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**LOW-INCOME CANCER PATIENTS ARE MORE LIKELY TO SEEK SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL SUPPORT FROM HEALTH CARE TEAM, STUDY SUGGESTS**

*The Cancer Support Community presents findings from a community-based distress screening program at annual meeting of the American Society of Clinical Oncology (ASCO)*

**WASHINGTON - (May 30, 2014)** - A study conducted by the Cancer Support Community (CSC), the largest professionally led nonprofit network of cancer support worldwide, suggests that cancer patients with lower income are more likely to request social and emotional support and could benefit from proactive monitoring of their distress.

The study of 251 English-speaking cancer patients, each completing CancerSupportSource<sup>SM</sup>, a 25-item distress screening survey, found that high levels of distress were significantly linked to an increased likelihood of patients seeking support from a member of their health care team, especially among patients with lower income.

“Early recognition of and intervention for distress has demonstrated a significant impact on patient outcomes,” said Joanne Buzaglo, PhD, Vice President of the Cancer Support Community’s Research and Training Institute. “The results of this study underscore the importance of being proactive with screening and seem to suggest a group of patients who would likely benefit greatly from early intervention.”

In the study, patients completed the web-based CancerSupportSource survey, which measured their levels of distress in seven key areas as recommended by the Institute of Medicine in its 2008 report, “Cancer Care for the Whole Patient: Meeting Psychosocial Health Needs.” The survey asks patients to rate their level of concern regarding 25 screening items and select the type of help they want for each concern (e.g., talk with a staff person, connect with online resources, or provide written information). Individuals who indicate they want to talk with staff on at least one of the 25 items are automatically connected with a member of their health care team.

In addition to being a key recommendation by the Institute of Medicine, screening for psychosocial distress is also part of the new patient-centered standards from the American College of Surgeon’s Commission on Cancer, which require that all patients cared for in an accredited cancer center be screened for distress by 2015.

To read the abstracts presented at the meeting, click [here](#) or visit [www.cancersupportcommunity.org/postersandpresentations](http://www.cancersupportcommunity.org/postersandpresentations).

**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 more than 50 licensed Affiliates, more than 120 satellite locations and vibrant online and telephone communities, 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. Through cutting-edge psychosocial, behavioral and survivorship research, the Cancer Support Community's *Research and Training Institute* is helping CSC change the future of cancer care through education and training. The Cancer Support Community's *Cancer Policy Institute* ensures that the voices of 13.7 million cancer survivors and their families are heard in the nation's capital and state and local legislatures across the country. In 2013, the CSC network delivered nearly \$48 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](http://www.cancersupportcommunity.org)

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