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Study Examines Needs of Cancer Survivors When They No Longer Require Specialized Care
Investigators at The Cancer Institute of New Jersey Explore Survivor Expectations of Family Doctors

New Brunswick, N.J., January 15, 2009 – According to the National Cancer Policy Board, it is estimated that by the year 2050 there will be more cancer survivors in the United States than those newly diagnosed with the disease. That is why researchers at The Cancer Institute of New Jersey (CINJ) are taking a closer look at the specific needs of cancer survivors as they transition from specialty care back to their primary care provider. CINJ is a center of excellence of UMDNJ-Robert Wood Johnson Medical School.

A research study sponsored by the National Cancer Institute, CINJ and the U.S. Department of Defense will look at how breast and prostate cancer survivors view their medical needs as they no longer need to be under the care of an oncologist and go back to their regular family doctor, internist or gynecologist for follow-up care. Breast and prostate cancer survivors were chosen as the focus of this trial, because those groups represent the most common forms of cancer in survivors and screenings such as mammograms or blood work to see if the cancer has returned are often performed in a primary care setting.

Shawna V. Hudson, PhD, director of community research at CINJ and assistant professor of family medicine at UMDNJ-Robert Wood Johnson Medical School, is the lead investigator of the trial: “There have only been a few previous studies on this topic and the cancer survivor population continues to grow; therefore, it is critical to identify patterns of care that are most optimal for this group and to help them communicate their needs to general healthcare providers.”

A selected group of 36 survivors will undergo a 60 to 90 minute phone interview and will be asked a number of questions pertaining to how they view care from their primary care physician in relation to follow-up cancer care. Data from this first phase will then be used to develop a separate, self-conducted survey of 15 to 20 minutes featuring similar, but more specific questions targeted toward 720 survivors. While the entire study is expected to last five years, participants will only take part in their individual interview or questionnaire just one time.

Those who are survivors of breast or prostate cancer and are 30 years of age or older are eligible to take part in the study, although other criteria must be met. The study will recruit patients who were seen at CINJ and the Fox Chase Cancer Center in Philadelphia, as well as the affiliated network of hospitals for both institutions. For more information on how to participate, individuals should call CINJ’s Office of Human Research Services at 732-235-7245.

As New Jersey’s only National Cancer Institute-designated Comprehensive Cancer Center, CINJ provides patients with access to treatment options not available at other institutions within the state. CINJ currently enrolls more than 1,000 patients on clinical trials, including approximately 15 percent of all new adult cancer patients and approximately 70 percent of all pediatric cancer patients. Enrollment in clinical trials nationwide is fewer than five percent of all adult cancer patients.

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About The Cancer Institute of New Jersey

The Cancer Institute of New Jersey (www.cinj.org) is the state's first and only National Cancer Institute-designated Comprehensive Cancer Center, and is dedicated to improving the prevention, detection, treatment and care of patients with cancer. CINJ's physician-scientists engage in translational research, transforming their laboratory discoveries into clinical practice quite literally bringing research to life. The Cancer Institute of New Jersey is a center of excellence of UMDNJ-Robert Wood Johnson Medical School. To support CINJ, please call the Cancer Institute of New Jersey Foundation at 1-888-333-CINJ.

The Cancer Institute of New Jersey Network is comprised of hospitals throughout the state and provides a mechanism to rapidly disseminate important discoveries into the community. Flagship Hospital: Robert Wood Johnson University Hospital. Affiliate Hospitals: Bayshore Community Hospital, Carol G. Simon Cancer Center at Morristown Memorial Hospital, Carol G. Simon Cancer Center at Overlook Hospital, CentraState Healthcare System, Cooper University Hospital*, Jersey Shore University Medical Center, JFK Medical Center, Raritan Bay Medical Center, Robert Wood Johnson University Hospital at Hamilton (CINJ at Hamilton), Saint Peter's University Hospital, Somerset Medical Center, Southern Ocean County Hospital, The University Hospital/UMDNJ-New Jersey Medical School*, and University Medical Center at Princeton. *Academic Affiliate

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