

NKBCI NEWSLETTER



AMERICAN UNIVERSITY of BEIRUT MEDICAL CENTER
المركز الطبي في الجامعة الأميركية في بيروت

Our lives are dedicated to yours



NAEF K. BASILE
CANCER INSTITUTE

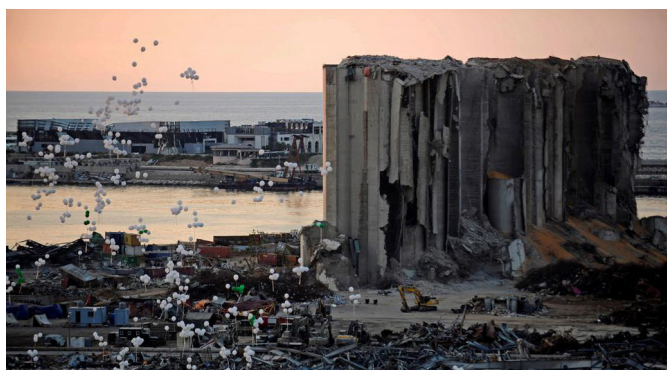
AMERICAN UNIVERSITY OF BEIRUT

معهد نافع ك. باسيل للسرطان في الجامعة الأميركية في بيروت

WORD OF THE DIRECTOR, BEIRUT BLAST

On Tuesday, August 4, at 6:08 p.m., the city of Beirut was ripped by an explosion whose severity is compared to the size of an atomic bomb or even a detrimental earthquake.

Today, the people of Lebanon are in the grip of multi-faceted challenges that include a devastating economic crisis, which is further complicated by a persistent COVID-19 outbreak. The NKBCI administration would like to express solidarity with all faculty, staff, and their beloved-ones who were impacted by this terrible explosion. We all stand with you in solidarity as you recover and overcome the challenges forced upon you during this humanitarian crisis.



KHCC DONATIONS

In a very generous initiative, the King Hussein Cancer Center (KHCC) donated the Naef K. Basile Cancer Institute at the American University of Beirut Medical Center a medical donation (with a value of 100,000 Jordanian Dinar) to support adequate treatment for underprivileged patients suffering from cancer in Lebanon. Donations of medications will bridge some of the gaps of the unprecedented public health crisis Lebanon is passing through.

The Naef K. Basile Cancer Institute, represented by Dr. Ali Taher, would like to thank Ghida Talal- Chairperson of King Hussein Cancer Foundation for this generous contribution which is channeled towards upgrading the medical capacity of the Center by extending aid to cancer patients who are unable to cover the cost of cancer treatment.

Donations: King
Hussein Cancer
Center (KHCC)



RINGING THE HOPE BELL TO SPREAD JOY AND HOPE TO CANCER PATIENTS

"It is especially in challenging times such as this that we most appreciate people like Randa Armoush and Hadi Darwish," said Dr. Hazem Assi, director for Specialty Clinics and Clinical Services for the Naef K. Basile Cancer Institute (NKBCI).

Assi explained that he met Armoush when she came to his clinic for oncology treatment. After finalizing a treatment plan, she went abroad for treatment where she became familiar with the "Hope Bell" – a bell that cancer patients ring after they have successfully completed treatment for cancer. When she returned to Beirut, Armoush discussed the idea with Assi, who had become familiar with the Hope Bell when he lived in Canada. As a doctor, he understood how important it was to cancer patients to receive encouragement during their recovery journey. Assi was grateful to Armoush for her efforts to follow up and establish a Hope Bell at NKBCI.

During a ceremony to inaugurate the Hope Bell on August 3, NKBCI Director Dr. Ali Taher spoke about how important it was that patients receive comprehensive patient support – medical, financial, emotional, and psychosocial. He spoke also about the support that Armoush and her husband, Hadi Darwish, had already provided for NKBCI. "They have been strong supporters of NKBCI and also the Cancer Support Fund that provides financial assistance for cancer patients who would not otherwise be able to afford treatment," he explained. "With the Hope Bell, they are tending to the emotional and psychological needs of patients and their families as well."

In her remarks, Armoush explained that the idea of the Hope Bell began with a cancer patient who was a rear admiral in the US Navy. It is a custom in the US Navy to ring a bell when a task has been completed, so when this admiral completed radiation therapy treatment, he rang a bell to mark the occasion. The idea caught on. Armoush said that even during the worst times of her treatment, the sound of other patients ringing the bell always lifted her spirits. It was this experience that led her to want to do something at NKBCI so that other cancer patients could also "share the joy."

Armoush rang the Hope Bell at the end of the ceremony, uncovering the dedication plaque for which she chose the quote: "He who is sick of pain, is blessed with hope."



ANNUAL GRADUATION CEREMONY

Even during the COVID-19 pandemic, the Naef K. Basile Cancer Institute found a way to honor its 2020 graduating class of three young physicians headed to healthcare's frontlines.

On the afternoon of June 11, 2020, a small commencement ceremony was held in Daniel ACC main lobby gathering NKBCI physicians, fellows, residents and administrative staff.

In a very delightful atmosphere that adhered to the needed safety precautions, NKBCI physicians recognized the three graduates for their outstanding academic and clinical performance in hopes of ensuring them a brighter future in their plans. Afterwards, the graduates received their completion trophies.

1. Dr. Yolla Haibe was accepted for a Clinical Associate position in the Division of Hematology-Oncology
2. Dr. Rola El Sayed was accepted for a Clinical Associate at AUB Global Health Institute
3. Dr. Paul Ramia was accepted by Mc Gill University for an advanced training in Radiation Oncology



In view of the above, Dr. Nagi El Saghir wrote a message of Thanks and Encouragement to Hematology Oncology Graduates Published by the American Society of Clinical Oncology Magazine, ASCO Connection, July 2020.

CSF FORECASTING AT MZAAR SUMMER FESTIVAL

The Cancer Support Fund (CSF) participated in this year's Mzaar Summer Festival, that was held from July 16 till August 18, 2020 in Faqra.

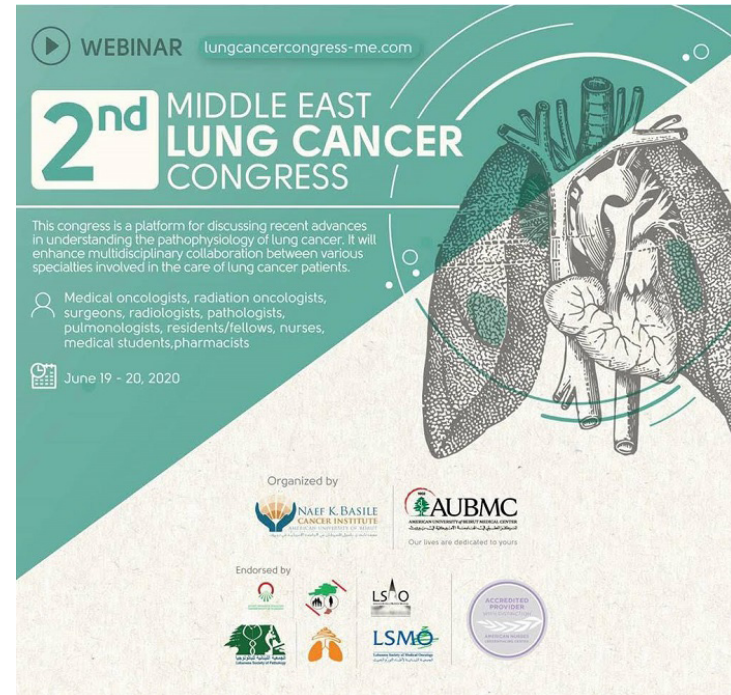
CSF displayed special branded handmade hats, designed especially for the event with all proceeds going to the treatment of cancer patients at NKBCI.

Thanks to all CSF supporters who enjoyed Mzaar Summer Festival this year and visited the stand!



SECOND MIDDLE EAST LUNG CANCER CONFERENCE

The Naef K Basile Cancer Institute at the American University of Beirut Medical Center held its Second Middle East Lung Cancer Congress, the first virtual congress in an annual series. This unique congress focused on lung cancer from all aspects in a holistic approach. The congress bridges the gap between different disciplines and shares all aspects of treating a patient. This year the congress was delivered entirely online on June 19 and 20, 2020. The opening ceremony was led by AUB President, Dr. Fadlo R. Khuri, Dr. Ghazi Zaatar, Interim Dean of the Faculty of Medicine, Director of the Naef K. Basile Cancer Institute (NKBCI), Dr. Ali Taher, and Director of Research at NKBCI and Activity Director, Dr. Arafat Tfayli.



In his opening speech, Dr. Fadlo Khuri said, "This Lung Cancer Congress is unique in that it brings together multiple specialties involved in the care of lung cancer patients. This holistic approach is our best hope at combatting the scourge of lung cancer." Dr. Ghazi Zaatar said, "Our medical knowledge on the cell biology of lung cancer continues to increase thus offering better opportunity for more effective therapy and improved outcome...What makes this topic of much greater importance is the fact that it is a preventable disease in the large majority of patients." Dr. Ali Taher said: "NKBCI thrives to offer all its patients a holistic care through its renowned specialized faculty and its established subspecialized multidisciplinary programs that cover patient recovery journey from all ends such as psycho-oncology, cardio-oncology, onco-fertility, as well as palliative and supportive care programs all in the aim to ensure the best quality of life for our patients."

Patients also took part in the conference and shared testimonials to reflect their experience and recovery journey from lung cancer and communicate a message on the importance of reducing smoking. Dr. Tfayli explained: "It is a very exciting time to take care of lung cancer patients. Treatment options are evolving so rapidly. In May 2020 only, there were 7 new FDA approvals for lung cancer specifically." Dr. Tfayli also stressed the importance of implementing law 174 that bans indoor smoking. He raised the issue of the Lebanese Ministry of Tourism allowing smoking of Narjileh in restaurants. He then thanked all contributors who helped organize and conduct this congress. Organizing the Second Middle East Lung Cancer Congress is part of the mission of the NKBCI at AUBMC to reduce the burden of cancer in Lebanon and the region through the application of state-of-the-art medical knowledge and technology and the development of integrated and advanced programs in patient care, research, education, and prevention. It is important to continue to call for action for smoking cessation, screening for lung cancer while keeping up with all updates in terms of innovative treatment modalities that can help increase survivorship of lung cancer patients.



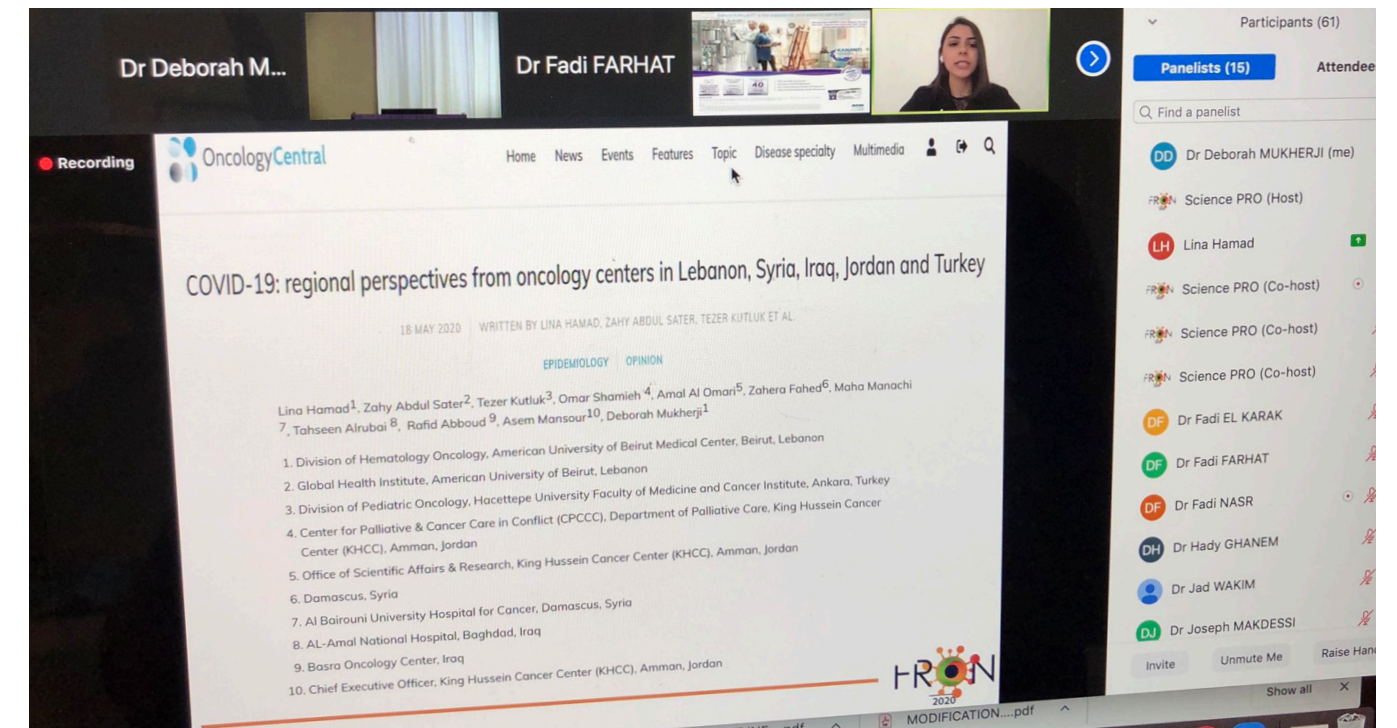
Dr. Tfayli

AUBMC PARTICIPATING IN FRON

NKBCI faculty participated in the 7^{ème} Forum de Recherche en Oncologie (FRON) - COVID-19 et Cancer which took place on the 12 of September 2020. Dr. Hazem Assi and Dr. Deborah Mukherji participated as members of the jury organized by the Department of Hematology Oncology at Hotel Dieu de France, Faculty of Medicine USJ.

The conference joined medical students and junior physicians from several institutions in Lebanon and France who discussed COVID-19 and cancer. 15 different abstracts were presented in this conference, where Ms. Lina Hamad, MED3 student at AUBMC was awarded the first prize for her presentation entitled: COVID-19: Regional Perspectives from Oncology Centers in Lebanon, Syria, Iraq, Jordan and Turkey.

Congratulations to Lina Hamad!!!



AWARENESS VIDEOS

On the World Chronic Myeloid Leukemia Day, the Communication Office at AUBMC featured Dr. Jean El Cheikh in an interactive conversation with the audience of the online platforms to talk about his recommendations to CML patients and answer questions about the disease within the current Covid-19 pandemic.

Following the grips of COVID-19, unprecedented public health crisis for almost all of 2020, the Communication Office at AUBMC featured Dr. Arafat Tfayli, Lung Cancer specialist, in a live interview to talk about his suggestions and precautionary recommendations in relation to COVID-19 and lung cancer patients in an aim to decrease the high burden of severity during this pandemic.



CONGRATULATIONS TO DR. ALI SHAMSEDDINE (ESCO AWARD)

On July 15, 2020 the College of the European School of Oncology – ESCO awarded Dr. Ali Shamseddine an honorary faculty member for the year 2020 as a symbol of appreciation to his time, experience, knowledge and dedication to ESO's core motto 'Learning to Care'. ESCO is an extension of ESO, in which it organizes all ESO activities into a structured educational pathway to guide aspiring medical, radiation and surgical oncologists through their careers.



CONGRATULATIONS TO DR. JEAN EL CHEIKH!!!

The Basile Family would like to congratulate Dr. Jean El Cheikh and Mrs. Rita Rashed El Cheikh for the arrival of their newborn Baby "Alina El Cheikh".

Associate Editor for the Board of Hematologic Malignancies - Frontiers in Oncology

Dr. Jean El Cheikh to be named by the Editorial Office of Frontiers in Oncology as an Associate Editor for the Board of Hematologic Malignancies (specialty section of **Frontiers in Oncology**).

The specialty sections of Frontiers in Oncology review articles related to: Clinical Trial, Correction, Editorial, Hypothesis and Theory, Methods, Mini Review, Opinion, Original Research, Perspective, Review, Specialty Grand Challenge, Systematic Review, Technology and Code, Brief Research Report, Case Report, Data Report, General Commentary and Classification.

The NKBCI Family would like to offer Dr. Jean El Cheikh the sincere congratulations upon his assumption of this new appointment as it raised the bar of the NKBCI family to a new scientific level.



CONGRATULATIONS TO DR. YOUSSEF ZEIDAN!!!

The Department of Radiation Oncology and the Naef K. Basile Cancer Institute extend their Congratulations to Dr. Youssef Zeidan, for being promoted to Tenured Associate Professor of Radiation Oncology. Hired in 2016 as an Assistant Professor of Clinical Medicine, he has an MD/Ph. D. from the Medical University of South Carolina in 2009. Along with several other co-investigators, Dr. Zeidan authored more than 30 peer-reviewed publications in the field. His work was recognized by several grants and awards from the radiological society of North America (RSNA) and the American Society for Radiation Oncology (ASTRO).



CONGRATULATIONS TO DR. SALLY TEMRAZ!!!

The Hematology Oncology Division and the Naef K. Basile Cancer Institute extend their congratulations to **Dr. Sally Temraz**, who was promoted to the rank of Associate Professor of Clinical Medicine-Hematology Oncology, effective September 2020. Dr. Temraz joined AUBMC since 2012 as an Instructor of Clinical Medicine. Her main interests and subspecialty is in gastro-intestinal and genitourinary oncology as well as thrombosis in cancer patients. She has more than 50 publications in peer reviewed medical journals and is actively involved in teaching medical students in the medical school. She also participated in establishing the national guidelines for the management for gastro-intestinal malignancies that was adopted by the Lebanese Ministry of Public Health

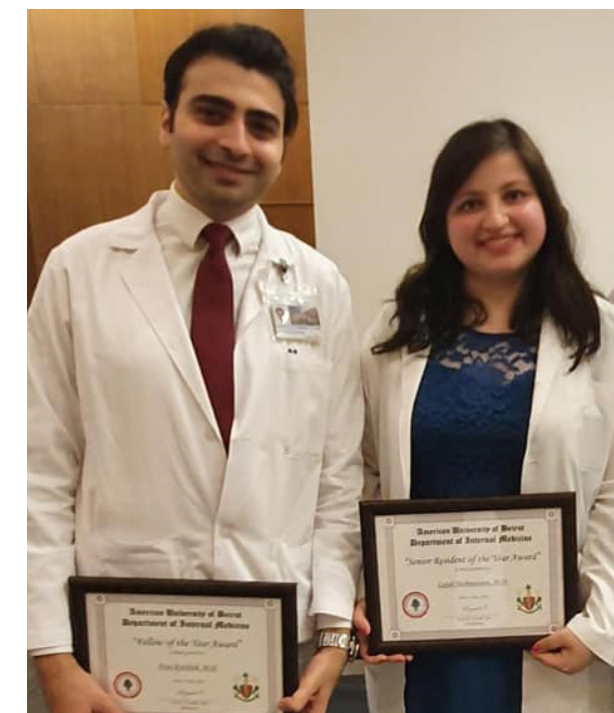


CONGRATULATIONS TO DR. FIRAS KREIDIEH AND DR. LAYAL AL MAHMASANI

As the 2019- 2020 challenging year ends, the Faculty of Medicine recognized best senior resident and best fellow of the year for their outstanding care based on the high ratings from residents and medical team. This year the annual award for an exceptional recognition as best senior resident and best fellow of the year went to:

- Dr. Layal Mahmassani, Hematology Oncology Fellow (1st Year) voted as Best Senior Resident of the year
- Dr. Firas Kreidieh, Hematology Oncology Fellow (2nd Year) voted as Best Fellow of the Year

NKBCI is proud of you and wishes you best of luck for the years to come!!!



CONGRATULATIONS TO MS. CHIRINE CHEHAB

We are delighted to announce that Ms. Chirine Chehab has been appointed as the new Clinical Support Units Director at AUBMC. Mrs. Chirine Chehab has been the Administrator of the Radiation Oncology Department for the last 4 years (Nov. 2015 – Jul 2020) and her appointment to this new role follows a restructure of AUBMC. Congratulations to Ms. Chirine Chehab on a well-deserved promotion!!



CONGRATULATIONS TO MR. HAIDAR NOUN!!!

Mr. Haidar Noun, NKBCI In patient Unit Nurse Manager, who has been named to assume an additional responsibility of overseeing and monitoring the nursing practice in the NKBCI Ambulatory Infusion Unit and Specialty Clinics Adult Hematology Oncology.

Mr. Noun will be working closely and collaboratively with the medical leadership team and the nursing team in order to ensure a smooth provision of patient care, in alignment with the institution's mission and goals.



CELINE ABOUT KARAM

Q: When did you join the Naef K. Basile Cancer Institute?

A: I first joined NKBCI on October 1st, 2017 after being at AUBMC for 9 years.

Q: What is your Job title?

A: I'm the Clinical Department Administrator.

Q: What are your main responsibilities?

A: NKBCI has many different areas and my work entails to oversee the operations and set annual and strategic plans to improve the operations in these different areas in alignment with AUBMC strategic goals. I'm engaged at the operational level in all NKBCI services (Clinics, Infusion center...) research, patient education, cancer prevention and control program, quality management and patient support programs and funds. In addition to the above, we also collaborate with Multidisciplinary department to bridge care gaps and establish new programs that are at the core of oncology patient care.

NKBCI is a very busy institute that also organize numerous scientific activities that also require a thorough coordination with the CME office. During these 3 years, many milestones were achieved; to name a few: Migration to full automation with EPIC, Move of the Hematology Oncology Clinics, Infusion Center and NKBCI administration and academic offices to the new Aida and Halim Daniel Academic Center as well as instilling the first comprehensive patient Cancer Support Fund for adult needy cancer patients and establishing an annual cancer awareness campaign with the communication office that has helped a lot in the exposure of the center services and milestones since establishment.

At NKBCI, we work in teams and none of the above would have been possible without our team commitment to excellence; Our aim is to sustain continuous improvement and create a patient centered care.

Q: Prior to joining this department, where were you working?

A: Prior to joining NKBCI, I held several positions at AUBMC, the last one was the Endoscopy and Bronchoscopy unit administrator with the Gastroenterology team; During 4 years, we revamped the unit and completed its expansion plan and automated all its processes in an aim to be ready for EPIC adoption.

Q: Where did you pursue your college studies?

A: I'm proudly a BS in Nursing graduate of the Lebanese University and have completed numerous development activities the last one being the "Master Lean certification" for Healthcare process improvement and streamlining.

Q: What do you like most about your job?

A: There are two main pillars that I like in my job: Innovation and Challenge.

Transforming healthcare and continuous progress is based on innovation today in new approaches be it in the clinical treatment as well as in the medical processes.

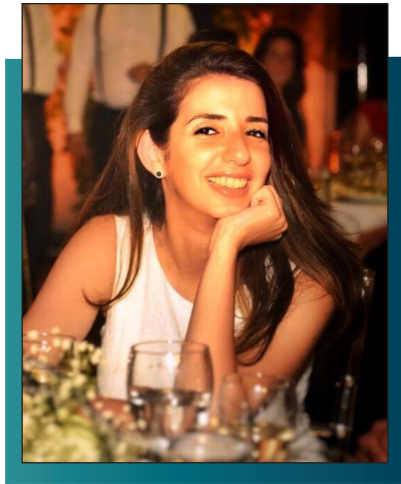
Challenge is every day's activity we face to overcome new incidents that we are experiencing in our beloved country Lebanon; a main challenge was to sustain operation during COVID-19 pandemic as well as after Beirut Blast in an unstable political and financial situation.

Q: Tell us about your ambition; in what terms would you like to develop your career?

A: I would like to start on working on my own healthcare consultancy firm for hospital improvement processes that can lead to a standard practice in the Lebanese healthcare industry and equitable patient care.

Q: Where is your best trip destination and why?

A: Barcelona is my best destination as it is a city that gathers gothic age building coupled with GAUDI innovative designs and colors; it is a city that beats culture, history as well as innovation with the housing of the biggest Firas in Europe.



Q: What are your hobbies?

A: Reading and Gardening; reading as it opens new horizons and gardening as it keeps on reminding us of the great work of GOD in nature.

Q: What would be your best food choice?

A: Green Salads are my favorites such as Fattouch and Tabboule; I tend to be more veggie and like organic food!

Q: Tell us more about your character.

A: I tend to be transparent most of the times as I found it is very useful in my professional career; I appreciate honesty and simplicity in dealing with peers.

Q: What is your advice to your peers?

A: Learn, learn, and learn and acquire new skills.

Q: What is your message to cancer patients?

A: Cancer patients pass through a lot of pain and challenges in Lebanon; many of these are reflected in a Bollywood movie called "We are Family"; keeping optimism is difficult however screening for early detection is key for better cure rates and outcomes. I ask every cancer patient to make his family member aware of the screening guidelines and ask their family doctor to advise on needed screening test.

Medical and Surgical Cancer Care is evolving; innovative therapies are rapidly changing the game with Cancer.

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