.

Trainees who complete our program acquire an outstanding clinical experience and are firmly grounded in the intricacies of their specialty areas. In addition, fellows receive specialized laboratory or clinical research experience and are trained to become leaders in their field.
Our physician-scientists are working hard to improve the outcome for all our patients and to develop and perfect new treatment approaches that stem from some of their most extraordinary scientific insights and discoveries. Often, therapies for our patients are developed here and many are available only at our center.”

– Dr. Donald Williams (Will) Parsons, Deputy Director, Texas Children’s Cancer Center

Texas Children’s Cancer Center’s treatment mission has always been indistinguishable from its research mission. Because our founders believed it was important for our clinicians to also be elite researchers, we created a four-year fellowship program with three full years dedicated to research, a model that quickly became the national standard.

Later, as Baylor College of Medicine grew into a global powerhouse for genetic research, the Cancer Center seized the opportunity to create a preeminent pediatric cell and gene therapy program by recruiting top researchers like Dr. Malcolm Brenner, a member of the prestigious National Academy of Medicine, and Dr. Helen Heslop, a Doris Duke Distinguished Clinical Scientist who now directs the program, to help lead us into uncharted but promising new territory.

Today, Texas Children’s Cancer Center is at the forefront of pediatric cancer research, with more than 350 researchers in 47 laboratories, total external peer-reviewed funding of approximately $40 million per year and over 250 active clinical trials. We are global leaders in the fields of precision oncology and immunotherapy; we currently have 16 investigational new drug applications with 28 associated studies; and we have one of the most robust early phase clinical trial programs in the world, offering all of the new, targeted therapies for children who have recurrent or difficult-to-treat cancers.

We’re working to improve the outcomes for all children afflicted with cancer, and to develop and perfect new treatment approaches that are the result of the most extraordinary insights and discoveries. The impact of our work has worldwide significance, not just for children today, but for generations to come.
“Thank you for loving our children like they were your own. Thank you for smiling through your tears, because we know you cry for our children too. Thank you for being their biggest advocates and giving them the best treatments you’ve got until the day you stand with us in the lobby and triumphantly ring that big golden bell. Thank you for making us laugh, even on the days when we thought we’d never laugh again.”

– Carrie Richardson, mom of patient

celebrating victory

The ringing of a bell can mean many things, but at Texas Children’s Cancer Center it symbolizes victory. Ringing the end of treatment bell is a huge milestone for patients and their families. The sound of the bell tells the patient ringing it that their journey with treatment is over and that they have conquered it courageously. It also has the ability to bring people together, to celebrate the patient’s success and give hope to others going through the same thing that one day it will be their turn. The end of treatment bell is placed next to a plaque that reads: “Let your strength and courage be felt by all, as this bell’s song fills the hall. For every time we hear this note, another life be filled with hope. Stay strong!”
“Texas Children’s Cancer Center is a national jewel and exemplar of excellence in research, education and clinical care. The work it has done – and which it stands poised to do in the future – has and will continue to change the landscape of childhood cancer – moving it ever closer to a cure for every child.”

– Dr. Philip Pizzo, Stanford University School of Medicine