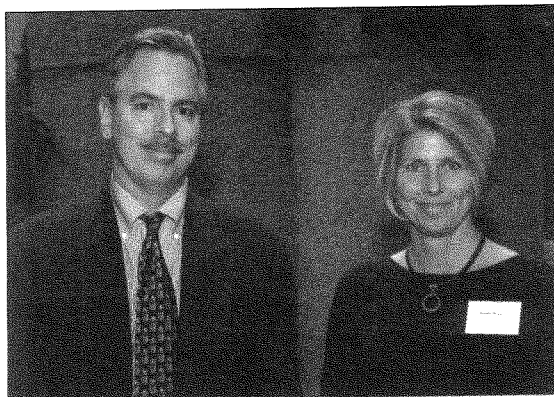


Interventional Pulmonology A Growing Field in Respiratory Medicine

In March, Alexian Brothers Medical Center was host to Thoracic Oncology Coordinators from across the United States who attended the Third Annual Thoracic Oncology Nurses Conference. ABHN's **Sue Abbinanti, MS, PA-C** planned the event to include presentations by **Kevin Kovitz, M.D., MBA** on "Interventional Pulmonology: Overview and Emerging Technologies for the Cancer Patient" and Brenda Disparti, RN, BSN, OCN from Colorado on "Development of a Pulmonary Nodule Clinic". Thirty coordinators were in attendance.

Dr. Kovitz, past president of the American Academy of Bronchology, shared how interventional pulmonology offers increased availability of technology for minimally invasive diagnosis and staging of thoracic malignancies. He made note of two technologies in particular: endobronchial ultrasound (EBUS) and electromagnetic navigation bronchoscopy. EBUS guided needle aspiration biopsy is an outpatient procedure that offers less invasive histologic sampling of mediastinal nodes than traditional mediastinoscopy. Electromagnetic navigation bronchoscopy uses CT data and a technology akin to automobile GPS to navigate to small peripheral lesions for diagnosis and placement of markers for radiation treatment. In addition to new therapeutic options for palliation of lung cancers, new alternatives are also available to address airway obstructions.

Though EBUS has been available for a number of years, Dr. Kovitz's interventional pulmonology practice (the Chicago Chest Center) has the longest standing program of use with the highest volumes in the area. The center provides services for ABHN patients on the Alexian Brothers Medical Center campus and is the only full service practice in the region that allows patients with a suspected malignancy to be evaluated, diagnosed and sent to treatment in one setting, usually within one week. Anxious patients get results quickly and are immediately referred if necessary for



Kevin Kovitz, M.D. and Brenda Disparti, RN, Oncology Nurse Navigator at Memorial Health System at the Third Annual Thoracic Oncology Nurses Conference hosted by ABMC.

services through the Cancer Institute. As the Institute's Thoracic Oncology Coordinator, Sue Abbinanti helps newly diagnosed patients to chart a course through treatment, provides education and support for family members and presents cases for the weekly tumor board.

Dr. Kovitz's practice also treats benign conditions, complex airway problems and peripheral disease. Its interventional pulmonology program is participating in the ACQUIRE database pilot project of the American College of Chest Physicians which examines outcomes of diagnostic and therapeutic bronchoscopic procedures. Dr. Kovitz is a member of the oversight committee and notes that the project will expand to include a broader range of interventions and aims to set national and international standards. Though ten sites around the world, including England's Cambridge University, Harvard, Cleveland Clinic and MD Anderson are participating, Dr. Kovitz said, "ours is the only private practice setting in the group, and our offerings and quality readily compare with the others".

For more information, or to refer a patient for evaluation, please call 847-498-LUNG or visit their website at www.chestcenter.com