

Recognizing Outstanding Service Excellence



Dr. Kevin Billingsley
Surgical Oncology

A patient's daughter submitted the following nomination...

This story starts in July 2007. I received the dreaded phone call of every daughter. My father had been rushed by ambulance to Hood River Memorial Hospital. My mom had found him in the bathroom vomiting blood. I was mildly comforted when I heard he would be transferred to OHSU as I worked there and knew it was a state of the art facility. Boy was being the family member of a patient sure an eye opener. My dad was transferred to the Cardiac ICU at 2 am in the morning. I didn't even know how to get in the building and of course in my rush to get to Hood River I did not have my ID badge. Luckily, we have a caring public safety team that found me and my mom wandering around that night and sent us in the right direction.

I honestly cannot say how long the hospital stay was but I think it was 4 or 5 days and then a transfer to the 8th floor of the VA for additional days at which time we found out my dad had cancer of the liver. You can imagine the faculty involved (a gastric bleed from the liver not functioning and then coordination of ongoing treatment). Although they used some fancy name, we couldn't possibly believe this. My dad was only 56 years old. Well this comes to the Golden part of this story, Dr. Kevin Billingsley. We were referred to him to see if surgical intervention was an option. Unfortunately, it was not and my dad was diagnosed as terminal. Dr. Billingsley was the one to tell us. We sat with him for what seemed like forever and asked questions regarding quality of life, diet, restrictions and expectations. He never seemed rushed and spoke to my dad in a way that was direct and honest. My dad left his appointment that day not in shock that he was dying, but with a game plan to make the most of the life he had left. I credit Dr. Billingsley with his individual approach to my father and his "you are my only patient in the world" attitude that gave him (and us) such a dear gift. For the next few months my father did everything Dr. Billingsley suggested: use food as your medicine, do whatever your strength and body will let you, and on and on. This dear Dr. was always available for questions and responded to every one of my emails regarding my dad.

By the time my father passed away in February 2008 he was only really ill for the last week of his life and my mom credits Dr. Billingsley with giving my dad the tools to remain healthy as long as possible. Even though this is a very hard time in my life to relive it exemplifies why I am proud to work for an organization that not only rewards this kind of caring but requires it. Dr. Billingsley certainly lived up to that expectation!



Award Recipient - July 2008