

# News Release

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**For Immediate Release**  
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**GW Medical Center Announces the Establishment of New Center  
With Support from Pfizer Focusing on Patient Navigation, Cancer Survivorship and  
Health Policy**

**WASHINGTON** – Today, The George Washington University (GW) Medical Center with support from Pfizer and the Pfizer Foundation announced the launch of The Center for the Advancement of Cancer Survivorship, Navigation, and Policy with a \$1.2 million commitment over three years. The new Center, a unique collaboration of the GW Cancer Institute (GWCI) and the Department of Health Policy in the School of Public Health and Health Services, will seek to advance patient navigation and cancer survivorship efforts both locally and nationally through training, research, policy analysis, outreach and education.

“By creating this Center, GWCI’s resources will reach patients in our community, as well as train other institutions to provide their own patients with the resources and care they need after receiving a cancer diagnosis. This Center will serve as a model for other organizations interested in implementing patient navigation and survivorship programs that cover the continuum of cancer health care from screening to cure or end-of-life,” said Steven Patierno, PhD, GWCI executive director. “Our goal is to put the tools in place to effectively meet the needs of cancer survivors across the nation.”

“This is an important initiative for Pfizer as we highly recognize the value that patient navigation and survivorship programs can bring in assisting cancer patients as they manage their treatments,” said Mace Rothenberg, MD, Pfizer’s Vice President of Clinical Development and Medical Affairs for its Oncology Business Unit. “We are proud to be partnering with GW and look forward to launching this important initiative.”

Patient navigation and survivorship care are key elements in helping patients with their fight against cancer. Even well-educated patients with access to resources often have difficulty navigating the labyrinth of medical care in the face of cancer, and the challenges intensify for those who are uneducated, poor, underinsured, or who face language barriers, creating disparities in quality of care.

Patient navigation has been shown to be effective in reducing cancer disparities. Likewise, cancer survivorship programs have been shown to improve the quality of life for patients with a cancer diagnosis. Nevertheless, health care providers have struggled to develop and sustain successful and cost-effective patient navigation and survivorship programs. Through the creation of The Center for the Advancement of Cancer Survivorship, Navigation and Policy, GWCI seeks to fill both gaps.

“The award to establish this Center offers an unprecedented opportunity to consider the impact of national health reform on patients with cancer and on the accessibility and quality of cancer treatment,” said Sara Rosenbaum, Harold and Jane Hirsh Professor of Health Law and Policy and chair of the Department of Health Policy.

Funds from the Pfizer grant will support important initiatives such as:

- Two one-week training programs, beginning in Fall 2009, where institutions from across the nation, will learn how to advance the effectiveness of navigation and survivorship programs and share best practices in the field. Trainees—including navigators, nurses, social and community health workers, and administrators--will learn about the barriers that affect their patients, be trained to launch or improve programs, and gain tools to implement institutional change.
- Courses for GW medicine and public health students and a fellowship program for MDs and PhDs in Cancer Health Policy, educating them about the policy context in which they practice and in which patients receive care.
- The development of a tool to evaluate national health reform proposals and their potential to remove barriers to effective care including patient navigation and survivorship practices, which will be distributed to policymakers and the cancer community.
- The Center will also conduct periodic assessments of pending reform legislation. Policy analysis activities will be informed by a “Voices from the Patients Navigation Field” initiative that will capture feedback from patients and caregivers and document barriers to patient care, which will also capture approaches to overcoming those barriers.
- The organization of an expert roundtable to develop a health policy related research agenda exploring the impact of cancer treatment and the effectiveness of navigation and survivorship services on disparities in health and health care.
- The establishment of programs and activities to promote patient navigation and survivorship research, as well as coordinated clinical care, and building an informational tool called “The Cancer Survivor’s Roadmap,” to assist survivors in the steps that follow treatment.

The multi-disciplinary approach will allow GWCI to make monumental strides in patient navigation and cancer survivorship. “The Center will improve quality of life for patients throughout the entire cancer experience,” said Mandi Pratt Chapman, MA, director, Office of Survivorship, GWCI and co-director of The Center.

“The Pfizer Foundation has a robust history as a pioneer in helping advance effective programs to improve health care delivery and disease prevention,” said Caroline Roan, president of the Pfizer Foundation. “We are pleased to support George Washington Cancer Institute’s innovative work in patient navigation and survivorship as their efforts will have a measurable impact in advancing cancer control and policy.”

### **About The George Washington University Medical Center**

The George Washington University Medical Center is an internationally recognized interdisciplinary academic health center that has consistently provided high-quality medical care in the Washington, DC metropolitan area since 1824. The Medical Center comprises the School of Medicine and Health Sciences, the 11<sup>th</sup> oldest medical school in the country; the School of Public Health and Health Services, the only such school in the nation’s capital; GW Hospital, jointly owned and operated by a partnership between The George Washington University and a subsidiary of Universal Health Services, Inc.; and the GW Medical Faculty Associates, an independent faculty practice plan. For more information on GWUMC, visit [www.gwumc.edu](http://www.gwumc.edu).

### **About the Pfizer Foundation**

The Pfizer Foundation is a charitable organization established by Pfizer Inc. Its mission is to promote access to quality health care, to nurture innovation, and to support the community involvement of Pfizer colleagues. The Pfizer Foundation provides funding and resources to local and international organizations that expand and improve global health strategies. In 2008, the Foundation provided \$47.1million in grants and employee matching gifts to non-governmental organizations around the world. The Global Health Partnerships program is one of the Pfizer Foundation’s signature initiatives reflecting Pfizer’s global commitment to working with a

diverse group of local NGO experts towards improving the diagnosis and treatment of cancer and reducing the disease's incidence and burden. Pfizer Inc and the Pfizer Foundation will be providing a total of more than \$47 million (USD) over four years (2007 – 2010) through 29 grants addressing emerging challenges in cancer and tobacco control in 46 countries across five continents. The program collaborates with a diverse group of local experts to improve the diagnosis and treatment of cancer and to reduce its incidence and burden. The Foundation solicits proposals from organizations that promote access to health care through evidence-based programs that can reach large audiences and be leveraged at the local level. The Foundation does not accept unsolicited requests.

### **About Pfizer Oncology**

Pfizer Oncology is committed to the discovery, investigation and development of cancer treatments and currently has 22 innovative compounds in clinical development across four platforms. By leveraging the strength of its resources and scientific talent, Pfizer Oncology strives to discover and develop novel treatment options to improve the outlook for oncology patients.