After nearly a decade of ongoing preparation, The University of Kansas Cancer Center has received National Cancer Institute, or NCI, cancer center designation, fulfilling the top research priority set by the university in 2005.

“We are extremely proud of what this designation means – and what it will mean to the people of Kansas and our region who deserve this level of care,” said Roy Jensen, MD, director of the cancer center. “With NCI designation, we have now been recognized as one of the best cancer centers in the country.”

The cancer center joins an elite club – just 67 cancer centers throughout the United States are NCI designated. NCI designation will allow the cancer center to continue recruiting top researchers, apply for federal funding and open more clinical trials only available to NCI-designated centers. The cancer center will be able to expand benefits to members of the Midwest Cancer Alliance, which brings regional cancer research, care and support professionals together. Designation will also allow the center to build new business opportunities and provide even better access to research.

“It’s taken years, the financial support of an entire community and the work of literally hundreds of people. But the announcement that the cancer center has received NCI designation really comes down to one thing: Hope in the fight against cancer.”

“I look forward to working with our regional partners to enhance the quality and delivery of cancer care at every level,” said Jensen. “Thank you to all university and hospital staff, donors, legislators and our community for the phenomenal outpouring of support toward this effort.”

**Good company**

By attaining NCI designation, the cancer center joins an elite group. Just 67 institutions have achieved the prestigious designation, which includes some of the best-known cancer research centers in the world. Among them are:

- The University of Texas MD Anderson Cancer Center in Houston, Texas
- Mayo Clinic Cancer Center in Rochester, Minn.
- Memorial Sloan-Kettering Cancer Center in New York, N.Y.
- The University of Kansas Medical Center

**What it means for our patients**

Here’s what NCI designation means for our patients and staff:

- **Access to more clinical trials:**
  - NCI designation will not only provide funding for clinical trials, it will also speed up the process of moving new discoveries made here into the trial phase.
- **Individualized care:**
  - NCI emphasizes interdisciplinary care and evidence-based standards, meaning patients here will get even more specialized care.
- **Greater resources for research:**
  - Grant money will help expand our capacity to conduct cancer research.

**How we got here**

The announcement that The University of Kansas Cancer Center has been selected to receive National Cancer Institute designation is an event decades in the making. Here is a look at the events that led to this historic news:

**Early 1970s:** NCI awards the University of Kansas Medical Center funding to investigate the feasibility of establishing a clinical cancer research center in Kansas. By the 1990s, The University of Kansas Cancer Center is experiencing steady growth in funding and discoveries.

**2002:** The medical center formally begins exploring attaining NCI designation.

**2004:** With funding from the Kansas Masonic Foundation, the cancer center hires Roy Jensen, MD, as its first full-time director. A nationally recognized breast cancer researcher, Jensen begins implementing a vision of becoming an NCI-designated cancer center.

**2005:** The university names attaining NCI designation its top research priority.

**2006-present:** The cancer center begins taking active steps to make itself one of the top cancer research organizations in the country. These include:

- Hiring 17 new cancer researchers
- Expanding our cancer research facilities, including the 82,400-square-foot KU Clinical Research Center and the 170,000-square-foot Kansas Masonic Cancer Research Institute
- Developing new areas of expertise in translational research, clinical trials, basic science, prevention and control
- Establishing the medical center’s Cancer Biology Department
- Forming collaborative partnerships with the Stowers Institute, the Leukemia and Lymphoma Society, NCI and Midwest Cancer Alliance, among others.

**Sept. 2011:** The university submits its application for NCI designation, a 700-plus page document.

**Feb. 2012:** A panel of 24 NCI reviewers come to the cancer center for the site visit.

**July 2012:** The cancer center receives word that it has been designated as an NCI cancer center.
The University of Kansas Cancer Center receives National Cancer Institute designation

After nearly a decade of ongoing preparation, The University of Kansas Cancer Center has received National Cancer Institute, or NCI, cancer center designation, fulfilling the top research priority set by the university in 2005.

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“NCI designation is an amazing achievement that has required the collaboration of an entire community,” said Bob Page, hospital president and CEO. “This milestone will yield benefits to cancer patients throughout the region for years to come.”

Here’s what NCI designation means for our patients and staff:

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