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For Immediate Release

St. Vincent's Earns Breast Center Accreditation Through Multidisciplinary Approach

Bridgeport, CT, June 22, 2010-- St. Vincent's Medical Center has earned "Breast Center of Excellence" accreditation from the National Accreditation Program for Breast Cancer (NAPBC), which is administered by the American College of Surgeons. The NAPBC awarded this designation based on the implementation by St. Vincent's of the accrediting agency's strict guidelines, and based on the positive results of the organization's survey earlier this year. In February, St. Vincent's opened the 125,000 square foot Elizabeth Pfriem SWIM Center for Cancer Care, which houses breast cancer services.

"This accreditation represents an exciting milestone for us, and one that not many hospitals in the United States have as yet attained," said St. Vincent's Senior Vice President, Chief Medical Officer and Chairman of the Department of Oncology Stuart Marcus, MD, FACS. Citing the high standards in comprehensive care and multidisciplinary approach required for the accreditation, he drew a direct correlation to what this means to the regional community.

"Patients are assured of having options here that are comparable to those at major cancer hospitals and university centers, and won't have to travel long distances to get the most effective treatment for their cancer," he said. "With our superb physicians and all the latest in diagnostic and treatment equipment as well as the most coordinated of specialized care, patients find it right here at St. Vincent's."

St. Vincent's multidisciplinary approach differs in that it follows a program of regular, face-to-face meetings where cases are presented and reviewed at multiple key points throughout the patient's workup and treatment.

The American College of Surgeons developed NAPBC as a tool to improve the quality of care and monitoring for patients with diseases of the breast. With official American Cancer Society (ACS) estimates of more than 192,300 invasive-breast-cancer cases diagnosed among women in 2009, and 1,910 among men, the guidelines address comprehensive care, clinical-trials awareness and new treatment information, as well as that need for quality care being "close to home." In addition, the guidelines emphasize providing state-of-the-art-services accessibility including for the underserved through community outreach.

Medical Director of the SWIM Women's Imaging Center Kelly Ann Harkins, MD, noted the value of the program's multidisciplinary focus in terms of coordinating imaging and diagnosis with treatment plans. "Patients who have a Breast Center of Excellence nearby that offers state-of-the-art imaging can have their tumors detected at their earliest size," Dr. Harkins said. "As a radiologist, I especially appreciate discussing with our physicians, nurses and technologists the imaging as it relates to our patient's diagnosis and care. It achieves a level of attention-to-detail that results in the very best care and outcomes."

According to Breast Center of Excellence program leader and surgeon Anthy Demestihis, MD, FACS, the Breast Center of Excellence program's stated standards and procedures promote optimal sharing of medical perspectives on a patient's diagnosis and condition. Dr. Demestihis believes this bodes well for positive surgical outcomes. "Having all this just makes me as a surgeon more confident that my patients are receiving the latest, most

effective treatment and support,” she said. “That’s always an essential concern for a surgeon and this program advances that goal.”

Three initiatives were created as part of the accrediting process, including establishing the weekly Breast Conference where all suspected or diagnosed cases of cancer are discussed by the team; coordinating the Breast Clinic at St. Vincent’s Family Health Center, where underserved area residents with breast cancer can be seen by surgeons and medical oncologists; and implementing the extremely successful Breast Care Nurse Navigator Program, where specially trained nurses help patients and their families understand and manage their treatment plan and serve as a support in many other ways.

Dr. Marcus noted that the weekly breast cancer conference is the core of the multidisciplinary program. This is where breast surgeons, plastic surgeons, medical and radiation oncologists, pathologists, radiologists, breast cancer nurse navigators and all other support personnel meet to discuss individual patient management in detail.

The Breast Clinic at the Family Health Center (FHC) is led by Dr. Demestihias, who every other week sees patients who have been referred by the FHC and other area clinics for follow-up on suspicion of breast cancer.

Breast Care Nurse Navigators answer patient questions, expedite scheduling of appointments and procedures, provide information on treatment options, side effects, available resources and support, and create an individualized survivorship plan at the conclusion of treatment.”

National Accreditation Program for Breast Cancers

The National Accreditation Program for Breast Centers, administered by the American College of Surgeons, represents a consortium of national, professional organizations dedicated to the improvement of the quality of care and monitoring of outcomes of patients with diseases of the breast. This mission is pursued through standard-setting, scientific validation, and patient and professional education. The NAPBC Board has worked diligently to assure multidisciplinary leadership representation and has recently sanctioned its program structure and standards, which include nationally recognized breast cancer quality performance measures that will serve as an initial platform for measuring quality improvement. For more information, visit napbc@facs.org

Elizabeth Pfriem SWIM Center for Cancer Care

The new Elizabeth Pfriem SWIM Center for Cancer Care, which opened to patients on February 2, is designed to consolidate cancer prevention, diagnostic, treatment and survivorship services in one convenient and attractive location. The building, 125,000 square feet of new construction all built to green standards at a cost of \$50 million, marks the most significant expansion project in the Medical Center’s 107-year history. Through screening, education and psychosocial support, the cancer center offers a safe, healing environment for patients and their families afflicted with cancer.

The four-level center incorporates the latest technology including a new Novalis™ linear accelerator with Rapid Arc™ technology which targets tumor sites, while minimizing damage to healthy tissue. The cancer center also features a PET/CT Dual Unit scanner and simulator which can detect evidence of cancer before a clinical change is observed on other imaging modalities, an Ambulatory Infusion Center with both an open or more private setting for patients to receive

their chemotherapy, adjacent garden courtyard where patients can relax during treatment, new Women's Imaging Center for mammography, breast ultrasound and bone density screenings, SWIM/ CT Challenge Integrative Survivorship Center offering a holistic approach to cancer treatment and survivorship issues, medical oncologist offices, a boutique for wigs and clothing designed for cancer patients, and a community lecture room for prevention and support programs. For more information, visit www.stvincents.org