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Oncology Alliance Hosts Research Symposium to Expedite Most Recent Data On Advances in Cancer Treatment

MILWAUKEE, Wis. (July 17, 2009) -- Each year, thousands of oncology nurses and physicians assemble at the world's premier scientific event for oncology professionals--the annual meeting of the American Society of Clinical Oncology (ASCO). There, the latest results of cancer clinical trials and laboratory research are presented prior to journal publication. Some results represent ongoing research, but other data has an immediate impact on how patients are treated. To expedite the transfer of this critical information to cancer specialists in our region, Oncology Alliance, the largest private practice of oncology and hematology specialists in the greater Milwaukee area, will host "Highlights of ASCO 2009," a symposium to review significant studies presented just weeks ago at the ASCO annual meeting. The symposium is on Saturday, July 25th from 9:00 a.m. until 12:15 p.m. at The Pfister Hotel, 424 E. Wisconsin Ave., Milwaukee.

"Oncology is a rapidly changing discipline," says Michael P. Mullane, M.D., a medical oncologist with Oncology Alliance and moderator of the symposium. "Changes in cancer treatment often result in patients living longer or with improved quality of life. To that end, it's critical that information about these advances be communicated to our colleagues as quickly as possible."

Mullane points to two significant studies presented this year at ASCO. One finding changes the way physicians treat stomach cancers. "Treating some gastric cancers with trastuzumab appears to help patients with this disease live longer," he says. A second set of findings will lead to cutting edge clinical trials with a new class of targeted therapy called PARP inhibitors for hard-to-treat "triple negative" breast cancers. "We have few options for this type of breast cancer, but these latest studies give us a promising new direction with new agents."

Mullane adds, "The public read and hear about many of these advances in the news, but there are nuanced data not reported which impact treatment decision making. By presenting these data in full at our symposium, our oncology colleagues will have the most up-to-date information about recent advances and can act on that information."

Oncology Alliance is the largest private practice of oncology and hematology specialists in the greater Milwaukee area. Oncology Alliance's 19 physicians provide care to patients from 11 locations in Southeastern Wisconsin. They are supported by a multidisciplinary team of 260 employees, including oncology nurses who are specially trained in oncology and hematology care and numerous other clinical specialists. For more information about Oncology Alliance, go to www.oncologyalliance.com.

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