

For Immediate Release

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**LINCOLN HOSPITAL HOLDS FIRST CONFERENCE
ON DISPARITIES IN BREAST CANCER CARE**

*“People should not die from cancer because they are poor” was the prevailing theme
of the first Lincoln Hospital Disparities in Breast Cancer Care Conference*

Bronx, New York – Lincoln Hospital’s renowned Breast Center hosted a conference addressing disparities in breast cancer care on June 7, 2012, bringing together prominent national and local medical experts to address a wide range of topics dealing with the disproportionate burdens that adversely affect minority women who have been diagnosed with breast cancer. Well-known authorities on breast cancer from Harvard University, University of Michigan, Weill Cornell Medical College, Memorial Sloan Kettering, Columbia University and Mount Sinai School of Medicine joined colleagues from St. Barnabas Hospital, New York City Department of Health and Lincoln Hospital Cancer Center to collectively address strategies and best practices to help improve health outcomes among women.

Addressing an audience of close to 300 participants who converged at Lincoln Hospital’s Auditorium, Iris R. Jimenez-Hernandez, HHC Senior Vice President and Executive Director of Lincoln Hospital said, “We are committed to eliminating disparities in health outcomes prevalent within the communities we serve. I applaud the Lincoln Breast Center and its leadership for convening this forum. It is an opportunity to present the latest developments in breast cancer care and bring attention to breast cancer incidence and the unfortunate consequences of disparities in research, prevention and access.”

“The challenge we face as healthcare workers is to provide quality healthcare, including cancer care, in these difficult economic times,” said Dr. Sydney McCalla, Lincoln Breast Center Director, who spearheaded the conference. “The burden should not fall solely on our patients to negotiate the system; the healthcare system should help patients overcome the multiple obstacles that result in health disparities.” Quoting Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., Dr. McCalla asserted that “of all the forms of inequality, injustice in health is the most shocking and inhumane.”

“No person in America with a suspicious finding of cancer should go untreated nor experience delays in diagnosis and treatment that jeopardize survival,” said Harold Freeman, MD, former Chairman of Surgery at Harlem Hospital and CEO of the Freeman Patient Navigation Institute. “We must develop a comprehensive, unified approach to improving conditions rooted in poverty,” he added.

(more)

Dr. Lisa Newman, Director of the University of Michigan Breast Care Center, echoed Dr. Freeman's assessment that we must create a high level of awareness among the medical community regarding its role in the elimination of bias in health care delivery. Highlighting the importance of clinical breast trials and the implications for underrepresented patient populations, Dr. Newman stressed that it is important to gain the trust of patients and engage them in clinical trials in order to gain in-depth data on how minority patients respond to new therapies.

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) continue to define breast cancer as one of the leading causes of cancer death among women of all races and those of Hispanic origin populations. One of 8 women in the United States is at risk of developing invasive breast cancer over the course of her lifetime.

Topics on the Conference agenda included disparities in research, prevention and access to care, global disparities, patient navigation, breast reconstruction, ethical responsibilities, and the implementation of a feedback registry to help reduce cancer mortality.

The Lincoln Cancer Center was first accredited by the American College of Surgeons in 2006 and reaccredited in 2009. The Lincoln Breast Center was the first site in New York City to receive accreditation by the American College of Surgeons (ACS) National Accreditation Program for Breast Centers (NAPBC) in 2009, recognizing Lincoln as a Center of Excellence for Breast Cancer.

About Lincoln Hospital

Lincoln Medical and Mental Health Center, located at 234 E. 149th Street in the Bronx, is a 347-bed, acute care level 1 trauma center with the busiest single site Emergency Department in the region. The Hospital emphasizes primary care and specialty medicine and utilizes the latest advances in medical science. Lincoln Hospital is a member of the Generations+/Northern Manhattan Health Network, a healthcare conglomerate which is part of the New York City Health and Hospitals Corporation.

About HHC

The New York City Health and Hospitals Corporation (HHC) is a \$6.7 billion integrated healthcare delivery system with its own 420,000 member health plan, MetroPlus, and is the largest municipal healthcare organization in the Country. HHC serves 1.3 million New Yorkers every year and more than 475,000 are uninsured. HHC provides medical, mental health and substance abuse services through its 11 acute care hospitals, four skilled nursing facilities, six large diagnostic and treatment centers and more than 70 community based clinics. HHC Health and Home Care also provides in-home services for New Yorkers. HHC was the 2008 recipient of the National Quality Forum and The Joint Commission's John M. Eisenberg Award for Innovation in Patient Safety and Quality. For more information, visit www.nyc.gov/hhc.