According to the American Cancer Society, the United States expects to see 1.6 million new cancer cases in 2016, and nearly 600,000 deaths will be caused by cancer. Cancer’s toll is particularly severe in Washington, D.C., where citizens experience significant health disparities and unequal access to care.

The George Washington University aims to turn these numbers around through the GW Cancer Center (GWCC), a new hub for innovative research, clinical care, and advocacy.

The GWCC will bring to bear the collective talents and expertise across medicine, engineering, public health, the sciences, and policy to further innovation in treatment and care. GW’s existing cancer entities—such as the GW Katzen Cancer Research Center, the GW Comprehensive Breast Center, and the GW Cancer Institute—will reside under this new umbrella.

**Leadership**

Eduardo M. Sotomayor, M.D., is a well-funded, world-renowned scientist and administrator with years of leadership experience at the Moffitt Cancer Center and Research Institute in Tampa, Florida. As director of the GWCC, he serves as the chief academic and clinical leader and is responsible for establishing the center’s vision and advancing its scientific goals. His primary area of research is immunobiology and immunotherapy of B-cell malignancies, with an emphasis on the design of novel immunotherapeutic approaches for these diseases.

Edward Seto, Ph.D., an internationally-recognized scientist and leader in the field of cancer epigenetics, spearheads the center’s basic sciences program. Dr. Seto was previously a senior member of the Department of Molecular Oncology at Moffitt Cancer Center and Research Institute and has been continuously funded by the National Cancer Institute (NCI) for the past 20 years.

**Cross-disciplinary Research**

The GWCC has a dedicated floor for cancer research on the eighth floor of the new, state-of-the-art Science and Engineering Hall (SEH). Designed to bring researchers from different fields across the university in a single space, SEH will enable cancer researchers and instructors to work side by side with GW engineers and scientists. The potential for multi-disciplinary collaboration, fostered by this new space, will bring breakthrough innovations in cancer diagnosis and treatment.

**Disease-oriented Multidisciplinary Teams**

- Breast cancer
- Gastrointestinal malignancies (colo-rectal, pancreatic, liver, and stomach)
- Genitourinary malignancies (prostate, kidney, bladder, and testicular)
- Hematologic malignancies (leukemias, lymphomas, myelodisplastic syndromes, myeloma, and stem cell transplant)
- Aerodigestive tumors (head and neck, esophageal, and lung)
- Gynecologic malignancies (ovarian, cervical, and endometrial)
- Initiatives in precision medicine

**Strategic Goals**

**Federal designation**

The GW Cancer Center aims to attain the Comprehensive Cancer Center designation by the NCI within 10 years. Achieving this milestone will mark the GWCC as a research hub of distinction and will allow the center to participate in collaborative research and shared resources programs with other NCI-designated Cancer Centers. Additionally, NCI-designated Cancer Centers have access to NCI grants that support multiple initiatives.

**Policy influence**

The GWCC’s location in the nation’s capital makes it distinctly suited to advocate for policy changes to improve the cancer health care system both in Washington, D.C., and nationally. Working with experts from across the university, the GWCC will affect real change in collaboration with the NCI, federal agencies, patient advocacy groups, and other key stakeholders.

**Community outreach**

The GWCC will enhance cancer-related community outreach programs already in play at the university. In a city with stark health disparities, GW is committed to encouraging cancer prevention and control, and improving access to quality cancer care in Washington, D.C.’s medically underserved communities. The center will also develop initiatives that address cancer within the LGBT community, which carries a disproportionate cancer burden.