



## Behind the Scenes Hero Helps Bring New Treatment to Rush

*Rush University Medical Center recently honored employees for their exceptional efforts at our annual Founders Day celebration. We'll be featuring them in a series of profiles in Rush News and Inside Rush, starting with the following look at this year's recipient of the Gail L. Warden Nonclinical Employee of the Year.*

Karen Ohara, clinical research coordinator, Department of Surgery has been instrumental in coordinating the many different people and departments necessary to bring Lutathera treatment to Rush. The therapy is an innovative treatment provided to patients who are suffering from [neuroendocrine tumors](#) that cannot be operated on.

Although her position isn't one that provides direct patient care, she has been instrumental in the behind the scenes work on establishing this option for patients at Rush University Medical Center. Due to the interdisciplinary nature of the treatment, as well as the fact that the medication itself is time-sensitive and has to be flown to Chicago all the way from Europe for each treatment for every patient, the process has been a complex one.

Ohara's colleague Jennifer Poirer, a statistician in the Rush Alzheimer's Disease Center, says that Ohara "has gone above and beyond in collaborating with providers across multiple departments (surgery, oncology, and nuclear medicine/radiation safety) to insure that each patient's experience goes as smoothly as possible."

"As her office mate, I have seen her stay late and deal with crises on this complex project on many occasions," Poirer continues. "She has never passed the responsibility off to someone else, always remaining accountable herself. She has shown great respect to both her colleagues and the patients she has interacted with, even when under great stress.

"Ohara deserves to be recognized for her adherence to Rush's core values throughout this process. It is clear to me that it is only due to her incredible work ethic that it has been possible for Rush to provide this innovative therapy to our patients."

On accepting the award at our Founders Day lunch, Ohara said "it's mind-boggling that I won this award; everyone who was nominated over the past year seems worthy. This is such an honor."

"The project I won for represents a lot of effort, but in the end it benefits patients past and future as well as all of Rush. I'd like to thank everyone in my department as well as everyone in Nuclear Medicine, Radiation Safety and all the other groups who were involved."

Ohara was one of three nominees for the Non-clinical Employee of the Year Award, who also included Kelly Barger, RN, clinical documentation specialist, Care Management, and Ruth Kniuksta, project leader, IS – Clinical Systems. You can learn more about them [watching this video](#), and you can [read their nominations here](#).