Faculty Spotlight: Drs. Larry Cripe and Greg Sachs

Drs. Larry Cripe and Greg Sachs recently received a 5-year $4.2 million Walther Cancer Foundation grant to establish the Walther Program in Palliative Care Research and Education Program at the IU Simon Cancer Center. A major focus of the Program is designing and testing communication strategies that can successfully integrate palliative care with conventional cancer care. This integration of care will address symptom distress in people with cancer, improve communication around end of life care and cancer, alleviate caregiver burden and distress, and control costs of cancer care. Specific aims are to (1) recruit a senior physician leader for the Program; (2) establish a pilot grant program to facilitate cancer-related research or education projects, e.g., feasibility or pilot studies; and (3) sponsor a bi-annual symposium related to palliative care and cancer.

This grant award reflects the Walther Cancer Foundation’s long-standing interest in quality of life for cancer patients and their families, including mitigating patient suffering and family distress. It also reflects the researchers’ ongoing interest in studying physician-patient communication and medical decision making near end of life. The Walther funding will enable the Program to become a leader in innovative ways to integrate conventional care with palliative care.