Construction milestone: Gantry installation begins at Beaumont’s Proton Therapy Center

The 190-foot-long truck carrying the 100-ton gantry arrived on the Royal Oak campus Wednesday, April 27. It came from the Port of Cleveland.

To workers constructing the new Proton Therapy Center at Beaumont Hospital’s Cancer Institute in Royal Oak, Michigan, the arrival of the gantry from Belgium is a “big deal.” How big? About 100 tons. So heavy, it came across the ocean on a ship from Antwerp, and then it was delivered to Royal Oak from the Port of Cleveland on a special 190’, 19-axle tractor-trailer system.

It’s also a big deal for moms like Cindy Davidson of Macomb. Four years ago, her then 6-year-old daughter, Lauren, was diagnosed with brain stem cancer. Little Lauren was referred to Oklahoma City for proton treatments. Cindy and Lauren traveled 2,000 miles roundtrip for a summer of lifesaving therapy. When Beaumont’s center is complete in 2017, people from across Michigan, Ohio and Ontario will have close access to the state’s first single-room proton cancer treatment facility.

Unlike larger, multiroom proton treatment facilities, Beaumont’s smaller, compact, single-room treatment center is more affordable to build and maintain. It will feature state-of-the-art, image-guided technology to treat many cancers with a precise beam of protons.

“Young cancer patients, like Lauren, will benefit from this technology. Proton therapy is effective in treating certain types of pediatric cancers, as well as certain cancers diagnosed in adults,” said Craig Stevens, M.D., Ph.D., chairman, Radiation Oncology, Beaumont Hospital, Grosse Pointe, Royal Oak and Troy. “The Davidsons understand the value of having this technology so close to home.”

While proton therapy is not effective against all cancers, Dr. Stevens explained it is effective in treating solid and localized tumors, including:

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- some pediatric cancers
- soft tissue cancers that develop in bone or muscle
- brain and skull base tumors
- eye tumors
- head/neck cancers
- abdominal/pelvic tumors
- liver tumors
- lung and thoracic cancers
- left-sided breast cancer

“The ability of protons to deposit more energy directly into the tumor makes this an ideal treatment option for many patients, especially those with tumors close to vital organs,” added Dr. Stevens. “For children, those most vulnerable and susceptible to the damage of traditional radiation therapy, proton therapy offers less radiation exposure and fewer side effects.”

Proton therapy is a high-tech alternative to X-ray radiation. A scanning beam of proton radiation with online image guidance offers greater precision to destroy cancerous cells, sparing adjacent healthy tissue and reducing treatment side effects.

“Our center will offer the best technology available for this advanced cancer treatment,” said Dr. Stevens. “We will have the ability to potentially cure patients that have failed conventional treatment at other centers.”

In February 2015, construction began on the $40 million Proton Therapy Center at Beaumont Hospital in Royal Oak. The two-story building is 25,200-square-feet, including a basement. The first floor will house the Proton Therapy Center. This 10,000-square-foot space will include a cyclotron and gantry that produces and delivers proton beams to a single-room treatment area. The first patients will be treated in the spring of 2017. The 8,000-square-foot second floor will be the future home of Beaumont Children’s Pediatric Oncology and Hematology program.

Proton therapy uses high-speed protons to fight cancer by aiming a high-energy ionizing beam at the tumor, destroying its cells. A cyclotron, or particle accelerator, creates protons from hydrogen molecules spun at extremely high speeds. They travel up to two-thirds the speed of light. The proton beam is sent to a treatment room through a transport system consisting of magnets, called the beam line, finally arriving in the gantry. The gantry is a device that rotates around the patient delivering a beam of protons. The beam is directed to the patient through a nozzle that targets the tumor.

Beaumont chose Ion Beam Applications of Belgium, also known as IBA, to manufacture, install and maintain the proton system. An Atlanta-based proton therapy development group, Proton International, is also lending their expertise. Presently, there are 22 active proton therapy centers in the U.S. and about 36 worldwide.

As someone who grew up close to Beaumont, Beth Klein, president of IBA Proton Therapy North America shared; “IBA is particularly pleased to partner with the team at Beaumont Hospital, Royal Oak to provide this powerful new treatment to cancer patients in Michigan and surrounding states. By being the first to provide access to this technology in Southeastern Michigan, Beaumont continues to set itself apart through their commitment to quality of care for their patients.”

“Our IBA ProteusOne single-room treatment system will include precision technologies,” said Dr. Stevens. “Intensity Modulated Proton Therapy, which combines Pencil Beam Scanning and 3-D Cone Beam CT, can target a tumor within less than a millimeter.”

Pencil Beam Scanning refers to the delivery of protons in a thin beam. Like a pencil, the beam uses back and forth motions to target the treatment area – the shape, size and depth. It “paints” a radiation dose on tumors layer by layer.

Radiation oncologists at Beaumont are well versed in precise image guidance, having developed cone beam CT technology almost 20 years ago. It allows doctors to analyze soft tissue and bone contrast to see tumor changes.

Those interested in learning more about the new center and its capabilities can call Beaumont’s Radiation Oncology program at 248-551-8402 or go to www.Beaumont.org/proton-therapy.
Compliance is everyone’s responsibility

The Compliance, Audit and Risk department and our Code of Conduct calls for all Beaumont Health employees to act responsibly and to behave consistent with its requirements. There are several ways employees can ensure compliance while helping improve operations and service to our community.

In addition to reading the Code of Conduct at your compliance training session, employees should regularly review the code and use it as a tool in your daily work life.

Creating a culture of compliance

If employees see something that is against Beaumont policy, you are encouraged to report a compliance or fraud issue through the Beaumont Health Trust Line. The investigation process is conducted fairly and reports can be completely anonymous. If you choose to make an anonymous report, the Compliance department will not receive, nor do you have to provide, your name. The report information is tracked by a case number, which you can use to monitor the investigation of your reported concern.

“We need to get these issues out in the open,” said Dawn Geisert, senior vice president and chief compliance officer. “Beaumont Health does not tolerate retaliation when individuals report concerns or issues, and employees always have the option of remaining anonymous, even if they are reporting incidents in person.”

Practicing compliance every day

We encourage positive relationships with business entities and those people who perform professional and business services for Beaumont Health that benefit our patients and community. Employees should be aware of conflicts of interest and avoid situations in which our personal interests in any way conflict or appear to conflict with the interest of Beaumont, our patients or our mission. The Code of Conduct provides examples of conflict of interest.

Employees should also use caution regarding patients’ personal health information. They should think of PHI as their own information and treat it accordingly. Beaumont has developed a Notice of Privacy Practices that provides patients with important information about their privacy rights with respect to their PHI. It describes our privacy practices.

Everyone should also refresh their compliance understanding during the annual educational modules each year, including the new online training focusing on information security. These modules help employees learn key steps they can take to protect patient information as well as their own personal data.

If you have any questions regarding Compliance, the Code of Conduct or what is expected of you, feel free to contact your supervisor, any member of management, or the Compliance, Audit and Risk department.

Chris Stesney-Ridenour named president of Trenton hospital

Carolyn Wilson, chief operating officer, Beaumont Health, named Christine Stesney-Ridenour as the new president of Beaumont Hospital, Trenton. Chris succeeds Edith Hughes who retired April 1 after a 40-year health care career, including more than 13 years at the Trenton hospital.

Chris joins the Trenton team from Beaumont Hospital, Grosse Pointe, where she has served as vice president and chief operating officer since January 2008. At Grosse Pointe, Chris has been responsible for daily operations including direct reporting responsibility for Cardiovascular Services, Emergency Center, Surgical Services, Trauma and Care Management.

Chris was part of the inaugural administrative team that transitioned the former Bon Secours hospital to Beaumont, Grosse Pointe. She was instrumental in developing the initial five-year strategic and master site plans for the hospital. Her accomplishments include improved market share, patient satisfaction, value-based performance scores and establishing major clinical programs such as Level III trauma, bariatric surgery and emergent angioplasty.

Before joining the Grosse Pointe administrative team, Chris was an administrative director at Beaumont, Royal Oak; an assistant hospital director at Beaumont, Troy; director of Patient Registration at Troy; and administrative director of the Family Medicine Center and residency program at Troy. She first joined Beaumont in 1985 as a department secretary in Family Medicine.

Chris is a fellow of the American College of Health Care Executives. While working full-time at Beaumont, she completed her bachelor’s degree in Business Administration from Walsh College and a master’s degree in Business Administration from the University of Detroit Mercy. 
The Patient’s Voice: Helping caregivers understand their impact

Beaumont Health often shares with employees patient comments from services such as Press Ganey to gain insight about the patient experience and to improve patient care. Beaumont Hospital, Taylor has taken this concept a step further and regularly invites former patients to share their experiences – good and bad – during employee meetings.

The Patient's Voice redesign team worked with the Patient and Family-Centered Care site leads to bring the real voice of a patient to the Patient’s Voice, a weekly employee meeting where leaders share patient satisfaction scores and patient comments with front-line staff.

Recently, Bill Mills from Westland, stopped by to share his experience as a former patient. Last December, he was on the rehabilitation unit.

“Overall, I received excellent care,” Bill said about his two-week stay. “This is your house and your patients are your houseguests. Treat them as your guest and as your friends.”

Bill recommended that caregivers share their goals with the patients so they know what is expected of them. He also suggested that employees be on time and keep their promises to patients, which he felt the employees at Beaumont, Taylor did well.

Opportunity for improvement

In contrast with the excellent care he received during his rehab, Bill was disappointed with the discharge process. He went home with oxygen, an IV and a wound that needed to be regularly treated. While he was receiving help to prepare for his discharge, another employee was giving his wife the discharge instructions and she was overwhelmed with all the information.

“This information was discussed with my wife but not me,” he said. “My wife was concerned she was going to kill me if there was air bubble in my IV line.”

Bill suggested employees go over discharge instructions with patients and family at the same time and make sure everything is clear. Also, he thought it would be better if the discharge instructions were spread out over a couple hours and not given at the same time.

“What you shared with us is really important and we are going to focus on it,” said Lee Ann Odom, president, Beaumont Hospital, Taylor, during the meeting.

Nicole Doxey, manager, Service Excellence/Guest Relations at Beaumont, Taylor, said leaders will share information about the discharge process with staff and they will develop an action plan to implement changes in the process.

Nicole said more former patients are scheduled to speak during the Patient’s Voice meeting. Constructive comments will be shared with staff to help deliver better patient care in the future.

Sharing the patient experience at Beaumont, Troy

Every Wednesday at Beaumont Hospital, Troy, employees, physicians and volunteers gather for inspiring and educational meetings focused on the patient experience. During “Caring Connections,” participants brainstorm ideas, learn of best practices and share wonderful patient stories.

“I truly believe stories are the best way to illustrate the greatest patient experiences, the closest caring connections and the most effective health care communication,” said Nancy Susick, president, Beaumont Hospital, Troy. “We are truly creating an environment where we learn from and inspire each other to be our very best.”
Troy team stuns with Nestled in Nature photo contest

Each year, Beaumont Hospital, Troy hosts a photo contest for team members. Everyone is encouraged to take a photo on campus of the beautiful surroundings at the hospital.

This year did not disappoint.

At right, the first place photo was taken by Tianfu Li, physical therapist. Below is the second-place photo taken by Diane Kolleth, clinical assistant on 5 North.

Get moving: Bwell offers Fitbit discounts

Bwell, your employee wellness program, understands there is value in knowing your personal health habits and is committed to investing in the health of our employees. Many people purchase activity trackers to monitor and improve their health.

This week, Bwell is launching the opportunity for all employees to purchase one Fitbit at a preferred price any time this year. Visit the “Bwell with Fitbit” online storefront for the preferred prices on seven different Fitbit trackers.

In addition, employees can purchase up to two additional Fitbit activity trackers for themselves, friends or family at any time in 2016 for a discounted price. The friends and family discount is on average, 15 percent off of retail cost.

Once you have received your Fitbit, you can join the “Bwell with Fitbit” program. You will receive inspiration and support as you embark on your personal active living journey. Participants will receive health tips, encouraging messages and participate in special contests and challenges throughout the year.

Fitbit trackers may be purchased with a credit or debit card. Visit the Bwell webpage for more information.
Betsy Barone is not a doctor or a nurse. But, she believes she still has the power to make children feel better. Barone is Beaumont Children’s new music therapist.

“It’s the best job ever,” Betsy said.

She sings and plays music to Beaumont Children’s patients every week thanks to new funding provided by Children’s Miracle Network Hospitals.

Beaumont Children’s patient Christian Hill said, “I forgot there was an IV in my arm. I was just so caught up in the music.”

Brian Berman, M.D., pediatrician-in-chief of Beaumont Children’s, added, “There are certain aspects of medicine that are very clear. A child has pneumonia, they need an antibiotic. But, then there are other elements of the healing process which are really not so clear cut, but these are approaches that help create a healing environment.”

When she first approaches parents, many have never heard of music therapy. But, Betsy says, moms and dads soon realize the healing power of music.

Even though it might look like she’s just singing a song, Betsy tailors every note to each patient.

“Rhythmically, we are in the same space. I’m watching their breath and intake and modulating myself down to meet them in that moment. The music is completely individualized in that moment,” Betsy said.

Her music therapy training also helps her pick up on emotional cues to help families relax.

“It’s like they get to take a break from everything that’s going on. For the family unit, it’s really beneficial,” Betsy said.

After the therapy sessions end, many families say they feel like they have had a dose of musical medicine.

Helping patients and families forget they’re in the hospital – even for just a minute – is one of the benefits of providing music therapy.
It’s a good thing Mary Chrusciel likes change.

As she approaches 40 years on the staff at Beaumont Hospital, Trenton, she’s seen plenty. She’s enjoyed three different jobs at a hospital that has changed names five times.

“That’s what I like about these kinds of jobs: if you need a different shift or want a different job, there was always something open,” she said. “You just have to wait for the right thing.”

Mary started in dietary/food service in 1975, fresh out of high school. She became a full-time employee there the following year and stayed for more than a decade. “I really liked that job, I just didn’t feel like I got out to see the patients much,” she said. “We worked like a little assembly line, putting the trays together, but then we sent them up to the floor and the aides passed them out. There wasn’t a lot of interaction with patients.”

When an opening came up in Housekeeping, she took it and soon found herself working on every floor, the operating rooms and talking directly with patients. She said she learned everything she could—and everyone she could—because the hospital, like Trenton itself, was a small community that operated like an extended family. “I didn’t really like it when someone would say to me, ‘Oh, I know a nurse who works there, her name is such-and-such’ and I didn’t know who it was because I was working down in the basement,” she said.

After 19 years in Housekeeping, she said she wanted another change and transferred to X-ray/Imaging. At first, she worked the midnight shift, one-half of a two-person crew responsible for inpatient imaging as well as the cases that came in through the Emergency Center. That was a little more than 10 years ago, but the job has changed dramatically since then. “I’ve enjoyed the change that’s come about in the X-ray department. In a short span of time, we were still doing darkroom, wet films and then we went to cassettes—which we still use for portables—and then we went digital,” Mary said. “It’s so nice: you know if something didn’t turn out right and you can just retake it. Seconds later you have the image again. You don’t have to pack up the image again and go back to the floor and take another picture,” she said. “I’m glad I got to experience it from the very beginning stages of X-ray to now,” she added.

Mary has three children who are all pursuing medical careers. After job shadowing at Trenton, one of her sons went into physical therapy; the other is in medical school. Her daughter is about to start nursing school.

Mary said she has no immediate plans to retire. The job keeps her moving, active and healthy. Besides that, she likes what she’s doing and who she’s working with. “This is more hands-on working with the patients, more than just going in and cleaning rooms,” she said. “I always felt like to the younger people I was a mother figure, to the older people I was a daughter and to the people my age, I was a friend. Working here, it’s just been like one big family.”