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VA Pittsburgh Recognized for Excellence in Patient Care

PITTSBURGH – August 4, 2010 – The Hospital & Healthsystem Association of Pennsylvania (HAP) has honored VA Pittsburgh Healthcare System (VAPHS) with a 2010 Achievement Award. VAPHS was among 17 winners and 134 entrants selected for the award, which recognizes hospital and health care system best practices in the state of Pennsylvania.

VA Pittsburgh earned the award for its Lung Cancer Collaborative, a multidisciplinary team driven to improve the timeliness and reliability of lung cancer care from the moment patients begin the screening process.

"We are honored to be recognized for our work in streamlining lung cancer care," says VAPHS Director and CEO Terry Gerigk Wolf. "This award underscores our health care system's continuing mission to give Veterans what they want: top-notch, stress-free, accessible care."

Acknowledging the challenges that patients and providers face while navigating a complex system, VA Pittsburgh created a simplified path that resulted in diagnostic evaluations taking just hours rather than weeks or months. As a result, VAPHS has reduced Veterans' wait for receiving diagnostic tests and surgery by more than half and closed the gap on initiating a patient's chemotherapy treatments by a third in the past year.

"These programs are examples of the commitment hospitals and health systems make—every day, in good times and bad—to their patients, communities, and employees," said HAP President and CEO Carolyn F. Scanlan. "They are among the most innovative and creative in the health care field, and we salute their accomplishments."

Sharon Muscatell, HAP Director of Quality & Accreditation, will present VA Pittsburgh with the HAP award tomorrow at 1:30 p.m. at VA Pittsburgh's University Drive Division.

A 19-judge panel of individuals from the public and private sectors, health care and business organizations, the media, and for-profit and nonprofit entities evaluated the 2010 HAP Achievement Award entries. HAP is a statewide membership services organization that advocates for nearly 250 Pennsylvania acute and specialty care, primary care, subacute care, long-term care, home health, and hospice providers, as well as the patients and communities they serve. Additional information about HAP is available online at www.haponline.org.

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