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***** For Immediate Release *****

Hematology-Oncology Associates introduces another cutting edge Clinical Research Trial related to Breast Cancer and Genetic Testing

Hematology-Oncology Associates of CNY recently celebrated the 20th Anniversary of their affiliation with the National Cancer Institute as the only Community Clinical Oncology Program (CCOP) in Central New York. Hematology-Oncology Associates is pleased to offer breast cancer patients another cutting edge clinical research trial.

This clinical trial is for breast cancer patients whose tumors test positive for estrogen and/or progesterone receptors without the spread of the cancer to their axillary lymph nodes. Although most patients receive surgical treatment for their cancer, there is chance that a woman may have a recurrence of the cancer in the breast, chest wall or other body parts. Therapy consistent with established guidelines for treatment includes hormonal therapy with or without chemotherapy. This study was developed under the premise that approximately 80-85% of patients with this stage of breast cancer would be cured with hormonal therapy alone. This study will enroll 11,000 nationwide and will study the rate of recurrence of breast cancer as related to genetic composition of the tumor and recommended treatment options.

The study involves the use a diagnostic test called *Oncotype DX*[™] (Genomic Health, Inc., Redwood, CA). This test involves the analysis of the cancer cells and tissue that was taken during surgery and stored in the pathology laboratory. *Oncotype DX*[™] is a diagnostic test that quantifies the likelihood of disease recurrence in women with early stage breast cancer and assesses the likely benefit from certain types of chemotherapy. This allows the oncologist and

patient to make a more informed decision about breast cancer treatment options. *Oncotype DX™* analyzes a specific set of genes within the tumor that results in a “score” that corresponds to the likelihood of breast cancer recurrence within 10 years of the initial diagnosis.

The purpose of the study will be to determine whether patients who have a tumor with an intermediate *Oncotype DX™* recurrence score benefit from chemotherapy, and to confirm that most patients who have a low *Oncotype DX™* score may be cured with hormonal therapy alone. An additional objective is to create a tissue and blood specimen bank that includes specimens from all women who participate in this study. This follow-up will allow for the collection of information regarding the health status of all women who participate in the study. It will also allow researchers to evaluate new diagnostic tests in the future that may predict the benefit or side effects from certain treatments.

Dr. Jeffrey Kirshner, partner in the practice and principle investigator for the program states, “A wonderful aspect of this study is that the genetic testing associated with this clinical trial usually costs a patient between \$2,000 and \$3,000 as it is not covered by most insurance companies. A benefit of the study is that patients without insurance coverage for the test will be able to have the *Oncotype DX™* performed without charge.”

For more information, please contact the Clinical Research Department at Hematology-Oncology Associates of CNY, 315.472.7504.

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