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Ochsner Supports *Cancer Patient Statement of Principles* at National Hematology Cancer Conference (ASH) in New Orleans

NEW ORLEANS - Cancer patients fighting for their lives often find themselves fighting the “system,” whether it’s to get the drugs they need or getting their insurance company to pay for the drugs that are prescribed. Now patients, especially those with rare blood cancers, have a champion in the “*Cancer patient Statement of Principles*” to be unveiled at the Annual American Society of Hematology (ASH) Meeting, **December 5-8, 2009**, held in New Orleans at the **Ernest N. Morial Convention Center**.

The Ochsner Cancer Institute is pleased to support this campaign which calls for

- an equitable, patient-oriented insurance system that acknowledges and covers 21st Century tests and treatments
- an expedited drug approval system for patients with life-threatening conditions
- and easier access to new drugs while they are still in the approval process.

“At Ochsner my role as a specialist in multiple myeloma is to treat patients with the newest, most-effective treatments,” said Dr Arthur Molina, Ochsner’s Director of Bone Marrow Transplantation and Hematological Malignancies. “I am concerned when patients tell me they would rather have an older, less tolerable drug because their insurance plan will reimburse them at a higher rate.”

The “Cancer patient Statement of Principles” is sponsored by a coalition of the International Myeloma Foundation, the Myelodysplastic Syndromes Foundation, and the Tackle Cancer Foundation. Supporters attending ASH can visit the “Statement of Principles” booth at exhibit hall at the Morial Convention Center, or learn more at the advocacy page on the International Myeloma Foundation Website, www.capwiz.com/myeloma/home, twitter CP4EA (cancer patients 4 equal access).

ABOUT THE STATEMENT OF PRINCIPLES:

- Prevention is the key to reducing the burden of cancer
- Continuing innovation is critical to early diagnosis and better treatment
- Patients need and deserve an equitable, patient-oriented insurance system that acknowledges and covers 21st Century tests and treatments
- Early approval of new treatments for deadly cancers is essential
- Patients who have exhausted approved therapies need simplified access to experimental agents

Ochsner Health System (www.ochsner.org) is a non-profit, academic, multi-specialty, healthcare delivery system dedicated to patient care, research and education. The system includes seven hospitals and over 35 health centers located throughout Southeast Louisiana. Ochsner employs more than 750 physicians in 90 medical specialties and subspecialties and conducts over 300 clinical research trials annually. Ochsner has been listed as one of the “Best Places to Work” by New Orleans CityBusiness since 2005 and received the Consumer Choice for Healthcare in New Orleans for 13 consecutive years. In 2009, Ochsner was ranked as a “Best” Hospital by U.S. News and World Report in Heart care, Urology and ENT services. Ochsner has 11,000 employees system-wide.