

LIBTC / St. Francis Hospital Symposium Educates Health Professionals On Brain Cancer Clinical Trials

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ROCKVILLE CENTRE, NY, USA, June 4, 2014 /EINPresswire.com/ -- A recent symposium, co-sponsored by The Long Island Brain Tumor Center at Neurological Surgery, P.C. (NSPC) and St. Francis Hospital – The Heart Center®, gave approximately 100 New York physicians, physician assistants and nurses a hopeful glimpse into the future of brain cancer treatment. Held at the hospital's DeMatteis Center (Greenvale, NY) on May 16, the first annual symposium featured a faculty of leading academic researchers and representatives of companies whose neuro-oncology treatments are now – or will soon be -- in [clinical trials](#). The symposium was held in May to coincide with Brain Tumor Awareness Month.

Course directors were [Lee Tessler](#), M.D., F.A.A.N.S., F.A.C.S., Executive Director and Co-Surgical Director of The Long Island Brain Tumor Center (LIBTC) at NSPC; [Ramin Rak](#), F.A.A.N.S., Co-Surgical Director, LIBTC; and Bhoomi Mehrotra, M.D., Director of Oncology, St. Francis Hospital. Moderators were LIBTC Co-Medical Directors J. Paul Duic, M.D. and Jai Grewal, M.D.

"Our goal with this symposium was to use it as a showcase, so that members of the region's medical community could better understand the importance of clinical trials to the future of neuro-oncology," said Dr. Tessler. "That is why we decided to provide a platform to so many of these innovative companies and researchers."

The symposium's distinguished faculty included: Marnix L. Bosch, M.B.A., Ph.D., Chief Technical Officer, Northwest Biotherapeutics, Inc.; Juliann Chmielecki, Ph.D., Senior Scientist II, Cancer Genomics, Foundation Medicine; Alan Ezrin, Ph.D., President and CEO, NX PharmaGen; George Farmer, Ph.D., CEO, Cortice Biosciences; Stuart Grossman, M.D., Professor of Oncology, Medicine and Neurosurgery, Johns Hopkins University School of Medicine; Al Musella, D.P.M., President, Musella Foundation for Brain Tumor Research and Information, Inc.; Jamey R. Skillings, M.D., Senior Vice President and Chief Medical Officer, Tocagen Inc.; Uri Weinberg, M.D., Ph.D., VP, Research and Development, Novocure GmbH; and Michael Yellin, M.D., VP, Clinical Science, Celldex.

"Now more than ever, participation in clinical trials offers brain tumor patients cutting edge technology, while advancing our knowledge of disease treatment," said Dr. Tessler. "Remarkable advances in immunotherapy and drug delivery options, as well as the drugs themselves, have allowed us to break down the blood-brain barrier and begin fighting these tumors head on."

Dr. Tessler added that, until recently, medical treatment of brain tumors was somewhat limited by this barrier, which prevented most drugs from affecting tumors within the brain.

Symposium participants learned about a range of promising treatments for those with newly diagnosed, as well as recurrent, brain cancer. Among the experimental treatments discussed were cancer vaccines, tumor treating electrical fields, novel drugs, immunotherapies, gene therapies and treatments that are individualized based on patients' genomic profiles, as well as personalized diagnostic tools.

The program was made possible, in part, by a generous educational grant from Stryker Corporation. Additional exhibit sponsor support was provided by Arbor Pharmaceuticals, Leica Microsystems and Visualase, Inc.

The Long Island Brain Tumor Center at Neurological Surgery, P.C. offers a multi-disciplinary approach to treating brain tumors, provided by a team of more than 20 physicians and surgeons with various sub-specialties. The team works in concert with each patient's established health care professionals, and treats primary brain and spinal tumors, as well as metastases. In addition to offering standard-of-care therapies for brain tumors, the Center is currently conducting a number of clinical trials.

For more information on brain tumor studies at the Center, please call Kimberly Prabhu, M.A., CCRP, (516) 478-0010. For additional information about The Long Island Brain Tumor Center at NSPC, please visit www.brainumor.com

About Neurological Surgery, P.C. - Neurological Surgery, P.C. is one of the New York City area's premier neurosurgical groups, offering patients the most advanced treatments of brain and spine disorders. These include minimally invasive procedures such as stereotactic radiosurgery (Gamma Knife[®], CyberKnife[®] and Novalis Tx[®]), aneurysm coiling, neuro-endoscopy, spinal stimulators, carotid stents, interventional pain management, microdiscectomy, kyphoplasty, and other types of minimally invasive spine surgery. The practice's physicians represent a range of surgical and nonsurgical specialties, combining compassionate care with highly specialized training. They are leaders in the region's medical community, with appointments as chiefs of neurosurgery in some of Long Island's best hospitals. NSPC offers 10 convenient locations in Nassau and Suffolk Counties, as well as in Queens and Manhattan. For more information, call 1-800-775-7784 or visit www.NSPC.com.

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