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Contact: Jennifer Stawarz, 847-498-8306
jstawarz@chestnet.org

LUNG CANCER: LARGE IMPACT, LITTLE FUNDING
The ACCP and FIRS Elevate Lung Cancer Status During 2010: The Year of the Lung

(Northbrook, IL, February 4, 2010)—During the 2010: The Year of the Lung campaign, the American College of Chest Physicians (ACCP) and other members of the Forum of International Respiratory Societies (FIRS) are honoring World Cancer Day, February 4, by elevating the awareness of lung cancer in terms of prevalence and prevention, as well as the amount of funding the disease receives for research in diagnosis and management.

Lung Cancer Funding

Lung cancer is the leading cause of cancer deaths in men and women in the United States and throughout the world, yet it is the least funded. Lung cancer causes more deaths than the next four most common cancers combined, including breast, colon, pancreas, and prostate.¹ Furthermore, lung cancer has one of the lowest 5-year survival rates among the five leading cancer killers, second only to pancreatic cancer.¹ However, in the United States, lung cancer receives just \$1,200 of federal funding per death, while breast cancer receives more than \$27,000 per death, followed by \$14,000 for prostate cancer and \$6,500 for colon cancer.²

“There is a significant disconnect between the tremendous morbidity and mortality caused by lung cancer, compared with other cancers, and the amount of funding provided for lung cancer research,” said Kalpalatha Guntupalli, MD, FCCP, President of the American College of Chest Physicians. “The lack of significant research dollars and resources for lung cancer research will further hinder the progress in reducing the incidence and management of this devastating disease.”

Lung Cancer and Women

Beyond the race for research dollars, lung cancer is in need of significant funding for national awareness campaigns, placing emphasis on the prevention of the disease and how the disease impacts specific populations. Although lung cancer trends show the incidence has slightly decreased among men from 1991 to 2005 (decrease of 1.8 percent per year), the incidence among women continues to grow (increase of 0.5 percent per year).³ Regarding lung cancer mortality, 30 percent of cancer deaths in men

are attributable to lung cancer, while the number is slightly lower at 26 percent in women.¹ However, this gender gap is also decreasing. The death rate per 100,000 was 90.56 for men in 1991 but fell to 69.39 in 2005. In women, the death rate per 100,000 increased from 37.61 to 40.59.¹

Lung Cancer and Ethnicity

In addition to women, African-Americans continue to experience the disproportionate burden of lung cancer incidence and mortality. Compared with other ethnic groups, African-Americans have the highest incidence of lung cancer, highest mortality rate, and lowest 5-year survival rate associated with lung cancer.¹

Lung Cancer Initiatives

An increase in federal funding for national, statewide, and community-based initiatives that focus on disease prevention, particularly in the areas of tobacco prevention and cessation, is needed in order to make a significant impact on morbidity and mortality associated with lung cancer. Furthermore, campaigns that place additional emphasis on the risk factors of lung cancer —tobacco use and beyond—are key in helping to educate at-risk populations.

“Significant funding and resources have been dedicated to cancer research, which has greatly improved patient awareness and outcomes for breast, prostate, and other cancers,” said Dr. Guntupalli. “It is time for lung cancer to receive this same priority in research and awareness.”

ACCP and 2010: The Year of the Lung

2010: The Year of the Lung is a global initiative instituted by the Forum of International Respiratory Societies (FIRS), a collaboration of the world’s leading professional respiratory organizations, including the ACCP. 2010: The Year of the Lung aims to raise awareness of and advocate for lung health, globally and at the country level, to reduce lung disease morbidity and mortality.

A leader in lung cancer education, the ACCP has published a number of provider and patient resources related to lung cancer, including evidence-based lung cancer guidelines and tobacco prevention education materials. To learn more about 2010: The Year of the Lung and corresponding ACCP initiatives, please visit www.chestnet.org. To learn more about World Cancer Day, visit http://www.who.int/mediacentre/events/annual/world_cancer_day/en/index.html

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¹ Jemal A, Siegel R, Ward E, Hao Y, Xu J, Thun MJ. Cancer statistics, 2009. *CA Cancer J Clin*. 2009;59:225-249.

² Uniting Against Lung Cancer. The facts about lung cancer. <http://unitingagainstlungcancer.org/raising-awareness/facts>. Accessed January 29, 2010.

³ Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Lung cancer trends. <http://www.cdc.gov/cancer/lung/statistics/trends.htm>. Accessed January 29, 2010.