

IT MATTERS.



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We are very pleased to announce Dr. Shostak as the newest addition to the Astera team.



On the cover
Dr. Hopkins running for a good cause.

Chairman & CEO'S letter

Dear All,

Astera Cancer Care exists only because of the dedication and passion of our team members and the wonderful patients we have the privilege of serving everyday.

Our It Matters magazine provides updates on recent program activities, initiatives, announcements, staff highlights, meetings, and publications. We've had an incredible year of innovation, and I am excited to share all of our clinical advances and strides. From treating our very first patient with Chimeric Antigen Receptor (CAR) Natural Killer (NK) cells as part of the Quilt-88 trial to offering clinical trial Lutetium 177 (Lu-177) to target prostate cancer, Astera's participation in highly innovative trials shows our commitment to building a world-class Cellular Therapy Program.

Our prior research accomplishments were recognized at the 2022 Annual American Society of Clinical Oncology Meeting and published in the prestigious Lancet Oncology journal. I look forward to many more amazing research accomplishments over the upcoming years, which will provide unparalleled access to the most innovative treatments close to home for our patients.

Astera is continuously looking for ways to expand our services to provide patients, families, and caregivers the care and support they need to beat cancer.

Warm regards,

Edward J. Licitra, MD, PhD
Chief Executive Officer





Running With Purpose:

Breast Surgeon Dr. Lisa Hopkins

Breast Surgeon Dr. Lisa Hopkins has always loved running. Influenced by her father, she recalls memories of her family staying active, always hiking or swimming at the beach together. When Dr. Hopkins was 17 years old, her father succumbed to leukemia. Running became her therapy. It helped her find peace and relaxed her mind. The year she graduated from college, Dr. Hopkins decided to run her first marathon in memory of her father. So she ran the Marine Corps Marathon in Washington, DC, as part of the team and training for the Leukemia and Lymphoma Society.

The following year, before starting medical school, she ran the Chicago Marathon. At the time, Dr. Hopkins worked at Johns Hopkins University for three years with a radiation oncologist in the lab. "I wanted to do something more clinical and closer to the patient level. So I ultimately decided to go to medical school and thought I might find something in oncology."

"You get lifetime relationships with your patients"

Lisa Hopkins, MD

That all changed when she began her medical school rotations. "In the operating room, something just clicked," Dr. Hopkins said. "I just knew I was supposed to be there. So I transitioned into the surgery department during my last year of medical school." During residency, she had an amazing general surgery mentor who had many breast cancer patients. She realized "I could marry my original love of research and be involved in more cutting-edge technology while also caring for cancer patients."

Dr. Hopkins feels passionate about treating breast cancer patients. "You get lifetime relationships with your patients," said Dr. Hopkins. "You don't often get that in other types of surgery." Since being in practice for 11 years, she has experienced the intimate connections of being a breast cancer surgeon.

While working with breast cancer patients, Dr. Hopkins stresses the importance of early detection. "The best thing we can do is find it as early as possible," said Dr. Hopkins. In addition, it is important to be aware of our bodies and get regular checkups.

Keeping her body healthy is so important to Dr. Hopkins because she always aims to "lead by example," not only for her two young sons but for her patients. "I hope to encourage my patients to do things to keep them healthy regardless of the number of hats they wear." Keeping patients healthy is her number one priority; she feels this is always possible with today's technology. "Women are strong," said Dr. Hopkins. "We take on so much in our lives, yet these women are just as tough; they're warriors."

Since having her second son, Dr. Hopkins has enjoyed staying strong through CrossFit. Dr. Hopkins and her husband converted their garage into a home gym when the pandemic hit. Recently, Dr. Hopkins decided to get back into running, specifically marathon training. In November, Dr. Hopkins ran the Philadelphia Marathon.

Radiation for Skin Cancer

Anna Kenny's Patient Story

After having difficulties wearing particular shoes, Anna Kenny noticed a mole on her lower left ankle, a big issue considering her love for shoes. So she decided to see a dermatologist. The dermatologist biopsied the mole, which confirmed it was cancerous. At 90 years old, Anna was diagnosed with skin cancer.

Her dermatologist recommended she undergo an unfavorable procedure to remove the cancer. But at her next oncology appointment with Dr. Bruno Fang of Astera Cancer Care, he provided a second opinion and a more suitable option: radiation therapy. Radiation treatment is an option for skin cancer.

"Radiation is a highly effective and safe treatment for many patients with skin cancer instead of surgery or after surgery for high-risk cancer," said Radiation Oncologist Dr. Hiral Patel Fontanilla.

Dr. Fang referred Anna to Astera Cancer Care Princeton Radiation Oncology (PRO). For 21 consecutive days in July 2021, she would travel to PRO and receive twenty minutes of radiation treatment every morning at 11 am.

Anna had nothing but great things to say about her experience at PRO, "It was a wonderful place, and everyone was so friendly. They made you forget you were there," Anna



Hiral Patel Fontanilla, MD

said. For patients undergoing treatment, safety and comfort are so important. "It's bad enough you need the treatment, but when you have somewhere to go that's so caring, it makes a difference," she said.

Anna enjoyed her new routine during her three-week treatment plan. She said, "The facility was not only pleasant but very timely." Anna never had to wait and was always in and out of the office every visit.

After 21 days of treatment at PRO, Anna was cancer free! This was a great celebration for a woman with three children, seven grandchildren, and four great-grandchildren! Having lived for over ninety years, Anna has her own secrets to a long life: a good night's sleep (8-9 hours) and a glass of wine every night while watching her favorite show, Judge Judy.



New Approach for Fighting Prostate Cancer

Prostate cancer is the second leading cause of cancer death for men in the United States. Those with metastatic cancer who have received prior androgen deprivation therapy, chemotherapy and radiation therapy, may have limited treatment options. However, patients with metastatic prostate cancer now have a new weapon in the fight against this deadly disease. ¹⁷⁷Lu-PSMA-617, also known as Pluvicto, is a prostate-specific membrane antigen (PSMA) agent that is used to precisely deliver radionuclide therapy for the treatment of patients with PSMA+ metastatic, castrate-resistant prostate cancer (mCRPC). Pluvicto has been recently approved by the U.S. Food and Drug Administration. Astera Cancer Care is the first center in New Jersey to

offer this novel treatment option for metastatic prostate cancer patients. The VISION trial, which was published in the New England Journal of Medicine, demonstrated that Pluvicto improved survival for men with metastatic castrate-resistant prostate cancer. Researchers showed that patients who received Pluvicto had a 38% reduction in risk of death and a 60% reduction in the risk of radiographic disease progression compared to those who received standard of care therapy. Dr. Bruno Fang, Astera

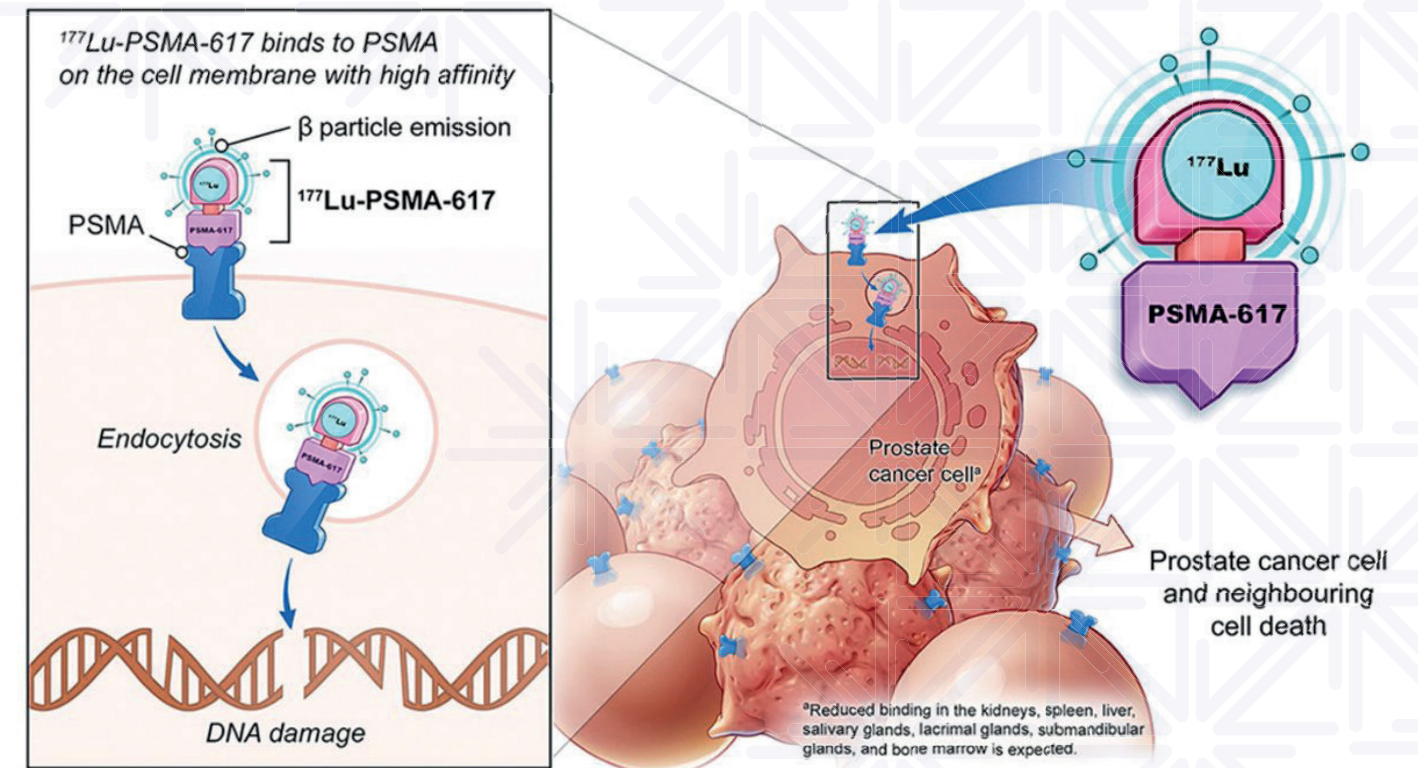


Phillip D. Reid, MD

Cancer Care's President and Director of Clinical Research, spearheaded Astera's participation and patient enrollment on this important trial.

"Astera Cancer Care is very excited to be able to participate in this clinical trial for patients with pancreatic cancer," said Dr. Phillip Reid, principal investigator. "The field of Oncology has been revolutionized over the past several years as we have learned

Illustration Credit: Pluvicto™ (lutetium Lu 177 vipivotide tetraxetan, formerly ¹⁷⁷Lu-PSMA-617) marketing materials.



to harness the power of the immune system in the fight against cancer. We hope that CAR NK cell therapies like the one developed by ImmunityBio will become part of the immune therapy armamentarium and give patients an effective treatment option that is not associated with overly burdensome side effects."

Metastatic castrate-resistant prostate cancer

patients who have received prior taxane-based chemotherapy and have imaging that demonstrates that their prostate cancer cells express PSMA are potentially eligible for Pluvicto. The radionuclide is delivered every 6 weeks for up to six doses. Pluvicto is well tolerated overall, and common side effects include fatigue, dry mouth, nausea, anemia (low red blood cell counts), decreased appetite and

constipation. Pluvicto is a ground breaking clinical advancement for prostate cancer patients. If you or someone you know has been diagnosed with prostate cancer, please consider discussing Pluvicto with your provider or contacting Astera Cancer Care for more information.



American Cancer Society's Making Strides Against Breast Cancer Walk

Astera Cancer Care participates in community-wide initiatives and service activities aligning with our vision and goals. On Sunday, October 23, 2022, Astera Cancer Care's oncology, radiation, and breast care divisions joined the American Cancer Society's Making Strides Against Breast Cancer Walk in Central Jersey.

Many patients and friends joined the team, helping Astera rank #1 out of 225 teams and raised almost \$19,000! It was wonderful to see everyone engage with the community and come together to help distribute t-shirts and materials, assist with pumpkin painting and proudly represent Astera.



Patient Reviews



“

The office staff is wonderful. All the nurses are very knowledgeable, friendly, and extremely caring. Astera was the most professional cancer center. They treated everyone with respect and like a person that was just a number. They cared for me very well there, and the staff and the doctors were friendly and did whatever they could to help me.

”

“

The Somerset office front desk and nursing staff took care of me like family. I have to say the nurses who work at the Somerset office are honestly kind and have lots of empathy towards the elderly. A patient required extra attention, and all took turns helping him. I have been a patient of Astera for over 6 years. Each and every doctor and staff member I have been in contact with has been friendly, professional, knowledgeable, and compassionate. They listen to me and answered all my questions. I'm blessed to have them as part of my journey.

”



“

One of the best doctor's offices ever visited. Dr. Amit Patel is amazing and remembers his patients. The staff, from reception to nurses, are super sweet and considerate. I have to go almost every week, even with the long waiting time (which makes sense as everyone deserves proper care). I never once felt frustrated and had such faith and satisfaction in being looked after. I love this office and the staff, and it's hard to write about them without getting emotional. I highly recommend them if you are looking for a hematologist/oncologist.

”

“

Very friendly staff. The phlebotomist did a PAINLESS job at getting my blood. Dr. Lampert is the BEST!! Always a pleasure to go to the office.

”



Upcoming Virtual Programs

To register for any of our upcoming virtual programs, scan the QR code or visit: www.asteracancercare.org/events.

2/13/23 : Prioritizing Self-Care

10:00am-11:00am



Facilitated by: **Krysta Schraff, LCSW**

Self-care is about listening to your mind, body, and soul. Learn strategies to treat yourself.

Zoom Meeting ID: 892 5518 4968

Passcode: Compass



Scan the QR Code to Register

3/13/23: Hire Help at Home?

10:00am-11:00am



Facilitated by: **Neshama Marcus, Director of Social Work**

What is home care? What is home health care? Learn when is a good time to ask for help

Zoom Meeting ID: 898 1372 7585

Passcode: Compass



Scan the QR Code to Register

4/17/23: Beating the Blues & Springing Forward

10:00am-11:00am



Facilitated by: **Sharlynn Flores, LCSW**

Learn how to recognize when you don't feel your best self and strategies for feeling better.

Zoom Meeting ID: 889 8399 6222

Passcode: Compass



Scan the QR Code to Register

5/8/23: What to Say

10:00am-11:00am



Facilitated by: **Krysta Schraff, LCSW**

We sometimes avoid our loved ones who are sick because we don't want to say the wrong thing. Learn some tips to communicate with family and friends who are dealing with chronic or terminal illness.

Zoom Meeting ID: 810 6619 5905

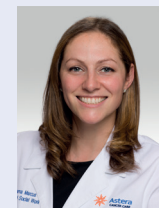
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Scan the QR Code to Register

6/12/23: Navigating Disability

10:00am-11:00am



Facilitated by: **Neshama Marcus, Director of Social Work**

Private Disability Insurance, Temporary Disability (TDI), & Social Security Disability (SSD)

Learn more about: • Eligibility • Required Documents • Timelines

Zoom Meeting ID: 854 9350 5137

Passcode: Compass



Scan the QR Code to Register

For more information, please contact Social Work at: social.work@asterahealthcare.org or 732-853-1038.

Dr. Eugene Shostak

Dr. Eugene Shostak, an Interventional Pulmonologist at Astera Cancer Care, brings a high level of procedural expertise in interventional pulmonology to better serve our patients. Dr. Shostak is one of few pulmonologists nationwide who is formally trained in rigid bronchoscopy and treats complex airway disorders such as tracheal stenosis, tracheobronchomalacia, and airway obstruction. He specializes in interventional pulmonology, thoracic oncology, advanced diagnostic and therapeutic bronchoscopy, complex airway disease, endoscopic treatment of asthma and COPD, endobronchial lung volume reduction, tracheobronchomalacia, and pleuroscopy. As a result, patients have access to high-quality pulmonary and thoracic services.

Dr. Shostak has been passionate about medicine and patient care for as long as he can remember,

but his love for medicine traces back to his childhood. “I took much of my inspiration from my mother, a Pediatrician in the former Union of Soviet Socialist Republics,” said Dr. Shostak.

Dr. Shostak was born in Ukraine and grew up in Brooklyn. He attended his undergraduate and medical schooling while still in New York but completed his residency in Boston. While in medical school, Dr. Shostak realized his passion for medicine steered him toward Pulmonary Medicine. But Dr. Shostak didn’t stop there.

“I pursued additional subspecialty training in Interventional Pulmonology to offer my patients the highest level of procedural expertise and access to the latest technologies,” said Dr. Shostak. Dr. Shostak treats his patients like family. “Every patient I treat receives an individualized

treatment plan based on a multidisciplinary discussion and the highest level of technical procedural expertise,” Dr. Shostak said. “Whether it is for diagnosis of suspected cancer or pulmonary evaluation in a setting of known cancer, my goal is to take care of that patient as if they were my own family member.”

Interventional pulmonology is at the forefront of innovation in terms of diagnosing and treating the lungs by biopsying parts of the lung that previously were inaccessible. Dr. Shostak has focused his work under the thoracic surgery department for the last eight years and highlights the importance of this close collaboration between interventional pulmonary and thoracic surgery. Dr. Shostak can have a thoracic surgeon close by while he’s performing procedures. Dr. Shostak prides himself

in making his services widely available. Patients can see him via telehealth and he hopes to expand his services to many different patients and providers throughout the New Jersey community. When Dr. Shostak is not with his patients or breaking ground in rigid bronchoscopy, he enjoys spending time with his family, traveling, and watching car races. Dr. Shostak is a thrill seeker, not just in his medical innovation but in his life. “I enjoy skydiving. I do enjoy extreme sports” said Dr. Shostak.

To make an appointment, please call 732-390-7750. For more information, visit asteracancercare.org.



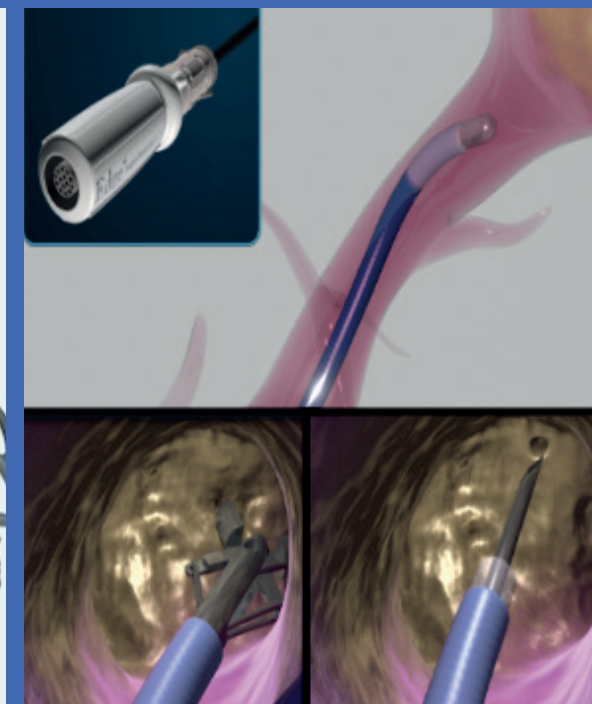
Below:

Robotic assisted bronchoscopy with 3 dimensional imaging that allows physicians to biopsy lung lesions with high degree of accuracy and minimal complications.



Below:

Navigational “GPS” bronchoscopy allows physicians to reach small lung nodules.



Locations

Medical Oncology

Bridgewater

1200 US Highway 22 East - 3rd Floor, Bridgewater, NJ 08807

East Brunswick

Brier Hill Court - Building J2, East Brunswick, NJ 08816

Edison

34-36 Progress Street - Suite B-2, Edison, NJ 08820

Jersey City

377 Jersey Avenue - Suite 160, Jersey City, NJ 07302

Monroe Township

9 Centre Drive - Suite 100, Monroe Township, NJ 08831

Robbinsville

1 Union Street - Suite 205, Robbinsville, NJ 08691

Rutherford

201 RT 17 North - FL 11, Rutherford, NJ 07070

Somerset

75 Veronica Avenue - Suite 201, Somerset, NJ 08873



Aysha Khalid, MD

Locations

Radiation Oncology

Darby

Mercy Fitzgerald Hospital Department of Radiation Oncology
1500 Lansdowne Avenue - Medical Science Building, Lower Level - Darby, PA 19023

Flemington

Hunterdon Regional Cancer Center Department of Radiation Oncology
2100 Wescott Drive, Flemington, NJ 08822

Freehold

CentraState Medical Center Department of Radiation Oncology
901 West Main Street, Freehold, NJ 07728

Langhorne

St. Mary Regional Cancer Center Department of Radiation Oncology
1201 Langhorne-Newtown Road, Langhorne, PA 19047

Monroe Township

9 Centre Drive - Suite 115, Monroe Township, NJ 08831

New Brunswick - Saint Peter's University Hospital

215 Easton Avenue, New Brunswick, NJ 08901

Plainsboro

Penn Medicine Princeton Medical Center Department of Radiation Oncology
One Plainsboro Road, Plainsboro, NJ 08536

Somerset

ProCure Proton Therapy Center
103 Cedar Grove Lane, Somerset, NJ 08873

Locations

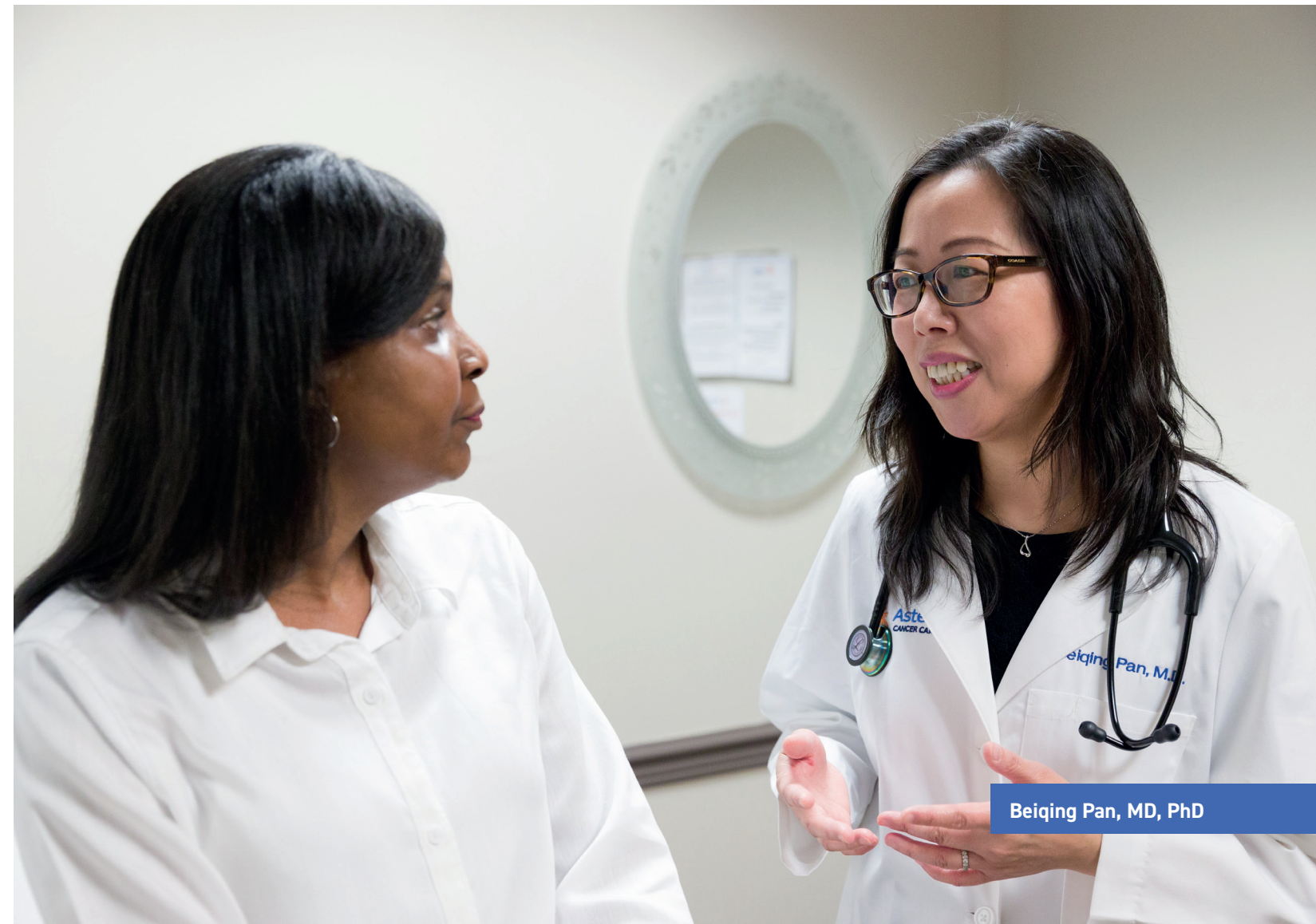
Breast Surgery

Monroe Township

9 Centre Drive, Suite 100, Monroe Township, NJ 08831

New Brunswick – The Breast Center Saint Peter's University Hospital

CARES Building 240 Easton Avenue, 3rd Floor
New Brunswick, NJ 08901



Beiqing Pan, MD, PhD



Steven E. Young, M.D.

Steven E. Young, MD

OUR PATIENTS & THEIR FAMILIES MATTER

Our patients and their families tell the story of overcoming cancer like no other. They help us connect, inspire, and empower. If you know a patient or have a family member who would like to make an impact and share their experience with us, please have them contact dorothy.ballweg@asterahealthcare.org.

