

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Date: April 10, 2013

Contact: Mary Lourdes Burke, Chief Communications Officer

Phone: 978-466-2214

Email: mburke@healthalliance.com

HealthAlliance Hospital Launches New CT Screening for Lung Cancer

April 10, 2013, Leominster, MA -[HealthAlliance Hospital](#) is proud to offer the first low-dose computed tomography (CT) screening test for lung cancer in Worcester County. “HealthAlliance Hospital understands the importance of early detection,” remarked Madhavi Toke, MD, medical director of HealthAlliance Hospital’s Simonds-Sinon Regional Cancer Center. “Earlier detection is associated with better treatment outcomes. As most people with early lung cancer have few or no symptoms, screening for early lung cancer in high-risk people is critical.”

According to the World Health Organization, lung cancer is the most common cancer worldwide, both in terms of incidence and mortality, and kills more people in the United States than any other cancer. “There are multiple treatment options available for lung cancer, but the most important factor that determines response to treatment is how early the cancer is detected,” added Dr. Toke.

The National Cancer Institute recently performed a clinical trial study: “National Lung Screening Trial (NLST)” to evaluate the efficacy of low-dose CT scan in comparison to regular chest X-rays in screening individuals at high risk for lung cancer. The results of this study showed that there were 20% fewer deaths from lung cancer in high-risk patients who underwent a low-dose CT screening scan. Low-dose CT scan is the only test proven effective for the purpose of this screening and is also supported by the American Cancer Society.

The hospital’s new CT lung cancer screening program is also supported by the recent installation of two, new state-of-the-art CT scanners at its Leominster Campus. This advanced CT system provides multiple benefits to the patient including high-resolution

images, shorter scan time, a design for patient comfort, and the ability of lower radiation doses; in some cases, by more than 50% compared to previous generation technologies.

“This latest technology supports the hospital’s focus on delivering high quality care and patient safety,” commented Rodrick Williams, MD, chair of radiology at HealthAlliance Hospital. “People over 50 years of age with a history of smoking are most at risk of developing lung cancer and are a group who could benefit from the hospital’s CT lung cancer screening program and advanced CT technology.”

“The most important thing an individual can do is not to smoke,” emphasized Dr. Toke. “We encourage individuals to contact their primary care physician to learn if they are a candidate for this new program or for information regarding the hospital’s free smoking cessation support classes.”

###

About HealthAlliance Hospital

HealthAlliance Hospital is a not-for-profit, full service, acute care hospital that serves the communities of North Central Massachusetts and Southern New Hampshire. As a member of UMass Memorial Health Care, HealthAlliance Hospital offers direct access to the advanced medical technology and specialty services that are part of the region’s academic medical center. The HealthAlliance system includes a hospital with services on two campuses in Leominster and Fitchburg, a regional cancer center, complementary care center, outpatient physical therapy centers, and a home health and hospice agency. For more information about HealthAlliance Hospital, visit www.healthalliance.com.