

Does Size Matter?

Medicine and especially cancer care has changed a lot in the last 2 decades. What used to be hundreds or thousands of small practices degenerated into massive, large groups mostly under the umbrella of a large hospital or hospital conglomerates. The driving force behind this change is an economics of scale. Large institutions employ primary care providers, surgeons, medical oncologists and radiation therapists. They carve a large piece of the pie, total control of referrals with patients choice pushed aside.

The sheer size of the institutions is impressive, in most cities' hospitals are the largest employer in town, the bigger their piece of the pie, the more revenue they generate "usually tax exempt" the more expansive is their sphere of market control. Many patients have the false perception that larger is better, but they only see the facts when they seek alternatives, independent small practices.

I think that the Covid pandemic has awakened people to the fact that organized medicine's intent is economics and patient control. In the last few years, we have seen more and more patients getting dissatisfied by the cancer care rendered at the "prestigious institutions". They get disappointed in the discrepancy between the size of the building and the quality of care rendered.

Besides the individualized care places like Gabrail Cancer Center render, there is the unique scope of clinical trials available only at our institutions attracting intuitive patients from large institutions. Cancer clinical trials require agility, fast pace of action and prompt attention, and easy access for patients. It takes an aircraft carrier 7 miles to make a U turn while a jet ski makes that in few feet.

By Dr. Nashat Gabrail