

*March 1, 2016***NEWS RELEASE***Karen Martsolf, MA  
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(970) 778-1249 (c)***Community Hospital's Dr. JoAnne Virgilio travels to Utah to meet with  
Huntsman Cancer Institute and Vice President Joe Biden***Vice President Biden tours world-class facility and participates in roundtable discussion with researchers and Institute leaders.*

Mesa County, CO – Huntsman Cancer Institute (HCI) hosted Vice President Joe Biden on Friday as a part of the White House administration's "moonshot" initiative to double the rate of progress toward curing cancer. During his visit, the vice president toured the facility and participated in a roundtable discussion comprised of Huntsman Cancer Foundation board chairman Jon Huntsman Jr., CEO and director of HCI Dr. Mary Beckerle, and Senator Orrin Hatch. Local cancer survivors, researchers, experts in the field and physicians, including Community Hospital's Dr. JoAnne Virgilio with Grand Valley Oncology also participated in the roundtable.

The vice president's visit to Huntsman Cancer Institute is part of a national tour during which he has traveled to cancer institutes around the country to discuss the "moonshot" effort and collaborate with researchers and physicians to find solutions to accelerate progress toward treating, preventing and curing cancer.

"I know science will catch up. This is about aggregating the intellectual, moral, emotional, scientific and capital elements in this country and do within five years what would otherwise take us 10 to 15 years to do," said Biden. "I think we can do that. And that means thousands of lives saved and millions of lives affected."

Huntsman Cancer Institute Clinical Affairs Director Dr. John Sweentenham said, "We need to find ways that share expertise that already exists here." He noted Huntsman Cancer Institute has affiliated hospitals in Wyoming and Colorado, including the partnership with Community Hospital's Grand Valley Oncology, that share protocols and referrals to clinical trials, even creating access to "hometown" clinical trials for patients in other states.

HCI holds Comprehensive Cancer Center designation by the National Cancer Institute (NCI) and is the only NCI-designated Comprehensive Cancer Center in the five-state Intermountain West. Researchers and physicians chimed in to talk about precision prevention, the Utah Population Database (UPDB) and other solutions that make Huntsman and the Utah cancer research community unique.

HCI manages the UPDB, the largest genetic database in the world, with more than 22 million records linked to genealogies, health records and vital statistics. Vice President Biden expressed a desire to figure out how this and other models of excellence created here can be replicated throughout the country.

To learn more about Community Hospital's Grand Valley Oncology, please visit [YourCommunityHospital.com](http://YourCommunityHospital.com). To learn more about Huntsman Cancer Institute, please visit [huntsmancancer.org](http://huntsmancancer.org).