



# Reaching into the community to enhance wellness



The mid-Willamette Valley sees at least 247 new diagnoses of invasive breast cancer cases each year.

Kathy Wolfe, breast cancer nurse and survivor, reads with her daughter Sydney. "Sydney is the most amazing part of my life and gives me hope each day," says Wolfe.

Kathy Wolfe vividly remembers how she felt after receiving a diagnosis of Stage 2 breast cancer in 1999—as if her life had changed in an instant and would never be the same.

That's why her role as breast care coordinator for Salem Cancer Institute is so poignant. She has traveled the same journey as her patients, and that opens doors to enhanced communication.

"I know what it's like to feel confused and scared. Having had breast cancer helps me understand patients' needs in a way that only someone who has gone through it can," says Wolfe, who is also a certified breast-care nurse.

As breast care coordinator, she provides information to patients on community and financial resources, answers their questions

about medical and personal care, and listens to their concerns. She also helps patients connect with the hospital's peer navigators, a group of survivors who are trained to support patients of Salem Cancer Institute from diagnosis through recovery.

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—Kathy Wolfe, RN

**Health tip**

Have a friend or family member go with you to doctor appointments to help you capture important information.

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Kathy Wolfe, RN, with Lynette Kirsch, a breast cancer survivor who makes chemo bags full of snacks, games and magazines to keep patients occupied during hours of treatment.

Wolfe makes a special point of reaching out to patients during the initial phase of diagnosis and treatment decisions. She knows that can be the toughest time.

She also knows about the disfiguring effects of breast cancer surgery. Last September, after a routine mammogram, Wolfe learned that she had cancer in her other breast.

While her first treatment plan included a lumpectomy, chemotherapy and radiation, this time she and her doctors chose a mastectomy and Tamoxifen, a drug that helps keep the original breast cancer from returning.

"One of my first reactions was that I would no longer be able to tell my patients I was an 11-

year survivor. I worried that my reality would dampen hope for them," Wolfe says.

In fact, she is still a survivor and continues to be a role model. She understands first-hand that every woman who undergoes a mastectomy must take time to grieve for the changes to her body. Wolfe encourages her patients to lean on family and friends for emotional support.

"I've learned from other women how to handle re-occurrence," Wolfe says. "Having supportive friends and family, and having someone to talk to, listen and hold your hand is as important to recovery as medical care."

Learn more: For more information visit [salemhealth.org](http://salemhealth.org), e-mail [cancer.institute@salemhealth.org](mailto:cancer.institute@salemhealth.org) or call 503-562-4321.

We want your opinion ... and you could win! [salemhealth.org/winawii](http://salemhealth.org/winawii)

## National accreditation recognizes excellent care

Local breast cancer experts receive recognition from a national program

When your focus is on providing advanced, comprehensive care, others take notice. That's why Salem Cancer Institute at Salem Health is now one of only three cancer centers in the state to become a nationally accredited breast center.

The distinction came from the National Accreditation Program for Breast Centers (NAPBC), which recognizes health centers that provide the most efficient and contemporary patient care. The Salem Health Breast Committee, a team of medical professionals who meet monthly to discuss breast cancer issues, was instrumental in receiving the recognition.

"Breast cancer treatment is very much a group effort, and the process of seeking the NAPBC accreditation proved to be a rallying point for our care team," said Beth Dayton, MD, surgeon and chair of the Salem Health Breast Committee.

For patients, receiving care at an accredited center ensures access to state-of-the-art services, a multi-disciplinary approach to coordinated care, and information about clinical trials and new treatment options.

Salem Cancer Institute serves more than 300 breast cancer patients each year from across the mid-Willamette Valley. Oregon has one of the highest breast cancer rates in the nation, and the mid-Willamette Valley sees at least 247 new diagnoses of invasive breast cancer cases each year.

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To raise visibility of Salem Health's many services, stories were chosen to build the reputation for exceptional, award-winning healthcare; while class schedules, articles and recipes encouraged people to use Salem Health's many resources to improve their health and wellness

^ Messenger magazine, produced two times a year, reaches 150,000 homes in Marion, Polk and Yamhill counties in Oregon



**BUSINESS MARKET** The fifth largest hospital system in Oregon  
Primarily those living and working in Marion, Polk and Yamhill counties

## Reaching into each community, raising expectations

### CHALLENGE

For many years Salem Health and Salem Hospital had been perceived as “second best” to Portland healthcare. With growth, new facilities, new partnerships and industry recognition, Salem Health wanted to raise expectations in the communities served. As part of a system-wide brand refresh, the community magazine was reinvented to showcase local stories and services with a focus on wellness.

### STRATEGY

The 24-page magazine incorporated a Community Health calendar; a series of features from a recipe to “Active you”, and three to four lead articles on current topics in each issue. Scheduled for a Spring and Fall issue, *Messenger* told stories of local people and doctors. Readers learned about procedures from bariatric surgery to joint replacement; and departments from the Neonatal Intensive Care Unit to the Heart & Vascular Institute. More than 150,000 copies were distributed in the tri-county area.

### RESULTS

A research study in the second year after re-launch showed positive response. Readership said *Messenger* had a positive effect on their wellness knowledge. The study also showed recipients would prefer to receive the magazine through the mail rather than by Email.

“*Messenger* became a positive embodiment of the new brand, incorporating the brand’s visual elements, but also delivering the warmth, personal touch we wanted through the stories of local people and their health challenges.”

—Jennifer Larsen Morrow  
Account Manager for Salem Health

“Unlike the previous version, these issues focused only on local patients and Salem Health staff. Each issue was planned, designed, written and produced in a collaboration of Salem Health staff and Creative Company.”