

News Release

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Greenwich Hospital announces graduates of oncology nursing fellowship program

July 29, 2015 (Greenwich, CT) – [Greenwich Hospital](#) announced the graduation of three nursing students – two from Fairfield University and one from Boston College – from the [Susan D. Flynn Oncology Nursing Fellowship Program](#), first implemented at the hospital last summer.

The program was made possible through the Susan D. Flynn Oncology Nursing Training and Development Fund, established by retired Stamford business executive Frederick C. Flynn Jr. in memory of his late wife, who died of ovarian cancer.

The three students at Greenwich Hospital – Kelly Marra from Boston College, and Emily Kopas and Felicia Staropoli from Fairfield University – were among 26 oncology nursing Flynn fellows at ten leading hospitals around the country this summer and were the first class to graduate in 2015.

Flynn's fellowship program grew out of his experience with Greenwich Hospital's Palliative Care Program in April 2013, when his wife was in the final stages of her courageous three-year battle with ovarian cancer. Profoundly moved by the compassionate care she received from medical director Donna Coletti, MD and the palliative care nursing team, Flynn launched a matching gift campaign and raised \$125,000 in support of the Palliative Care Program. Flynn then expanded the fund's mission to include creating a comprehensive fellowship program to help develop the next generation of oncology nurses. Greenwich Hospital served as the initial "pilot" program.

During the eight-week program at Greenwich Hospital, the three nursing fellows shadowed seasoned nurses, becoming integral hands-on members of the cancer care teams in the Operating Room, Radiation, Chemotherapy Infusion, the Cancer Registry and Oncology Research. They also worked with nurse navigators and the Quality and Safety team.

"Our hope is that this fellowship provided these three vibrant, energetic young women with a unique exposure to the field of oncology nursing that will inform and guide them as they build

their own nursing careers,” said Maria Marini, RN, program director, Oncology.

During the graduation ceremony, each student presented an evidence-based research project. Felicia Staropoli spoke about bereavement care and created a resource guide for families. “Children are often overlooked in grief,” she said, “and can develop behavioral issues without appropriate support.”

Kelly Marra focused on pain management for end-of-life patients, including the options and obstacles faced with the use of opioids. Emily Kopas discussed cancer survivorship and rehabilitation, noting that patients are survivors from the day of diagnosis and need to be encouraged to start rehabilitation immediately and continue through treatment and beyond.

Addressing the nursing fellows, Flynn said, “You are an extraordinarily talented group of students who are a credit to your families and to your nursing schools. You are going to make outstanding oncology nurses. Thanks to the wonderful staff and enthusiastic program mentors at Greenwich Hospital you are well equipped to provide excellent quality of care to your future patients and their families.”

Photo caption: Members of Greenwich Hospital cancer care teams joined oncology fellowship program sponsor Frederick C. Flynn, Jr. (seated center) at a celebration for graduating fellows Kelly Marra (seated, left of Flynn) and (seated, right of Flynn) Felicia Staropoli and Emily Kopas.

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Greenwich Hospital is a member of Yale New Haven Health System (YNHHS). Greenwich is a 206-bed (includes 32 isolettes) community hospital serving lower Fairfield County, Connecticut and Westchester County, New York. It is a major academic affiliate of Yale School of Medicine. Since opening in 1903, Greenwich Hospital has evolved into a progressive medical center and teaching institution representing all medical specialties and offering a wide range of medical, surgical, diagnostic and wellness programs. Greenwich Hospital is recognized throughout the healthcare industry as a leader in service excellence and patient satisfaction. www.greenwichhospital.org