



Cancer Center of Excellence Award Annual Report

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Governor**

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Cancer Center of Excellence Award Program Overview

The designation of a hospital, treatment center, or other organization as a Cancer Center of Excellence is intended to recognize organizations that demonstrate excellence in patient-centered coordinated care for persons undergoing cancer treatment and therapy in Florida. The goals of the Cancer Center of Excellence Award program (section 381.925, Florida Statutes) are to encourage excellence in cancer care in Florida, attract and retain the best cancer care professionals to the state, and help Florida organizations be recognized nationally as a preferred destination for quality cancer care.

The application standards and measures are performance-based, using objective criteria and measurable outcomes to evaluate whether a standard is met. The focus is on outcomes that improve patient care. Health care organizations have flexibility in taking different approaches to meeting the standard, as long as the organization meets rigorous high standards and provides improved outcomes for patients. The performance measures are applicable to cancer care across a range of settings, such as community hospitals, academic health centers, and other organizations. In order to improve outcomes, health care organizations may be required to meet more stringent standards, or meet performance measures sooner than specified elsewhere, and may be required to adopt additional performance measures.

Cancer institutions that meet the criteria as a Cancer Center of Excellence, receive the award for a three-year period. After the three-year period, recipients have the opportunity to seek re-designation.

Florida has four Cancer Centers of Excellence that all received re-designation in 2017. The Centers are: H. Lee Moffitt Cancer Center and Research Institute, Mayo Clinic Florida, University of Miami Sylvester Comprehensive Cancer Center, and University of Florida Health Cancer Center, which includes University of Florida Health Shands Hospital, University of Florida Health Proton Therapy Institute and Orlando Health's Orlando Regional Medical Center.

An annual update and report is submitted by December 15 of each year. The Florida Department of Health reports the following information to the President of the Senate and the Speaker of the House of Representatives, as required by Florida Statute:

- The number of applications received
- The number of award recipients by application cycle

- A list of award recipients
- Recommendations to strengthen the program

Application Cycle 2018

The Department conducted two application cycles in 2018 for new applicants. There were no applications submitted for the spring or fall cycle. Based on inquiries and interest, there is anticipation that there will be applications over the next twelve months.

Application and Review Process

The application performance measures were updated in fall 2016 by the Joint Committee. The process for seeking designation as a Cancer Center of Excellence is that an organization submits an application, then undergoes a review process approved by the committee, and an onsite evaluation. The application and review process involves the following steps:

- Organizations submit applications during one of the two application cycles offered each year.
- Staff review applications to confirm information is sufficient for evaluators. These evaluators determine whether the organization meets performance measures.
- Organizations may be asked to submit revised applications with additional information.
- A team of five independent evaluators review written materials. Evaluators are vetted and determined to be free from conflicts of interest.
- Two evaluation team members may, as necessary, conduct an onsite evaluation to verify submitted application documentation.
- Applicants are provided a draft evaluation report, including observations made during the site visit if applicable, and are allowed to respond with corrections and improvement plans, if needed.
- Each member of the evaluation team reviews the draft evaluation report, the organization's response if applicable, and reports to the State Surgeon General those applicants that achieved or exceeded performance measures and met all requirements of the rating system approved by the committee.

- The State Surgeon General notifies the Governor regarding providers that are eligible to receive designation as a Cancer Center of Excellence.

Recommendations to Strengthen the Program

The Biomedical Research Advisory Council (BRAC) and the Cancer Control Research Advisory Council (CCRAB) requested that Department staff contact previous applicants who did not receive the designation and inquire why the organizations did not reapply. This evaluation was completed and it was determined through interviews that at least one previous applicant will reapply within the next year. Additional feedback indicated that the application process is extensive with no additional funding attached to the designation. There are two institutions, which did not apply previously that plan to submit an application within the year. The Department is prepared to complete the review process for any new application.

Additionally, strategies are being implemented to increase awareness of the Cancer Center of Excellence designation. All Biomedical Research presentations now include information on the Cancer Center of Excellence designation. CCRAB is fully engaged in promoting the designation and the group's strategic plan includes objectives for increasing the number of applications. BRAC includes the designation in their 10-year research agenda.