



# **Cancer Center of Excellence Award**

## **Annual Report**

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**December 15, 2022**

**Ron DeSantis**  
Governor

**Joseph Ladapo, MD, PhD**  
State Surgeon General

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**2022 Cancer Center of Excellence Annual Report  
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## **Cancer Center of Excellence Award Program Overview**

The designation of a hospital, treatment center, or other organizations as a Cancer Center of Excellence (CCE) 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 CCE designation (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. Before each application cycle, the Florida Department of Health (Department) contacts research treatment facilities across the state via email to provide information about the award and the requirements.

The Joint Committee establishes the performance measures for the designation of CCE and redesignation. The Committee meets every three years to review and update the performance measures for designation and comprises of members from the Biomedical Research Advisory Council (BRAC) and the Florida Cancer Control and Research Advisory Council (CCRAB). The performance measures will be re-evaluated in early 2023.

By December 15th of each year, the Department 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 and Review Process**

Organizations seeking designation as a Cancer Center of Excellence submit an application and then undergo a review process approved by the Joint Committee. The application and review process involve 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. Then, evaluators determine whether the organization meets performance measures.
- A team of five independent evaluators review written materials. Evaluators are vetted and determined to be free from conflicts of interest.
- Organizations may be asked to submit revised applications with additional information.
- If a site visit is recommended during the review process, two evaluators will participate in the site visit.
- Applicants are provided a draft evaluation report and respond with corrections and

improvement plans.

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

## **Application Cycles**

Two application cycles were conducted in 2022 with only one applicant. The State Surgeon General approved the designation of Cleveland Clinic Maroone (Maroone) Cancer Institute in September 2022. The designation is for three years followed by a re-designation review and determination process.

The peer reviewers are members of the BRAC, CCRAB and representatives from out-of-state National Cancer Institute Comprehensive Cancer Centers. The peer reviewers have been involved in Florida's CCE designation since 2014. Peer reviewers determine if the measure is met. The performance measure is met when the peer reviewers reach consensus that the measure is met. Only the merits of the Florida-based institution were considered for the designation. The peer reviewers all agreed that Maroone met all criteria to be a designated Cancer Center of Excellence.

Maroone Cancer Center offers advanced community-based cancer treatments from the Treasure Coast to South Florida. The organization focuses on research that's scientifically rigorous, innovative and improves patient outcomes nationally. Maroone Cancer Center focuses on research that characterizes diagnosis and treatment of a broad spectrum of diseases and conditions. Staff are dedicated to providing patients with innovative treatment through clinical research trials which includes new targeted agents and therapies. Maroone Cancer Center collaborates on many clinical trials with the National Cancer Institute. Maroone Cancer Center has increased developing clinical trials, increased patient accruals to trials and increased publishing in journals. Physicians from the institution have received funding from multiple foundations to support their research efforts, such as Broward Health Foundation. Researchers at the institution are consistently applying for grants to fund their research, such as the Cleveland Clinic Biorepository award. The physicians, research team and medical students are continuously working on research projects to increase outcomes and quality of life.

The current Cancer Centers of Excellence are:

- H. Lee Moffitt Cancer Center and Research Institute
- Mayo Clinic Florida
- University of Miami Sylvester Comprehensive Cancer Center
- University of Florida Health Cancer Center, which includes Shands Hospital and Proton Therapy Institute, and Orlando Health's Orlando Regional Medical Center
- Memorial Cancer Institute and Florida Atlantic University
- Cleveland Clinic Maroone Cancer Institute

### **Recommendations to Strengthen the Program**

Over the last two years, only three applications were submitted. Additional awareness building is needed for reviewing new applications. For the upcoming year, organizations receiving Biomedical Research grants will be contacted and informed of the merits on becoming a Cancer Center of Excellence.