



Division Updates

Orthopaedic Oncology Division

Cara Cipriano, MD, MSc



Orthopaedic Oncology Faculty



Kristy Weber, MD, FACS



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The Orthopaedic Oncology service at Penn has continued to grow and develop in 2022-23.

Dr. Kristy Weber remains clinically busy with her practice at PCAM, HUP, and CHOP. She also serves in leadership roles such as the Vice Chair of Faculty Affairs for the Penn Orthopaedics Department and Director of the Sarcoma Program at the Abramson Cancer Center. In this capacity, she runs the weekly musculoskeletal tumor board, which includes participation from medical oncology, radiation oncology, pathology, radiology, neurosurgery, and general surgery. In addition, she dedicates herself to maintaining and building the multidisciplinary team by recruiting new faculty. We are excited to welcome several new sarcoma team physicians in the next few months, each of whom will bring their unique experiences, ideas, and energy to the team.

In her first two years at Penn Medicine, Dr. Cara Cipriano has built a clinical practice focused primarily on musculoskeletal oncology, but also including primary and revision joint replacement. This has created additional options for patients requiring complex reconstructions for metastatic disease as well as sarcoma survivors with prosthetic complications that inevitably occur over long-term follow up. In addition to seeing patients at PCAM, she sees patients at Radnor, which improves access to patients who experience barriers or challenges associated with travel into downtown Philadelphia. More recently, she has established a clinic at Pennsylvania Hospital's Farm Journal Building, where patients can see our medical oncology team on the same day for improved convenience and coordinated care.

Dr. Cipriano also has several initiatives and responsibilities as the Director of Undergraduate Medical Education. She manages the Ortho 200 Clerkship and has made significant structural changes to the curriculum that

have improved the engagement and experience of the students. Additionally, she mentors students applying into Orthopaedic Surgery residencies, oversees the Inclusive Orthopaedics Scholarship to support URiM students, and acts as a faculty advisor for the Leo Leung Orthopaedic Society, a student interest group at Penn Medicine.

Kate Barrie, PA continues to play a pivotal role in seeing patients as well as managing the Orthopaedic Oncology service. Nicole Koffke, RN, joined our team in 2022 and has already proved herself to be a phenomenal and indispensable addition. Both Kate and Nicole are both exceptionally knowledgeable and compassionate clinicians, and they are highly valued by our patients and multidisciplinary colleagues. We look forward to welcoming Allyson Woodley as our new administrative coordinator next month, to complete and bring her own strengths to our team.

Our basic and translational science teams at Penn Medicine, Penn Veterinary Medicine, and the Children's Hospital of Philadelphia (CHOP) have maintained and grown their extramural funding, allowing them to push the envelope of modulating the immune environment in soft tissue sarcoma and identify targets for the prevention and treatment of sarcoma metastasis to the lung. We are continuing our collaborative clinical trials across the full age span led by Drs. Patrick Grohar at CHOP. Dr. Nicola Mason is expanding her work with immunotherapy for dogs with different types of sarcoma with corollary trials in children using her ideas. Overall, the portfolio of available clinical trials for a variety of bone and soft tissue sarcomas as well as aggressive benign conditions has continued an upward trajectory over the past year at Penn. Meanwhile, our multidisciplinary clinical research group has been focused on questions related to local disease control that directly impact the care and quality of life of our patients.

We are in the process of finalizing a manuscript on a novel approach for determining whether patients require surgery for metastatic lesions at risk for fracture, and we will be beginning new studies in the coming months. As always, much of this research would not be possible without the philanthropic generosity of our patients, their families, and other supporters.

Our 9th Annual Steps to Cure Sarcoma Walk/Run took place on May 21, 2023, and was a great success. The event was organized by our patient/family advocacy group to raise awareness and funds for sarcoma translational and clinical research. (www.stepstocuresarcoma.com) We look forward to a productive year in 2023-24!