

News of the Center

Bioinformatics

Over the past decade, the use of informatics in facilitating, managing and expanding the possibilities of cancer research has evolved dramatically. The National Cancer Institute (NCI) has launched a multi-year, multi-million dollar initiative, entitled the Cancer Bioinformatics Information Grid (caBIG), which will enable cancer research organizations to aggregate data and results, further leveraging the power of information gleaned from NCI-funded projects.

UCLA's Jonsson Comprehensive Cancer Center is very fortunate to have a faculty member who has conceived a vision for informatics. Dr. Arash Naeim and his associate, Courtney Martin, have assembled a dynamic team of individuals with informatics expertise to develop robust systems that harness the power of data for hypothesis generation and analysis. Naeim has taken the lead in implementing an informatics resource to facilitate the research of cancer center members.

This informatics core will develop and support informatics applications and shared resources for cancer center investigators. Many cancer center programs have projects that require complex information systems, including clinical trials data management, tissue and specimen tracking, related clinical and patient follow-up information, metadata management and analysis, and high volume research data from proteomics, genomics, flow cytometry and micro-arrays.

The core also plans to deploy and maintain data systems that will support the translational research goals of the cancer center. In addition, the core will support many key administrative and



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operational functions of the cancer center by providing data to fulfill the NCI's reporting requirements. The core will develop data systems that span a range of users, from individual investigators to cancer center research programs to the cancer center as a whole. Informatics will work with researchers, cancer center administration and other core shared resources to fulfill its goals.

The goal of the informatics core over the next three to five years will be to establish a data-warehousing system that will allow the integration of various types of clinical and research data. The core also will enable researchers to share their data while securing and protecting the rights to their findings. These ambitious goals will require close collaboration and cooperation with the David Geffen School of Medicine and the UCLA hospital enterprise to ensure that proper policies are in place to protect patient privacy rights, follow U.S. Food & Drug Administration regulations, and preserve the intellectual property of our cancer center members. *

Services include:

- * Manage, customize and deploy third-party software.
- * Design and implement database models.
- * Design and implement user interfaces.
- * Maintain databases and associated web sites.
- * Custom data services involving specific programming expertise.

Jonsson Cancer Center Best in California – Again!

UCLA's Jonsson Comprehensive Cancer Center ranks as the best cancer center in California for the eighth consecutive year, according to a **U.S. News & World Report** survey of board-certified physicians from across the country. The survey reviewed patient outcomes, the cancer center's reputation among physicians, mortality rates and other care-related factors.



The ranking was included in the magazine's July 25, 2007 annual guide to America's best hospitals. The centers that rank highest in the survey often are those that treat the sickest patients and focus on translational research, according to a statement from the magazine.

UCLA's Jonsson Cancer Center is one of five California cancer centers named among the top 50 nationwide this year, and is the only one to make the top 10.

Judith C. Gasson, Jonsson Cancer Center director and a professor of medicine and biological chemistry, said the U.S. News ranking reflects innovative basic and clinical research and the outstanding medical care available to patients with cancer at UCLA.

"The Jonsson Cancer Center has established an international reputation for developing new cancer therapies and providing leading-edge experimental treatments," Gasson said. "Our renowned oncologists are committed to delivering the best in patient care. We are gratified by this recognition from our colleagues and are delighted to be ranked the best cancer center in California for the eighth year in a row."

Overall, UCLA's Jonsson Cancer Center ranked eighth in the nation. Of the four other California cancer centers listed in the top 50, Stanford Hospital and Clinics ranked 13th, the University of California, San Francisco Medical Center ranked 14th, City of Hope National Medical Center in Duarte ranked 30th, and the University of California, San Diego Medical Center ranked 39th. The rankings are listed on the **U.S. News** web site at www.usnews.com.