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**Christiana Care Health System and Wistar Institute
Form Cancer Research Partnership**

(PHILADELPHIA – August 19, 2011) – Christiana Care Health System’s Helen F. Graham Cancer Center and The Wistar Institute, an international leader in biomedical research, have entered into an historic partnership to collaborate on translational cancer research with the aim of bringing the latest discoveries in cancer research to cancer patients in the community.

The partnership combines Wistar’s strengths in basic biomedical research with the Graham Cancer Center’s exceptional cancer treatment and patient care. The goal of the translational cancer research collaboration is to “translate” or advance research discoveries made in Wistar’s labs into early phase (phase I and II) clinical trials with patients at the Graham Cancer Center.

“Forming this partnership with one of the foremost cancer research institutions in the nation will be greatly beneficial to finding cures and treatment options for many cancers,” said Robert J. Laskowski, M.D., president and CEO of Christiana Care Health System. “This collaboration is exciting news for Christiana Care and our cancer program, but most importantly, for our patients and neighbors in the community.”

“While Wistar scientists have made great progress in understanding the biological basis of cancer, we are only part of the continuum of translational research that yields new therapies for cancer patients,” said Russel E. Kaufman, M.D., president and CEO of The Wistar Institute. “By joining with such an outstanding clinical partner as the Graham Cancer Center, our hope is that, together, we can bring our laboratory discoveries to patients more quickly and improve public health, overall.”

At 24 percent, the Graham Cancer Center has one of the nation’s highest patient accrual rates into cancer clinical trials, far above the national average of 4 percent. One of the original National Cancer Institute’s Community Cancer Centers formed in 2007, the Graham Cancer Center is also one of the most technologically advanced and largest cancer programs on the east coast, recording more than 170,000 patient visits last year.

Established in 1894, The Wistar Institute was designated a National Cancer Institute Cancer Center in 1972 and has focused its basic biomedical research on understanding the causes and treatment of cancer. The Institute’s Cancer Center has a history of significant advances in cancer genetics, cancer biology, tumor immunology and virology. Its accomplishments include identification of genes associated with breast, lung

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and prostate cancer, development of monoclonal antibodies used to study the pathways and proteins involved in tumor development and contributions to improved cancer treatments and diagnostic tests. The Institute works actively to transfer its inventions to the commercial sector to ensure that research advances with the potential to benefit public health move from the laboratory to the clinic as expeditiously as possible.

Translational cancer research transforms scientific discoveries arising from laboratory, clinical, or population studies into clinical applications to reduce cancer incidence, morbidity and mortality. It is vital to finding cures and treatments for cancer.

Many of today's standard treatments for cancer began in clinical trials. Patients who volunteer to participate in clinical trials often have the first chance to benefit from an effective new therapy. Early phase trials evaluate how a new drug should be given (by mouth, injected into a vein, or injected into the muscle), how often, and what dose is safe. They also evaluate how well the new drug works against a particular kind of cancer.

Areas of initial research in the Wistar-Christiana Care partnership will focus on colon cancer stem cells, targeted treatments for melanoma and novel approaches for molecular profiling, and treatment of advanced and metastatic disease.

For example, Wistar scientists recently demonstrated in mice that low doses of an anti-cancer drug currently in development, called Gamitrinib, sensitize tumor cells to a second drug called TRAIL, also in development. The drug combination kills tumor cells in mice and in human glioblastoma (the most common and aggressive form of brain cancer) cells. The Graham Cancer Center may provide human glioblastoma cells to Wistar for further preclinical study through its Tissue Procurement Collection, one of only a few non-university based programs in the country to collect human tissue samples to help scientists learn more about the growth and development of cancer through the NIH Cancer Genome Atlas Project. After further preclinical development, the drug combination based on Wistar science may be offered to Graham Cancer Center patients in a phase 1 clinical trial.

“Eighty-five percent of oncology care is given in the community at places such as the Helen F. Graham Cancer Center,” said Dario C. Altieri, M.D., director of The Wistar Institute Cancer Center and Robert and Penny Fox Distinguished Professor. “This partnership will bring cutting edge cancer research to these patients, while also providing outstanding opportunities for collaboration with our clinical colleagues that will inform our laboratory work and hopefully, ultimately, lead to better cancer therapies.”

“Collaborative initiatives between the two Institutions will focus on specific translational oncology research projects, with the goal of enhancing opportunities for joint funding and joint publications between scientists at Wistar, the Graham Cancer Center and other institutions,” said Nicholas J. Petrelli, M.D., Bank of America Endowed medical director of the Graham Cancer Center. “The National Cancer Institute-supported facilities of both organizations will interact and share resources and expertise as appropriate to advance collaborative research projects.”

For more information about Christiana Care, visit www.christianacare.org. To learn more about The Wistar Institute, visit www.wistar.org.

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