

Banner MD Anderson Stem Cell Transplant Program Achieves Milestone

GILBERT, Ariz. – Banner MD Anderson Cancer Center recently received FACT (Foundation for the Accreditation of Cellular Therapy) accreditation for autologous stem cell transplants. This type of transplant involves collecting stem cells from the patient to harvest, freeze and store them, in order to give them back to the patient after intensive therapy. Stem cell transplants can be used to treat cancers such as leukemia and lymphoma, and certain hereditary blood disorders, by replacing defective or damaged blood cells with new, normal ones.

This accreditation recognizes the stem cell program at Banner MD Anderson for demonstrating a thorough understanding and compliance in FACT Cellular Therapy Standards. Those standards are defined by the leading experts in the field and are based on the latest knowledge in cellular therapy and transplantation.

The program has “attracted not only physicians experienced in transplant, but nurses, advanced practice professionals, coordinators, and quality personnel who have years of experience,” FACT reviewers wrote in the site inspection. “The program has an impressive facility and has extensive support through the Banner Health system, as well as through their partnership with The University of Texas MD Anderson Cancer Center.”

Tomislav Dragovich, MD, medical oncology and hematology section chief at Banner MD Anderson, said the accreditation “speaks to our ability to successfully deliver the most complex and potentially life-saving treatment for our patients with advanced hematological malignancies. It also highlights the overall quality of care that is delivered at Banner MD Anderson and Banner Gateway Medical Center.”

The process of building the stem cell transplant program was a collaborative effort and initiative from Banner MD Anderson’s hematology and stem cell physicians, advanced practice professionals, nurses and other staff members, as well as campus leaders. This also included support from MD Anderson in Houston, especially its Stem Cell Transplant and Cellular Therapy team led by Dr. Richard Champlin.

Banner MD Anderson Cancer Center, located on the Banner Gateway campus, delivers cancer care to patients in Arizona through the collaboration of Banner Health and MD Anderson. Banner MD Anderson offers focused disease-specific expertise in the medical, radiation, and surgical management of the cancer patient; an evidence-based, multidisciplinary approach to patient care; access to clinical trials and new investigative therapies; state-of-the-art technology for the diagnosis, staging and treatment of all types of cancer; oncology expertise in supportive care services.

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