



MEET THE EXPERT

ROBYN M.
SCHERBER, MD

"I KNEW, GOING INTO MEDICINE, THAT ONCOLOGY WAS WHAT I ALWAYS WANTED TO DO. IT'S SUCH AN EXCITING FIELD BECAUSE THE VAST AMOUNT OF RESEARCH (INTO CANCER) IS TEACHING US AN AWFUL LOT ABOUT THE WHOLE BODY, AND HOW WE TREAT ANY NUMBER OF DISEASES." – DR. SCHERBER

"The question everyone asks is, 'How did this happen?'" says UT San Antonio MD Anderson Cancer Center oncologist Robyn M. Scherber, M.D., M.P.H. "If there's any single thing that keeps me motivated as a physician and researcher, it's a commitment to finding answers for my patients and their families."

In her quest to find those answers, Dr. Scherber has become a premier researcher

in the field of hematological (blood and bone marrow) cancers. A research fellow of the Society for Translational Oncology since 2017 and a 2018 awardee of the American Society of Hematology Clinical Research Training Institute, Dr. Scherber's work is recognized by some of the most highly acclaimed organizations in her field. She has authored or co-authored nearly 50 published articles and has presented her research

throughout the United States, as well as in Italy and Taiwan.

A focus of Dr. Scherber's investigative work since 2008 is developing a broader understanding of how the blood and bone marrow work. "There's so much new data and so much new research teaching us just how important the blood really is," she says. "Knowing more about how the blood and marrow function within the body can help us predict and prevent a wide variety of health problems – cancer, blood clots, stroke, heart attacks and more."

"This is definitely a life's work," Dr. Scherber adds.

An assistant professor of medicine since 2018, Dr. Scherber joined UT Health San Antonio MD Anderson Cancer Center in 2018 after completing a fellowship in hematology and oncology at Oregon Health and Sciences University. Before that, she earned her medical degree at Rosalind Franklin University of Medicine in Chicago and completed her residency in internal medicine at Mayo Clinic in Scottsdale, Arizona.

Dr. Scherber holds a master's degree in public health and a bachelor's degree in biochemistry, both from the University of Minnesota. She is board certified in internal medicine and a member of the American Medical Association, the American Society of Hematology, and the European Hematology Association.

NEWSLETTER

3.21.2019

WHAT THE PEOPLE IN THIS BUILDING TAUGHT ME ABOUT HEALTH CARE

JANUARY 30, 2019

SUBMITTED BY BUTCH OBERHOFF, A PATIENT AT UT HEALTH SAN ANTONIO MD ANDERSON CANCER CENTER

It's almost cliché. You hear, "You have cancer," and you wonder if you've been given a death sentence. You know it's going to be a difficult process and you'll be handing control of your life to someone else.

That's scary.

I was lucky. Incredibly lucky. I was diagnosed with a very treatable form of cancer. As long as I followed the proven, well-documented, highly researched treatment plan, the numbers were in my favor. But what if I chose – as was my right – to decline the very difficult treatment regimen of daily radiation and weekly chemotherapy?

"You'll die."

OK, color me a compliant patient.

I've worked in health care my entire adult life, almost all of it in EMS at an amazing agency that treats employees well, encourages care and compassion for patients and tries very hard to do the right thing. We're not perfect, but most of the agency's leadership grew up in the organization and started off as clinicians, caring for patients and doing their best to help others. There are countless stories of our medics quietly going the extra mile for our patients, in ways

big and small, sometimes on their own time or at their own expense. They don't do it for attention; they do it because they care.

But I have to wonder if those of us in health care sometimes lose our way. Long hours, doing more with less, increased demands for more detailed documentation and the frustration of the never-ending changes in electronic charts and medical records can distract us from the reason we're there to begin with. We're trying to make sure we don't miss a check-off box, fill out a form incorrectly or, heaven forbid, do the patient a disservice by not wording their condition correctly and causing a claim to be denied.

But does this mean we're focused more on the laptop than on the patient?

Proper documentation is important, to be sure. But it doesn't give us a pass on actually caring for the patient. The patient needs compassion and communication. Face-to-face communication. Two-way

communication. Not someone talking over their shoulder as they type, staring at a screen. The patient needs to feel they're part of the care plan and know what to expect from a test, a procedure or even a whole course of treatment — and that kind of information should not be communicated by handing over a pamphlet or a website address or by using your best robotic monotone as you go over your checklist, so you can document that you provided patient education.

Stop it. You know better. If you don't, try being a patient. Your perspective will change drastically.

I don't mean the kind of patient who has a cold or an infection, and you already know what's going on and it's stupid that you have to waste your time going to see the doctor because you've been doing this for 20 years and you already know what you need and blah, blah, blah...

[CLICK HERE TO READ MORE ABOUT BUTCH'S POSITIVE EXPERIENCE AT UT HEALTH SAN ANTONIO MD ANDERSON CANCER CENTER](#)

"EVERY SINGLE PERSON IN THE MAYS CANCER CENTER IN SAN ANTONIO WAS INCREDIBLE. EVERY. SINGLE. PERSON. I COULDN'T GET OVER JUST HOW MUCH OF A CULTURE OF CARING EXISTED IN THAT BUILDING." – BUTCH OBERHOFF

ASCO Direct™ Highlights

2019 Official Annual Meeting Review

HYATT REGENCY SAN ANTONIO RIVERWALK SATURDAY, JUNE 22, 2019

UT Health San Antonio ASCO Direct™ Highlights 2019 Official Annual Meeting Review is a program licensed by the American Society of Clinical Oncology, Inc. This meeting will provide highlights of the recent advances in the treatment of cancer presented at the 2019 American Society of Clinical Oncology's (ASCO®) Annual Meeting for hematologists/oncologists, nurses, pharmacists, physician assistants and other health care professionals specializing in oncology.

Take advantage of this smaller meeting to facilitate communication and interaction with faculty, network with peers and discuss the advances most likely to change clinical

practice. You will have the opportunity to gain knowledge of and discuss the latest clinical trials that have influenced change to the standard of care, and hear about the role of new diagnostic techniques and therapeutic approaches as applied to the care and management of people with cancer, placing the updated information into the context of current practice.

Faculty scheduled to present include:

- Sukeshi Patel Arora, MD, UT Health San Antonio MD Anderson Cancer Center
- Anne Blaes, MD, MS, University of Minnesota
- Andrew Brenner, MD, PhD, UT Health San Antonio MD Anderson Cancer Center

- Matthew Butler, MD, UT Health San Antonio MD Anderson Cancer Center
- Robert Coleman, MD FACOG, FACS, MD Anderson Cancer Center
- Lawrence Einhorn, MD, Indiana University
- Matthew Ellis, MB, BChir, BSc, PhD, FRCP, Baylor College of Medicine
- Petros Grivas, MD, PhD, University of Washington
- Virginia Kaklamani, MD, UT Health San Antonio MD Anderson Cancer Center
- Anand Karnad, MD, UT Health San Antonio MD Anderson Cancer Center
- Mary Mulcahy, MD, Northwestern University
- John Sarantopoulos, MD, UT Health San Antonio MD Anderson Cancer Center

This activity has been approved for AMA PRA Category 1 Credit™. For more information [click here](#). Pre-Registration Discount Deadline is June 7, 2019 | [Register here!](#)



FAMILY DAY

SATURDAY, MARCH 30, 2019 11:00 AM - 1:00 PM

MAIN ENTRANCE - UT HEALTH SAN ANTONIO

Family Day, a first of its kind event at UT Health San Antonio, is set for March 30 on the Long campus.

THE EVENT, FROM 11 A.M. TO 1 P.M. FEATURES:

- MUSIC
- BALLOON ARTIST
- FOOD TRUCKS
- INTERACTIVE BOOTHS
- PETTING ZOO
- AND MORE
- MAGIC SHOW

“Family Day is for everyone — students, staff, faculty, alumni and their families,” said Charlotte Anthony, marketing specialist in the Graduate School of Biomedical Sciences.

Anthony came up with the idea for Family Day at a recent graduation ceremony. “After talking with students, I realized it was the first time they had brought their parents and families to campus, and it was their last day here,” she said.

Faculty and staff, as well, don’t usually have a chance to show off where they work and spend so much time.

Anthony applied for and was awarded a \$5,000 grant from the Student Services Fee to fund Family Day. An interprofessional committee is helping organize the event.

The day will also afford UT Health San Antonio schools, departments, institutes and other entities the opportunity to have a booth that explains their work. Anthony said she is hoping the booths will be interactive in some way.

UT Health San Antonio MD Anderson Cancer Center will have a table at the event. If your department is interested in sitting at our table, contact cancercentercommunications@uthscsa.edu.

THE ONCOLOGY RESEARCH INTERNSHIP IS ACCEPTING APPLICATIONS THROUGH APRIL 1.

The Institute for Drug Development is accepting applications through April 1 for its summer oncology research internship (ORI) at UT Health San Antonio MD Anderson Cancer Center. The ORI offers interns an up-close and personal view of the drug development process. Interns will work closely with staff in each of our research departments, including the Clinical Trials Office, Regulatory Affairs and Research Infusion. After learning about each of our research areas and their roles in drug development, interns will be assigned a mentor in their area of interest.

TO LEARN MORE ABOUT THE ORI, AND TO DOWNLOAD THE APPLICATION, [CLICK HERE](#).



**GIVE CANCER THE
BOOT SURVIVORSHIP
5K RUN/WALK**

**SATURDAY, APRIL 6, 2019
9 A.M. (RACE TIME)
REGISTRATION BEGINS AT 7:30 A.M.**

UT Health San Antonio
MD Anderson Cancer Center
7979 Wurzbach Rd.
San Antonio, TX 78229

Chip-timed 5K Run/Walk or
1-Mile Walk:

- **\$25 UNTIL MIDNIGHT 3/24/19**
- **\$30 DAY OF EVENT REGISTRATION**
- **FREE FOR CANCER SURVIVORS
AND CHILDREN UNDER 12**

Register Today!



Dr. Frank Miller, chairman and professor in the Department of Otolaryngology — Head and Neck Surgery will be representing UT Health San Antonio MD Anderson Cancer Center and speaking at the Oral Cancer Foundation 5K Run/Walk on Saturday, **MARCH 30**, to raise awareness for oral, head, and neck cancer.

**10 A.M. (WALK/RUN BEGINS)
REGISTRATION BEGINS AT 8:00 A.M.**

**Lady Bird Johnson Park
10700 Nacogdoches Rd
San Antonio, TX 78217**

5K Fundraiser Walk/Fun Run:

- **\$30 WALKERS**
- **\$15 AGES 6-10**
- **\$35 DAY OF EVENT REGISTRATION**
- **FREE FOR ORAL CANCER SURVIVORS
AND CHILDREN UNDER 5**

**FOR MORE INFORMATION OR TO
REGISTER, PLEASE [CLICK HERE](#)**

- Speakers
- Silent Auction
- Snacks & Refreshments
- Goodie Bags
- Free public oral cancer screenings
- Fun Kids Area
- Raffles