Daniel F. Hayes, M.D.
Stuart B. Padnos Professor of Breast Cancer Research
Professor of Internal Medicine

From his days as a distance runner at Indiana University, Daniel F. Hayes, M.D., knows very well that life is not a sprint, but rather a marathon. And, while he was quick to gain stature as a clinician-scientist and breast cancer oncologist, in the long run he has steadily, and successfully, built one of the top breast cancer treatment programs in the world.

Hayes has served as clinical director of the Breast Oncology Program (BOP) in the Comprehensive Cancer Center since joining the U-M faculty in 2001. During that time, colleagues who nominated him for the Outstanding Clinician Award say, he has balanced compassionate and dedicated care for his patients with his translational and clinical research interests.

Prior to his arrival, and since his joining the faculty at U-M, the BOP has grown into one of the most successful, multidisciplinary breast cancer programs in the world. His colleagues say key to this effort has been Hayes’ coordination of care across multiple disciplines, commitment to teamwork, and a laser focus on the patient experience.

“The camaraderie within the Comprehensive Cancer Center, and in particular the Breast Oncology Program, coupled with the uncompromising dedication to clinical care in the context of practice changing clinical and translational research truly do make ‘The Michigan Difference,’” he says. “My colleagues in the BOP are also my friends — something everyone hopes he or she can say about their work partners. I am truly honored by this award, since, other than being a good dad and husband, I consider excellent patient care as one of my strongest sources of pride. Indeed, this attitude permeates the entire BOP, from the check-in staff, to the medical assistants, nurses, physician’s assistants and faculty, and this award is a testimony to their dedication to our patients.”

Hayes’ research focuses on identification and clinical validation of tumor biomarkers that predict prognosis and response to anticancer therapy, especially related to breast cancer. In addition to his biomarker research, he and his colleagues in the BOP have led local and national trials addressing the development of new agents directed towards breast cancer, as well as studies of chemoprevention and interventions to improve quality of life in breast cancer survivors. As a member of a talented bench-to-bedside team — most recruited to the U-M by him — each of the BOP faculty translates these research findings back to the clinic to care for patients.

Throughout his career, Hayes’ mantra has been “At the end of every clinic day, there should be a new experiment to do, and at the end of every day in the laboratory, there should be a patient to see.”

Hayes, who holds the prestigious Stuart B. Padnos Professorship in Breast Cancer Research, has an impact on patients’ lives and the larger cancer community that has garnered accolades beyond the University’s walls. In addition to his leadership and clinical activities at the U-M, he was elected to serve a three-year term (2015-18) as president of the American Society of Clinical Oncology (ASCO) — the world’s largest and most influential professional oncology organization.

“He is a great doctor highly regarded by his patients and his colleagues ... he believes in equity of care, affordable care and making himself available to patients whenever possible.”
— Lori J. Pierce, M.D., professor of radiation oncology, Medical School, and vice president for academic and faculty affairs, University of Michigan