

Dr. Mike Cruz, Chief Operating Officer – OSF HealthCare

Tell me a little bit about this collaboration.

A lot of times partnerships in the business sense imply some kind of an acquisition or merger. This partnership is really about how do we do excellent clinical work together. So radiologically, medical oncology, surgically, all around oncology. And so doing this together with established partners, both OSF HealthCare and Illinois CancerCare is a great opportunity to do this excellently over a large region, because both of us cover significant parts of central Illinois. :31

These are two independent entities collaborating.

OSF HealthCare and Illinois CancerCare are going to continue to conduct their business as they have previously. This is not an acquisition. It's not a merger with OSF and Illinois CancerCare. So they'll completely, as business entities, continue to operate such fashion. :19

What does this mean for the patient going through their cancer journey?

Sometimes the patient and family experience during the cancer journey is really an awful thing they've received. So how do we do that together, better? So think about the navigation, in addition, all the front end work, the detection, the prevention, the education, and then we navigate them over time, and we keep them. There's 20 million survivors now, there used to be 2 million survivors in 1990. So all these patients we still need to connect with them. :30

OSF and Illinois CancerCare have been collaborating for years.

We've known them for years and they've done great care here at OSF for many years and in multiple communities that we are connected in. So up to I-80, east on I-74, west on I-74, even into the Ottawa area and north of that region. So they're in a lot of different places. So our footprints actually match up pretty well. :24

This will strengthen research opportunities.

Oncology, like a lot of other fields when you think about precision medicine, and personalized medicine with access to the genetic and phenotypic markers of patients. We have a tremendous opportunity with other researchers and academics that we're doing work with today. And so partnering with Illinois CancerCare, and those clinicians who have been doing a lot of research in the clinical trials sphere, is really going to be able to actually multiply that. So we need their expertise. We're going to combine that with OSF healthcare and with other large academic partners to really bring better services and opportunities for patients who might not been aware of what they might have available to them. :45