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Sharon Hospital Cancer Program Approved By The Commission on Cancer of The American College of Surgeons Sharon Hospital Awarded Three Year Approval with Commendation

Sharon, CT – The Commission on Cancer (CoC) of the American College of Surgeons (ACoS) has granted Three-Year Approval with Commendation to the Cancer Program at Sharon Hospital.

A facility receives a **Three-Year Approval with Commendation** following the on-site evaluation by a physician surveyor during which the facility demonstrates a Commendation level of compliance with one or more standards that represent the full scope of the cancer program (cancer committee leadership, cancer data management, clinical services, research, community outreach, and quality improvement). In addition a facility receives a compliance rating for all other standards. “We are very proud of this accomplishment. It’s wonderful to have our quality cancer program recognized” stated Patricia Murtaugh, RHIT, CHP, Director HIM and Director of Sharon Hospital’s Cancer Program. “Receiving commendation was the outcome of the entire team’s dedication to continually enhancing the quality of our cancer care at Sharon Hospital.”

Established in 1922 by the American College of Surgeons, the CoC is a consortium of professional organizations dedicated to improving survival rates and quality of life for cancer patients through standard-setting, prevention, research, education, and the monitoring of comprehensive, quality care. Its membership includes Fellows of American College of Surgeons and 42 national organizations that reflect the full spectrum of cancer care.

The core functions of the CoC include setting standards for quality, multidisciplinary cancer patient care; surveying facilities to evaluate compliance with the 36 CoC Standards; collecting

standardized and quality data from approved facilities; and using the data to develop effective education interventions to improve cancer care outcomes at the national, state, and local level.

The American Cancer Society (ACS) estimated that more than 1.4 million cases of cancer were diagnosed in 2007. There are currently more than 1,400 CoC-approved cancer programs in the US and Puerto Rico, representing close to 25 percent of all hospitals. This 25 percent of hospitals diagnose and/or treat 80 percent of newly diagnosed cancer patients each year. In addition, a national network of more than 1,600 volunteer Cancer Liaison Physicians provides leadership and support for the CoC Approvals Program and other CoC activities at these local facilities.

The Approvals Program, a component of the CoC, sets quality-of-care standards for cancer programs and reviews the programs to ensure they conform to those standards. Approval by the CoC is given only to those facilities that have voluntarily committed to providing the highest level of quality cancer care and that undergo a rigorous evaluation process and review of their performance. To maintain approval, facilities with CoC-approved cancer programs must undergo an on-site review every three years.

Receiving care at CoC-approved cancer program ensures that a patient will have access to:

- Comprehensive care, including a range of state-of-the art services and equipment
 - A multispecialty, team approach to coordinate the best treatment options
 - Information about ongoing clinical trails and new treatment options
 - Access to cancer-related information, education, and support
 - A cancer registry that collects data on type and stage of cancers and treatment results and offers lifelong patient follow-up
 - Ongoing monitoring and improvement care
- And, most importantly,
- Quality care close to home

Cancer patient data are reported by each CoC-approved cancer program to CoC's National Cancer Data Base (NCDB), a joint CoC/American Cancer Society program. The NCDB currently contains patient demographics, tumor characteristics, and treatment and out-comes information for more than 18 million cancer patients diagnosed and treated at hospital cancer programs in the US between 1985 and 2004. These data account for approximately two-thirds of newly diagnosed cancer cases in the US each year.

NCDB data is regularly used to monitor and improve the quality of patient care delivered in CoC-approved cancer programs. The CoC require programs to implement quality improvement initiatives that promote the delivery of quality, multidisciplinary cancer care and lead to ongoing educational interventions with local providers in the CoC-approved cancer programs. “The Cancer Committee at Sharon Hospital, which was formed in 1989, is a cross-functional team comprised of members from our medical and nursing staff as well as community outreach, support services and administration” states Jill Groody Musselman, Director of Marketing & Public Relations. “Together our team constantly looks for ways to improve scope of services and enhance quality of care for our patients. We are proud of our three-year approval with commendation from the Commission on Cancer” added Musselman.

Through an exclusive partnership with the American Cancer Society, the CoC provides the public with information on the resources, services, and cancer treatment experience for each CoC-approved cancer program. This information is shared with the public on the American Cancer Society’s Web site at www.cancer.org and through the American Cancer society’s National Cancer Information Center at 1-800-ACS-2345.

For more information about the Commission on Cancer, visit our Web site at www.facs.org/cancer/index.html (.)

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