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LUNG CANCER ALLIANCE HAILS LANDMARK STUDY PROVING EARLY DETECTION SAVES LIVES

Washington, DC [October 25, 2006] – Lung Cancer Alliance, the only national organization providing patient support and advocacy exclusively to those living with or at risk for lung cancer, hailed the research work of the International Early Lung Cancer Action Program (I-ELCAP) published in the October 26, 2006 New England Journal of Medicine, which demonstrates that the number one cause of cancer death – lung cancer – can be cured.

The I-ELCAP study – the largest long-term study ever conducted by the world’s leading experts in early detection of lung cancer – demonstrates that if lung cancer is detected and treated early, 92 percent of patients could expect to live 10 years. Lung cancer currently has a 15 percent five-year survival rate and is considered to be one of the most lethal cancers.

“This is the most important breakthrough for the lung cancer community that has ever happened – and will happen for years to come,” said Laurie Fenton, President of Lung Cancer Alliance. “It is a watershed moment.”

Lung cancer is the leading cause of cancer death. The vast majority (70 percent) of diagnoses are late stage, causing most deaths in the first year.

“If you detect it early and treat it early, you stand the greatest chance of surviving longer,” continued Fenton. “It has been proven with other major cancers and diseases that early detection saves lives. Why should lung cancer be treated differently?”

The I-ELCAP study was launched by a team of researchers at New York Presbyterian Hospital/Weill Cornell Medical Center in 1993 and has expanded into an international collaboration of 38 institutions in 7 countries, with over 30,000 patients and 50,000 scans. It is the largest, long-term study undertaken by the world’s leading lung cancer early detection experts to determine the usefulness of annual screening by CT.

Participants in the study were at least 40 years of age and at risk for lung cancer due to a history of cigarette smoking, occupational exposure (to asbestos beryllium or radon), or exposure to second hand smoke. By keeping pace with rapidly developing CT technology, I-ELCAP devised an entire protocol for detecting, diagnosing and managing lung cancer.

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NO MORE EXCUSES. NO MORE LUNG CANCER.

Fenton praised founder and principle investigators, Claudia I. Henschke, M.D. and David F. Yankelevitz, M.D., for their years of dedication and commitment to proving that screening for lung cancer can save lives. “On behalf of all our stakeholders – those living with or at risk for lung cancer – we thank you.”

Fenton concluded, “Lung Cancer Alliance intends to strongly advocate within the public health community for adoption of the I-ELCAP protocols on screening, diagnosis and early disease management and to make certain that lung cancer early detection is reimbursed through public and private mechanisms.”

For more information or to view the Lung Cancer Alliance Position Paper on the I-ELCAP study, please visit www.LungCancerAlliance.org.

The Lung Cancer Alliance is the only national non-profit organization solely dedicated to patient support and advocacy for people living with, or at risk for, lung cancer. As the number one cancer killer, lung cancer will kill more than 160,000 Americans this year alone, causing more deaths than breast, prostate, colon, liver, kidney cancers and melanoma combined.

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