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West Jefferson Medical Center Cancer Program to Host Pink Tea for Breast Cancer Survivors

West Jefferson Medical Center's Community Cancer Program will host its annual Pink Tea on October 17 for breast cancer survivors. The special event is one of several programs hosted by the Community Cancer Program's Public-Outreach Committee and Cancer Program. For complimentary admission, survivors should RSVP to (504) 349-1308.

West Jefferson Medical Center in Marrero, Louisiana is one of the 66 cancer facilities across the country which received outstanding achievement awards from the American College of Surgeons Commission on Cancer for 2007.

The Commission on Cancer (CoC) of the American College of Surgeons granted its 2007 CoC Outstanding Achievement Awards to currently approved and newly approved cancer programs at 66 facilities across the country including one in Louisiana for 2007. West Jefferson Medical Center was the program so recognized for the 2007 Survey year.

Established in 2004, the CoC Outstanding Achievement Award (OAA) is designed to recognize cancer programs that strive for excellence in providing quality care to cancer patients. A facility receives the OAA following the on-site evaluation by a physician surveyor during which the facility demonstrates a Commendation level of compliance with seven 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 the facility receives a compliance rating for the

remaining 29 standards including public outreach. Sixty-six programs received the OAA as a result of surveys performed in 2007. This number represents approximately fifteen percent of the 453 programs surveyed during this period. A majority of recipients are community-based facilities; teaching hospitals, NCI-designated Comprehensive Cancer Centers and Network Cancer Programs also received the award.

Established in 1922 by the American College of Surgeons, the Commission on Cancer is a consortium of professional organizations dedicated to improving survival 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 the American College of Surgeons and representatives of 40 national organizations that reflect the full spectrum of cancer care.

The CoC's core functions include setting standards for quality, multidisciplinary cancer patient care; surveying facilities to evaluate compliance with the 36 CoC standards; collecting standardized, high quality data from approved facilities; and using the data to develop effective educational interventions to improve cancer care outcomes at the national, state, and local level. 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. These CoC-approved facilities diagnose and/or treat 80 percent of newly diagnosed cancer patients each year.

The Approvals Program, a component of the CoC, sets quality-of-care standards for cancer programs and reviews the programs to ensure that 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 a 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 multi-specialty team approach to coordinate the best treatment options, information about ongoing clinical trials 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 of care and, most importantly, quality care close to home.

Cancer patient data are reported by each CoC-approved cancer program to the CoC's National Cancer Data Base (NCDB), a joint program with the ACS. The NCDB currently contains patient demographics, tumor characteristics, and treatment and outcomes information for more than 16 million cancer patients diagnosed and treated at hospital cancer programs in the US between 1985 and 2003. These data account for approximately two-thirds of newly diagnosed cancer cases in the US each year.

NCDB data is used regularly to monitor the quality of patient care delivered in CoC-approved cancer programs, and to improve cancer care outcomes at national and local levels. The CoC requires 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.

Through an exclusive partnership with the ACS, 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 ACS Web site at www.cancer.org and through the ACS National Cancer Information Center at 1-800/ACS-2345.

For more information about the Commission on Cancer, visit its Web site at www.facs.org/cancer/index.html (.). For information on West Jefferson Medical Center's upcoming cancer awareness activities, call (504) 349-1176.

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