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2012 Pancreatic Cancer Symposium features UF Proton Therapy Institute research on benefits of proton therapy for pancreas cancers

JACKSONVILLE, Fla. – New research from the University of Florida Proton Therapy Institute suggests that proton therapy may be used safely in combination with other treatments for pancreatic cancer such as surgery and chemotherapy.

The findings were presented by UF Proton Therapy Institute radiation oncologist R. Charles Nichols, M.D. at the International Symposium on Pancreas Cancer 2012 in Kyoto, Japan last month.

The study followed 20 pancreatic cancer patients treated with proton therapy at the UF Proton Therapy Institute. Findings demonstrate that proton therapy is able to effectively eliminate the gastrointestinal side effects associated with conventional radiation therapy when it is used to treat patients who have pancreas cancers that cannot be removed surgically or are treated following complete or partial surgical removal. Nichols, who is the study's lead investigator, said the data suggests that the minimal toxicity associated with proton therapy in this setting may allow for radiotherapy dose escalation, chemotherapy intensification and possibly an increased willingness on the part of surgeons to utilize preoperative radiation therapy in the treatment of this lethal malignancy.

"It was an honor to be selected to deliver one of the four plenary presentations at the meeting," explained Dr. Nichols. "Over 100 abstracts were submitted for this symposium. The fact that our work was selected to be presented indicates a very real interest on the part of thought leaders in this field to learn more about the potential for proton therapy."

The International Symposium on Pancreas Cancer 2012 is a multidisciplinary meeting attended by surgeons, medical oncologists and radiation oncologists from Asia, Europe and the Americas. Approximately 200 experts in the field convened to discuss potential improvements in the management of this disease. The American Cancer Society estimates that in 2012 in the U.S. more than 43,000 pancreatic cancer cases will be diagnosed and more than 37,000 people will die of the disease.

UF Proton Therapy Institute is a nonprofit 501(c)3 organization affiliated with the UF College of Medicine, dedicated to delivering state-of-the-art cancer treatment and setting new standards for treating and curing cancer. The cancer treatment facility houses both conventional radiation

and proton therapy, and delivers proton therapy to 110 patients a day. For more information about the UF Proton Therapy Institute, please visit www.floridaproton.org, or call toll-free 877-686-6009.

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