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NEARLY HALF OF ALL PATIENTS WITH CANCER EXPERIENCE SIGNIFICANT LEVELS OF SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DISTRESS

Cancer Support Community delivers enhanced CancerSupportSourceSM distress screening program; presents findings at annual meeting of the National Comprehensive Cancer Network (NCCN)

WASHINGTON - (March 13, 2014) - The Cancer Support Community (CSC), a leading international nonprofit provider of social and emotional support for people impacted by cancer, presented findings today showing that a condensed version of the distress screening program CancerSupportSource is as effective in identifying patients with distress as longer versions of the tool.

Research conducted by CSC with more than 400 patients from various regions of the United States suggests that a 13-item version of the questionnaire in English and a 15-item version in Spanish have high validity and reliability in identifying those patients experiencing distress.

Originally released as a 25-item tool, CancerSupportSource is the first validated distress screening program developed for community-based hospitals, physician practices and advocacy organizations to fully integrate screening, referral and follow-up care, all through a single, streamlined, web-based program. A study presented by CSC's *Research and Training Institute* staff at the 2014 annual meeting of the National Comprehensive Cancer Network utilizing the 25-item tool identified that screening, referral and follow-up in just a 30-day period resulted in a 25 percent decrease in overall distress.

"There is clear evidence that screening a patient for emotional distress and providing necessary support results in improved patient outcomes," said Joanne Buzaglo, PhD, Vice President of CSC's Research and Training Institute. "Delivering a more streamlined version of CancerSupportSource with the availability to reach Spanish speaking populations allows us to reach and positively impact more people currently living with this disease."

CancerSupportSource is a fully integrated program that identifies specific areas of distress by asking patients to rate their social and emotional concerns using a five-point scale (0 "not at all concerned" to 4 "very seriously concerned"). As a follow-up to the identified need, patients are given the choice to identify whether they want to: 1) talk with a health care team member; 2) receive print information; or 3) be connected to online resources as a way in which to manage their concerns.



Screening for psychosocial distress is a key recommendation in the Institute of Medicine's Report, "Cancer Care for the Whole Patient, Meeting Psychosocial Health Needs." Additionally, new patient-centered standards from the American College of Surgeon's Commission on Cancer require that all patients in an accredited cancer center be screened for distress beginning in 2015.

To read the abstracts and see the posters presented at the annual NCCN meeting, [click here](#) or visit www.cancersupportcommunity.org.

About the Cancer Support Community

The mission of the Cancer Support Community (CSC) is to ensure that all people impacted by cancer are empowered by knowledge, strengthened by action and sustained by community. In 2009, The Wellness Community and Gilda's Club joined forces to become the Cancer Support Community. The combined organization, with more than 50 years of collective experience, provides the highest quality social and emotional support for people impacted by cancer through a network of over 50 licensed affiliates, more than 100 satellite locations and a vibrant online community, touching more than one million people each year.

Backed by evidence that the best cancer care includes social and emotional support, the Cancer Support Community offers these services free of charge to men, women and children with any type or stage of cancer and to their loved ones. As the largest, professionally led nonprofit network of cancer support worldwide, the Cancer Support Community delivers a comprehensive menu of personalized and essential services including support groups, educational workshops, exercise, art and nutrition classes and social activities for the entire family. In 2013, CSC delivered more than \$40 million in free services to patients and families. The Cancer Support Community is advancing the innovations that are becoming the standard in complete cancer care. So that no one faces cancer alone®.

For more information, please visit www.cancersupportcommunity.org.