

Jay Harness, MD General & Breast Surgeon Principal Investigator, NCCCP

What's the significance of St. Joseph Hospital's National Cancer Center Community Cancer Center Program (NCCCP) designation?

I believe NCCCP provides the template for the future of all cancer care in the U.S. I don't think most people realize what a big deal it is for our hospital to be selected as one of 16 sites in the country, and the only hospital on the West Coast so designated. We're raising the level of care here as well as helping develop a road map for future cancer care. And, I believe funding will follow that road map.

In this country 85 percent of all cancer care is delivered at the community hospital level and only 15 percent at the university level. The reality is that community hospitals around the country are more heterogeneous, not homogeneous like university hospitals. Although to some extent people solve problems in uniquely geographic ways, we need to look at what are the commonalities and how clinical trials can be incorporated

for higher-end care. To fight cancer more effectively and efficiently, people from all corners of the cancer community need to be allies, pooling resources to relieve the cancer burden in our communities. It's too broad and important an issue to confront alone.

Dr. John Niederhuber was a colleague of mine at the University of Michigan and is now the Director of the NCI. The NCCCP is his baby and he came up with the funding for it. He gets it that a united front is more powerful for reducing cancer risk, detecting cancers earlier and improving access and quality of life for cancer survivors.

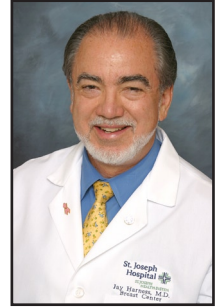
Why was St. Joseph Hospital selected for the NCCCP pilot program?

There are several reasons why we were chosen from more than 50 hospitals nationwide submitting proposals. We're ethnically diverse. Our primary catchment area is 53% Hispanic and 17% Asian, with the rest being Caucasian and other ethnicities. We're committed to excellence, as shown by the development of our new Cancer Center. And, we're committed to all the things the NCI is interested in, such as electronic

medical records, survivorship, biospecimen storage and health disparities.

How big of a commitment is it for you to serve as the SJH NCCCP Principal Investigator?

Half of my time is spent in this role, overseeing committees and work groups and participating in six or more national conference calls each month. The other half is devoted to breast surgery.



Dr. Harness came to St. Joseph Hospital in 2003. He served as Medical Director of the Comprehensive Breast Center until his advancement in 2008 to a more global role at the Center as Principal Investigator for the National Cancer Institute Community Cancer Centers Program (NCCCP). He is also a Clinical Professor of Surgery at UC Irvine. In his spare time, Dr. Harness enjoys sailing. He and two partners own a 30-foot sail boat docked in San Diego Harbor. He has three grown children and three grandchildren.

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A PUBLICATION FROM THE ST. JOSEPH HOSPITAL MEDICAL STAFF OFFICE

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