

**Our Lady of the Lake Regional Medical Center,
Baton Rouge, Louisiana
The Cancer Program of Our Lady of the Lake
and Mary Bird Perkins**



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Background

Our Lady of the Lake Regional Medical Center is the largest private medical center in Louisiana. With 740 licensed beds, Our Lady of the Lake provides services to more than 33,000 hospital patients and 350,000 outpatients. The hospital occupies 100 acres in the heart of Baton Rouge, including the cancer center. The cancer program includes Mary Bird Perkins Cancer Center, a nonprofit, comprehensive radiation therapy facility, which joined with Our Lady of the Lake in 1988 to offer multispecialty cancer care. The hospital provides nearly 42,000 cancer treatments and serves 2,258 new cancer cases each year.

Patient Service Area

Since 2005, migration away from the devastation of Hurricanes Katrina and Rita has caused an estimated 16 percent increase in the hospital's market size, with Baton Rouge (Louisiana's capital), now the largest city in the state. In a state with the highest poverty rate in the nation, 16 percent of the extended market is uninsured and another 18 percent rely on Medicaid. Beyond Baton Rouge, the Cancer Program of Our Lady of the Lake and Mary Bird Perkins' service area consists of 15 predominantly rural parishes, most of which lack access to quality healthcare services. Louisiana ranked third in the nation for overall cancer death rates in 2001. The state's high mortality rates are attributed to its significant low-income population, with barriers to healthcare services including education about the role of early detection. African American women in Louisiana, for example, have breast cancer incidence rates similar to the national rate but have death rates 17 percent higher.

Access and Outreach Initiatives

Lack of public transportation throughout the region creates a significant healthcare access issue. To address this and other access barriers, the cancer program makes a van available and operates two additional radiation centers beyond the Baton Rouge area. The cancer program is also a participant in the NCI Minority-Based CCOP, in coordination with the Louisiana State University Health Sciences Center.