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**Implementation of Multidisciplinary Approach to Cancer Care in Hospitals  
Improves Patient Outcomes**

*– Establishing Internal Infrastructures to Coordinate Care Across Service Areas –*

**MORRISTOWN, N.J.; SAN FRANCISCO** (Nov. 26, 2008) — Surgical oncologist Dr. Aaron Chevinsky addressed more than 300 surgeons at the American College of Surgeons Cancer Liaison Physician Breakfast, which was held Oct. 13 in San Francisco. His presentation, “Implementation of a Multidisciplinary Approach to Cancer Care,” offered experiences from his practice, Allied Surgical Group ([www.alliedsurgical.org](http://www.alliedsurgical.org)), and a discussion of his role in the creation of a multidisciplinary hepatobiliary and pancreatic tumor treatment team at the Carol G. Simon Cancer Center in Morristown Memorial Hospital.

Comprehensive multidisciplinary medical teams that care for patients with cancer include medical, radiation and surgical oncologists; gastroenterologists; interventional radiologists; pathologists; researchers; the physician liaison; tumor registry; and components of the cancer care team including cancer registry, cancer dietitians and social workers.

“The primary goal of coordinating cancer care across all service areas is to measure and improve patient outcomes and decrease cancer mortality rates,” said Dr. Chevinsky.

Benefits of the team approach include increased access to referrals and information sharing about new technology, cancer databases, research and clinical trials; in-depth evaluation of all treatment options; and the enhanced ability to prioritize protocols, increase physician education and boost public awareness about the specific cancer treatments. Other ancillary benefits from a business perspective include financial, managerial and recruitment/retention.

The key factors a hospital should consider before establishing multidisciplinary teams include the following:

- What are the roles and challenges of the liaison physician, who is the champion for the cancer patient?
- How do we establish site-specific panels for specific cancers?
- What desired disciplines comprise specific teams?
- How can we establish key partnerships with other credible medical institutions?

It is also invaluable for staff in the beginning stages of establishing multidisciplinary teams to conduct site visits at hospitals with established programs.

“The Commission on Cancer sets standards for cancer care at its member institutions. These standards assist in creating a setting for optimal treatment of patients with malignant disease; among these are standards encouraging multidisciplinary care,” notes Dr. Aaron D. Bleznak, Chair of the Committee on Cancer Liaison and Vice Chair of Operations & Clinical Affairs for the Department of Surgery for Lehigh Valley Hospital & Health Network.

“Dr. Chevinsky has had an influential role in the creation of a multidisciplinary care team for a targeted cancer diagnosis. The leadership of the Committee on Cancer Liaison applauds Dr. Chevinsky's efforts and asked him to present this as an example of the leadership role we hope to see from our Cancer Liaison Physicians in support of the standards of the Commission.”

Attendees at the American College of Surgeons Cancer Liaison Physician Breakfast included the American College of Surgeons, the 46 national and professional organizations affiliated with the Commission on Cancer (CoC), and affiliated member organizations.

Speaker Aaron Chevinsky, M.D., FACS, is a surgical oncologist at Allied Surgical Group in Morristown, N.J.; chief of surgical oncology at Carol G. Simon Cancer Center at Morristown Memorial Hospital; and clinical professor of surgery at UMDNJ in Newark, N.J.

#### **About Allied Surgical Group**

Allied Surgical Group includes world-class surgeons who have provided state-of-the-art surgery to patients and New Jersey's finest doctors for more than three decades. Allied Surgical Group's eight board-certified surgeons include Mitchel S. Carter, M.D., FACS; Aaron Chevinsky, M.D., FACS; William L. Diehl, M.D., FACS; Carey Dolgin, M.D., FACS; Leah S. Gendler, M.D., FACS; Edward R. McLean Jr., M.D., FACS; Michael David Most, M.D.; and David S. Ward, M.D., FACS.

Areas of expertise include oncology; vascular, advanced laparoscopic and obesity surgery; and minimally invasive surgery. Together, the doctors care with compassion and integrity for patients throughout the tri-state region. Allied Surgical Group is located at 261 James St., Suite 2G, Morristown, N.J., and in the Carol G. Simon Cancer Center at Morristown Memorial Hospital. For more information, call 973-267-6400 or visit [www.alliedsurgical.org](http://www.alliedsurgical.org).

#### **Commission on Cancer**

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. ([www.facs.org/cancer/](http://www.facs.org/cancer/))

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