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**CANCER SUPPORT COMMUNITY'S *CANCERSUPPORTSOURCE*SM DISTRESS
SCREENING PROGRAM ADVANCES THE STANDARD FOR SOCIAL AND
EMOTIONAL CARE**

*Nonprofit Helps Health Care Providers with Early Detection of Patient Distress and Links Patient-
Reported Needs with Support Services*

Washington, D.C. – [Aug. 28, 2012] –The Cancer Support Community (CSC), the largest professionally-led cancer support nonprofit network in the world, continues to advance its vision to ensure that no one faces cancer alone through CancerSupportSourceSM. CancerSupportSource is a comprehensive program that not only leverages technology to screen patients for social and emotional concerns, it provides referral and follow-up care personalized for each individual.

Almost 30 years of work by CSC was further substantiated in 2007 when the Institute of Medicine (IOM) published *Cancer Care for the Whole Patient: Meeting Psychosocial Health Needs*. “Early identification and treatment of cancer distress is recommended by the IOM and is a critical step in treating the whole patient,” said Kim Thiboldeaux, President and CEO, Cancer Support Community. “We know that including distress screening and follow-up as a routine part of comprehensive cancer care will help improve patient outcomes.”

The American College of Surgeons Commission on Cancer (CoC) also recognizes the importance of screening as a part of overall care and will begin to require its accredited cancer centers to screen all patients diagnosed with cancer in 2015. The Cancer Support Community provided key input into the development of these standards and advice on how patient-centered standards could be implemented into the framework of CoC-accredited cancer programs.

CancerSupportSource asks patients a series of questions to help identify their level of distress and key areas of concern such as paying for care, communicating with their health care team and others. The program takes less than 10 minutes to complete. Upon completion, patients are provided with a Personal Support Care Plan comprised of tailored information about their distress level and available support resources. Health care providers receive a Clinician Report which summarizes the patient’s results, including actionable clinical alerts to help staff triage a response and identify specific assistance, as needed. CancerSupportSource was created with community cancer centers and nonprofit organizations in mind, but can be used in any setting where cancer patients receive care.

“My distress screening with CancerSupportSource helped me realize I was putting my feelings and fears on the bottom of my priority list,” said Rina C., a cervical cancer survivor who utilized the tool. “After participating in support activities recommended by CancerSupportSource and my provider, I became more empowered and have become better about expressing myself. Now I can take a step back and realize my life will never be the same, but things will be better.”

If you are a health care professional who is interested in learning more about CancerSupportSource, please contact Vicki Kennedy at 202.650.5379, Vicki@cancersupportcommunity.org or go to www.cancersupportcommunity.org.

About the Cancer Support Community:

Backed by evidence that the best cancer care includes emotional and social support, the Cancer Support Community offers these services to all people affected by cancer. The largest professionally-led network of cancer support worldwide, the organization delivers a comprehensive menu of personalized and essential services. Because no cancer care plan is complete without emotional and social support, the Cancer Support Community has a vibrant network of community-based centers and online services run by trained and licensed professionals. For more information, visit www.CancerSupportCommunity.org.

In July 2009, The Wellness Community and Gilda’s Club Worldwide joined forces to become the Cancer Support Community. The combined organization provides high-quality psychological and social support through a network of more than 50 local affiliates, more than 100 satellite locations and online.

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