



## Southwestern Vermont Regional Cancer Center

SOUTHWESTERN VERMONT HEALTH CARE



# world-class medicine close to home

**Cancer patients in outlying communities don't have to drive for hours to clinical trials and family-oriented care.**

**T**ucked in a scenic corner of Vermont lies a state-of-the-art cancer treatment center serving the region's hill towns. Here patients find not only top-drawer technical care, but also the compassion and support they need to manage a challenging disease.

"Our smaller facility allows us to get to know the patient and family better," says Dr. Letha Mills, Medical Director of Southwestern Vermont Regional Cancer Center (SVRCC) in Bennington. "We can establish a much more personal bond."

### Clinical Trials

The only location in southern Vermont participating in National Cancer Institute clinical trials, SVRCC offers conventional treatments as well as the option for qualifying patients to participate in these



Dr. Mills



T. Keefer, LPN

clinical trials. "They are a way to receive exciting new drugs ahead of time," says Theresa Keefer, LPN, CCRP, the Center's Research Program Director.

As an example, she cites a recently completed trial involving chemotherapy with and without the drug Herceptin. Results proved so conclusively that Herceptin decreases the chance of breast cancer recurrence that it became part of the standard of care. Patients who participated in the trial, Theresa notes, "are already ahead of the game. We were using standard of care before everybody else."

### Valuable Partnerships

SVRCC works with leading health centers in the region—Dartmouth-Hitchcock Medical Center, Fletcher Allen Health Care, and Albany Medical Center—which are university-based facilities with healthcare staff, research, and training. "It's important to have these affiliations," Dr. Mills says, "because some classes of care are not available at community hospitals."

SVRCC's radiation oncology and

therapy program works in partnership with Dartmouth-Hitchcock. "This partnership brings that level of care to this area," says SVRCC's Dr. Andrew Young. "The goal of the Dartmouth cancer program is to serve local communities at a more grassroots level, so residents are not burdened by long travel times. For me as the Director of Radiation Oncology, the mission is to be a resource for local communities whenever possible."

For more information about SVRCC's cancer treatment programs or clinical trials, please call Theresa Keefer at **802-440-4252**.

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[www.svhealthcare.org](http://www.svhealthcare.org)

**I**ntensity Modulated Radiation Therapy is a long way of saying "pinpoint accuracy" when it comes to zapping tumors. The technique allows physicians to focus a beam on diseased tissue without harming the healthy tissue nearby. "IMRT is quickly becoming the standard for treating many forms of cancer," says Dr. Young. "Most commonly, IMRT is used to treat prostate, head and neck, brain, breast, and lung. It's currently being developed for other regions, like the pancreas and esophagus."

He notes that IMRT is one of several ways to deliver radiation therapy. All work in conjunction with an arsenal of imaging tools, including MRI, PET, and CT scans. These create, he says, "the most optimized imaging to base our treatment upon."

Such high-tech options are part of SVRCC's commitment to bringing best practices to outlying communities. To schedule a consultation with Dr. Young or to learn more about IMRT, call Southwestern Vermont Regional Cancer Center at **802-447-1836**.

**a better mouse trap:**

**IMRT**

