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Community Leaders Join Forces to Overcome Barriers
*Prostate Cancer Education and Awareness Key Component to
Improve Men's Health*

New Brunswick, New Jersey, June 26, 2006 – In an effort to build awareness and improve the community's understanding of the devastating effects of prostate cancer and the importance of education, early detection and screening, community leaders from a myriad of organizations met June 20 at The Cancer Institute of New Jersey (CINJ) to lend their support as members of a newly formed community-based coalition.

Sponsored by CINJ and Robert Wood Johnson University Hospital, with leadership from some of New Brunswick's largest faith-based and community resource organizations, the town hall-style meeting was the first step in what will become a larger city-wide push to increase the level of understanding men have regarding their risk of prostate cancer. For New Jersey, prostate cancer is of high concern, with more than 7,700 men being diagnosed this year alone.

"What empowers men is to have the knowledge of what their own risk is and how to reduce that risk," stated Ronald A. Morton, Jr., M.D., Director of Urologic Oncology at CINJ and Professor of Surgery, UMDNJ-Robert Wood Johnson Medical School.

"But we must break tradition in order to reach those that need to be reached," added Reverend Joseph Hooper, Ph.D., of the Mt. Zion AME Church. "Men need to engage other men and begin to get on the bandwagon. The inability to pay for medical bills should not be an issue as to whether we live or die."

Through discussion, coalition members were asked to identify possible barriers keeping men from regularly visiting their doctor or a healthcare professional for a checkup or screening. The old adage, 'if it doesn't hurt, why fix it' was amongst the challenges, in addition to issues and concerns involving the lack of education and low-literacy, health insurance companies and the inability to pay medical bills if in fact something was to be wrong.

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“Identifying barriers to cancer screenings and prevention efforts is the only way we can move forward in our communities,” stated Reverend Vicente Martinez, Chair, New Brunswick Faith-Based Collaborative Initiative. “It is a challenge for all of us because the statistics are real, but with your help we can better strategize to get more minority males to prostate cancer screenings.”

Upcoming Screening

On September 25-27, Robert Wood Johnson University Hospital’s Community Health Promotion Program and CINJ’s The Dean and Betty Gallo Prostate Cancer Center will co-sponsor a free, three-day screening. Men 50 years and older with no history of prostate cancer or 40 years and older with a family history of prostate cancer are encouraged to attend. The screening event will be held from 5-8PM at The Cancer Institute of New Jersey, 195 Little Albany Street, New Brunswick. An appointment is necessary. For more information and to make an appointment, please call Mariam Merced or Rebecca Escobar at 732/247-2050.

The Cancer Institute of New Jersey is New Jersey’s first and only National Cancer Institute-designated Comprehensive Cancer Center, and is dedicated to improving the prevention, detection, treatment and care of patients with cancer. CINJ’s physician-scientists engage in translational research, transforming their laboratory discoveries into clinical practice-quite literally bringing research to life. The Cancer Institute of New Jersey is a Center of Excellence of UMDNJ-Robert Wood Johnson Medical School. To support CINJ, please call The Cancer Institute of New Jersey Foundation at 732/235-8614.

The Cancer Institute of New Jersey Network is comprised of hospitals throughout the state and provides a mechanism to rapidly disseminate important discoveries into the community. Partner Hospitals: Robert Wood Johnson University Hospital, Atlantic Health System (Morristown Memorial Hospital, Mountainside Hospital, Overlook Hospital). Affiliate Hospitals: Bayshore Community Hospital, CentraState Healthcare System, Cooper University Hospital (CINJ at Cooper),* Jersey Shore University Medical Center, JFK Medical Center, Monmouth Medical Center, Raritan Bay Medical Center, Robert Wood Johnson University Hospital at Hamilton (CINJ-Hamilton), Saint Peter’s University Hospital, Somerset Medical Center, Southern Ocean County Hospital, The University Hospital/UMDNJ-New Jersey Medical School,* and University Medical Center at Princeton **Academic Affiliate*

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