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In Brief

Frederick Schnell named to new post of COA medical director

Frederick Schnell was named medical director of the Community Oncology Alliance.

In this newly created position, Schnell will focus on issues related to oncology payment reform.

Schnell was a practicing community oncologist for 34 years, most recently as CEO, at Central Georgia Cancer Care in Macon, GA. He is a clinical assistant professor, Department of Medicine, Mercer University School of Medicine, Macon, GA. and a clinical assistant professor of hematology and oncology at the Winship Cancer Institute, Emory University School of Medicine.

Schnell has been the recipient of the Distinguished Cancer Clinician Award from the Georgia Cancer Coalition. He was a founding physician of COA, and has served as the third COA president, and as a member of the COA Board of Directors for many years.

“This is a crucial time for community oncology,” Schnell said in a statement. “There are obstacles and issues, to be sure, but the future is so much more positive and COA has more resources than at any time in its history.”

Richard Barakat to lead Northwell Health cancer services, research

Northwell Health has appointed Richard Barakat to lead its cancer services and research.

A surgeon and clinical investigator who specializes in robotic and laparoscopic treatment of uterine cancer and radical debulking procedures for ovarian cancer, Barakat will serve as physician-in-chief and director of the Northwell Health Cancer Institute, senior vice president of the health system’s Cancer Service Line, and professor of obstetrics and gynecology at the Donald and Barbara Zucker School of Medicine at Hofstra/Northwell.

He will also work closely with Cold Spring Harbor Laboratory as part of a strategic affiliation with Northwell on future cancer research and treatment collaborations.

He will join Northwell on April 30 after 27 years at Memorial Sloan Kettering Cancer Center, where he served as director and vice chair of MSK’s regional care network and affiliations, and the Ronald O. Perelman Chair in Gynecologic Surgery.

Throughout his career at MSK, Barakat oversaw the care of thousands of patients who were newly diagnosed with gynecologic cancer. He also served as chief of the gynecology service from 2001 to 2013 and was the lead investigator on several influential research projects, including a study to compare the benefits of laparoscopic versus standard surgery for patients with endometrial cancer and an NIH-funded study evaluating risk factors for the development of symptomatic lower-extremity lymphedema in women undergoing radical surgery and lymphadenectomy for gynecologic cancer.

Barakat was a division member and examiner for the American Board of Obstetrics and Gynecology and vice chair of the Cancer Prevention Committee of the Gynecologic Oncology Group for five years.

Barakat was also president of the Society of Gynecologic Oncology from 2013 to 2014 and president of the International Gynecologic Cancer Society from 2014 to 2016.




Denis Guttridge named director of MUSC Darby Children's Research Institute, associate director at Hollings

Denis Guttridge will join the Medical University of South Carolina as director of the Charles P. Darby Children's Research Institute and associate director of translational sciences for the Hollings Cancer Center effective May 1.

Guttridge most recently served as professor of cancer biology and genetics at Ohio State Comprehensive Cancer Center, where he has worked for the past 16 years. There he served as the associate director for basic research and was responsible for the coordination of basic science across the center's research programs.

His job involved fostering and nurturing collaborations at Ohio State and Nationwide Children's Hospital, involving more than 300 cancer researchers and their teams from 12 of the university's colleges.

The Darby Children's Research Institute, which opened in February 2005, is the largest and most comprehensive pediatric research facility in the Carolinas and one of only about 20 in the country.

The seven-story, 121,000 square-foot building houses 150 laboratories with 11 research programs dedicated to discovering the cures for a wide spectrum of conditions affecting kids, including cancer, genetic disorders, and diabetes.

Guttridge's research focuses on both early muscle development and cancer. At OSU, he was the principal investigator for multiple NIH research project grants and an NIH research training grant.

A special area of his research focus is the nuclear factor kappa B family of transcription factors and their role in regulating skeletal muscle differentiation. This research made connections that led to insights in a number of disease conditions where NF-kB activity is chronically elevated.

Guttridge is a scientific leader in the molecular mechanisms of muscle-wasting conditions, including the cancer syndrome called cachexia that is commonly diagnosed in cancer patients and contributes to poor prognosis and a reduced quality of life.

Other research interests include pancreatic cancer that has the highest incidence of cachexia, and childhood illnesses related to skeletal muscle defects including Duchenne muscular dystrophy and a childhood cancer called rhabdomyosarcoma.

In addition to his role in the cancer center at Ohio State University as associate director of basic science, he directed the Center for Muscle Health and Neuromuscular Disorders and led working groups in cancer cachexia and pancreas disease.

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