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Christiana Care participates in landmark research study that reveals lung cancer 10-year survival dramatically improves with annual CT screening and prompt treatment
Only institution in Delaware and Philadelphia area actively enrolling patients in I-ELCAP

WILMINGTON, DE (Oct. 25, 2006) – Lung cancer can be detected at its very earliest stage in 85 percent of patients using annual low-dose CT screening and when followed by prompt surgical removal the 10-year survival rate is 92 percent. These results, to be reported in the October 26 *New England Journal of Medicine*, would dramatically decrease the number of deaths from lung cancer – the number one cause of cancer deaths among both men and women in the U.S.

Christiana Care's Helen F. Graham Cancer Center is the only site in Delaware and the Philadelphia area continuing to enroll patients in the International Early Lung Cancer Action Project (I-ELCAP), an international collaboration of 38 institutions in seven countries. Begun in 1993 by a team of researchers at New York-Presbyterian Hospital/Weill Cornell Medical Center, I-ELCAP is the largest, long-term research study to determine the usefulness of annual screening by CT (www.ielcap.org).



Since 2003, Christiana Care enrolled more than 1,100 patients, ranking it 9th among the 38 institutions involved. The study was lead at Christiana Care's Helen F. Graham Cancer Center by Thomas Bauer, M.D., (Thoracic Surgeon) and James Lally, M.D., (Radiologist) and coordinated by Barbara Marconi, RN, and Angela Steele-Tilton, RN.

"The overall survival from lung cancer has not changed over the past 50 years," according to Dr. Bauer. "Through close collaboration between radiology, thoracic surgery and community physicians, we have been able to offer access to this study. The result has been a dramatic improvement in overall survival of lung cancer patients participating in this trial."

Stage I lung cancer is the only stage at which cure by surgery is highly likely. While survival rates have been climbing for other forms of cancer, the survival rates for lung cancer have remained dismal. Approximately 95 percent of the 173,000 people diagnosed each year die from the disease – more than breast, prostate and colon cancer combined. The high death rates are a consequence of lung cancer not being detected early enough for treatment to be curative.

Among the 31,567 people in the study, CT screening detected 484 people who were diagnosed with lung cancer, 412 of these were Stage 1. Of the Stage I patients who chose not to be treated, all died within five years. Overall, the estimated 10-year survival rate for the 484 participants with lung cancer was 80 percent. The participants were 40 years of age and



older and at risk for lung cancer because of a history of cigarette smoking, occupational exposure (to asbestos, beryllium, uranium or radon), or exposure to secondhand smoke.

Since the early 1990s, there have been remarkable advances in CT scanners. Sub-millimeter “slicing” can now be applied to the entire chest in a single breath-hold. As a result, lung cancer may be detected when it is smaller than it was possible to diagnose previously. Although CT scans once yielded only 30 images, current technology yields over 600 images. As the technology advanced, the approaches for studying the usefulness of this technology have also advanced.

The initial screening CT is free at Christiana Care’s Helen F. Graham Cancer Center thanks to the generous support of both Christiana Care and the surrounding community. Treatment for Stage 1 lung cancer is less than half the cost of late-stage treatment. Estimates of the cost-effectiveness of CT screening for lung cancer are similar or better than those for mammography screening for breast cancer.

The current study was supported by numerous private and public grants, including a grant from the National Institutes of Health (NIH).

For more information about the study, please log on to www.christianacare.org and review the eligibility criteria and register online or call 302-623-5227.

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About Christiana Care Health System

Christiana Care Health System, which dates back to 1888, is one of the region's largest not-for profit health care providers, serving the people of Delaware as well as neighboring areas of Maryland, Pennsylvania and New



Jersey. A teaching hospital, Christiana Care is recognized as a regional center for excellence in cardiology, cancer and women's health services, as well as Level-I trauma care and Level-3 neonatal intensive care (both highest intensity). Christiana Care operates two hospitals, transitional care services, preventive medicine and rehabilitation services, a network of primary care physician offices and an extensive range of outpatient and home health services. Christiana Care provided \$ 25.2 million of charity care last year.