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***For Immediate Release***

**SNHMC's Breast Cancer Program Earns 3-Year Accreditation  
—Surveyor Recommends Program for Best Practice in 3 Categories—**

**(Nashua, NH) August 10, 2016** – The National Accreditation Program for Breast Centers (NAPBC) has awarded the Breast Cancer Program at Southern New Hampshire Medical Center a full 3-year accreditation. The Breast Program at SNHMC is a collaboration of the deNicola Breast Health Center, Foundation Surgery, and Foundation Hematology/Oncology.

It is the third consecutive time Southern New Hampshire Medical Center has earned this distinction. The accreditation is a seal of approval for breast centers from the American College of Surgeons (ACS).

“The survey also recognizes our program for best practices in 3 categories: sentinel lymph node biopsy, genetic evaluation and management, and patient navigation,” explains Michael DeLeo, MD, Medical Director, deNicola Breast Health Center at SNHMC. “Best practices are the techniques and procedures that based on evidence have been show to improve the quality of care.

“Results show 100 percent compliance to all 28 standards of care,” adds Dr. DeLeo. During the survey process, our Breast Cancer Program must demonstrate compliance with NAPBC Standards for treating women with breast disease. The standards include proficiency in the areas of center leadership, clinical management, research, community outreach, professional education, and quality improvement.

The deNicola Breast Health Center is a leading provider of breast health services, offering proactive screenings, precise diagnostics and cancer staging, and the most optimal treatment plans. Dr. DeLeo attributes the breast cancer program’s success to a multidisciplinary team of cancer experts that includes oncologists, surgeons, pathologists, nurse practitioners, breast health coordinators and genetic counselors, among others.

“We work together to be sure each woman receives individualized, compassionate care,” adds Nicolette McDonnell, APRN, Breast Surgery Nurse Practitioner. She supports and guides patients through every step of a new cancer diagnosis: from the biopsy, pathology results and genetic testing, to breast MRI and fertility consultations.

### Sentinel Node, Patient Navigation, Genetic Counseling

The Breast Cancer Program was recognized for its reliance on sentinel node biopsy to help some patients avoid more widespread lymph node surgery. Lymph nodes, part of the immune system, are found throughout the body. The first node or nodes that cancer spreads to from a primary tumor is called a sentinel node(s). Doctors locate the sentinel node, remove it and check for cancer cells. This procedure is called a sentinel node biopsy. “If the biopsy is negative for cancer, then surgeons are not likely to remove any additional lymph nodes, sparing the patient side effects that include arm swelling, decreased shoulder range of motion, or numbness or pain at the surgery site,” explains Dr. DeLeo.

“The survey also recognized our patient navigation service,” says Elaine Lavalley, RTRM, manager of the deNicola Center. “When a biopsy is recommended, our breast health coordinator can book a same-day appointment with the breast surgeon’s office, or the patient can consult with the surgeon on the day of the biopsy.”

“Our clinical partnership with Massachusetts General Hospital offers many benefits including easy access to MGH specialists,” adds Ms. Lavalley. When patients at SNHMC need an “emergency” genetics consult, they can talk, via telephone, with counselors in Boston within 24 hours. Counselors can help guide treatment decisions.

### Rigorous Review

The NAPBC accreditation process is a rigorous evaluation and performance review. To maintain accreditation, centers must monitor compliance with the NAPBC Standards and undergo an on-site review every three years. A breast center that achieves NAPBC accreditation has demonstrated a firm commitment to offer its patients every significant advantage in their battle against breast disease:

- Comprehensive care, including a full range of state-of-the-art services
- A multidisciplinary team approach to coordinate the best treatment options
- Information about ongoing clinical trials and new treatment options
- Quality breast care close to home

### About Southern New Hampshire Health

Southern New Hampshire Health System includes Southern New Hampshire Medical Center and its affiliated multi-specialty provider group, Foundation Medical Partners. The Health System is



committed to improving, maintaining and preserving the health of people in the greater Nashua area. The Medical Center is celebrating a 125-year tradition of providing innovative health programs and preventive health resources to the community.

Our clinical affiliation with Massachusetts General Hospital offers our patients access to collaborative programs in cancer care, pediatric specialties, trauma, vascular surgery and stroke management. Our program relationships with Dartmouth-Hitchcock Medical Center (OB/GYN) and Lahey Hospital & Medical Center (cardiovascular medicine) open up a full range of adult and maternal health care services that are available to our patients through a medical staff of more than 500 primary and specialty care providers.

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For more information about the National Accreditation Program for Breast Centers, visit their website at [www.accreditedbreastcenters.org](http://www.accreditedbreastcenters.org).