Congressman Carney recognized by Delaware Society of Clinical Oncology

Carney honored for accomplishments in combating cancer at federal and state levels

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NEWARK — Congressman John Carney was recognized last night by the American Society of Clinical Oncology (ASCO) and its state affiliate the Delaware Society for Clinical Oncology (DSCO) for his continued support and leadership at the state and federal levels in Delaware’s fight against cancer. The reception included remarks by Dr. Sandra Swain, President of the American Society of Clinical Oncology, as well as Medical Society of Delaware President, Dr. Stephen Kushner; Dr. Jon Strasser, President of the Delaware Society for Clinical Oncology; and Dr. Stephen Grubbs, an oncologist at Christiana Care’s Helen F. Graham Cancer Center and an Advisory Board member of the Delaware Cancer Consortium. The event was held at the Medical Society of Delaware.

Congressman Carney has focused on fighting cancer and improving healthcare in Delaware throughout his career in state and federal government. In 2012, Rep. Carney introduced key reforms that were signed into law addressing critical prescription drug shortages, which commonly impact patients fighting cancer. Rep. Carney has also been a member of the Delaware Cancer Consortium since its founding in 2001, and for much of that time chaired the Consortium’s Disparities Committee.
“It’s an honor to receive this recognition, particularly in the presence of so many friends and colleagues working toward the same cause,” said Congressman Carney. “With the leadership of the Delaware Cancer Consortium and the help of many concerned members of our community, Delaware has made a lot of progress in recent years. Increased screening, access to care, and public awareness have led to a significant drop in Delaware’s cancer rates. But we still have a lot of work to do, and I will continue making the fight against cancer a top priority.”

Congressman Carney’s proposals to address prescription drug shortages were among the major provisions of the Prescription Drug User Fee Authorization that passed Congress last year with bipartisan support and was signed by President Obama. Since 2005, critical prescription drug shortages have nearly quadrupled, from 61 different shortages to more than 230, many of which impact drugs needed by patients battling cancer. Congressman Carney’s reforms included:

- Creation of a publically available Drug Shortage List with information about the reason for the shortage and estimated date by which drugs will begin reaching providers in a quantity sufficient to meet demand.
- Expedited review of any application seeking approval of a critical drug and any request by a manufacturer of a critical drug to approve a change to the manufacturing process or facilities of that drug in order to mitigate or prevent a shortage.
- Improved regulation of critical drugs to ensure that, at each stage of the regulatory process, the status of drugs as critical drugs is taken into consideration.
- Development of improved communications between offices within FDA responsible for approving and regulating critical drugs and offices of FDA responsible for identifying and addressing critical drug shortages.

“We applaud Representative Carney’s leadership in improving the lives of people with cancer,” said Sandra M. Swain, MD, FACP, ASCO president. “His extraordinary commitment demonstrates the meaningful impact our elected officials can have on addressing major cancer care issues. He has been a steadfast national partner and it is my true pleasure to recognize him here today.”

In 2012, Delaware became the first state in the nation to close a cancer disparity when it eliminated the gap in colorectal cancer screening rates and incidence for Caucasians and African Americans. Screening rates for both groups increased to 74%, among the highest in the nation, and incidence rates dropped to 45 per 100,000. The Delaware Cancer Consortium’s Disparities Committee, led for nearly a decade by Congressman Carney, was responsible for designing and implementing the screening, care, and treatment program that led to these improvements.

“DSCO is pleased to honor Congressman Carney for his work in improving the lives of people living with cancer in the state of Delaware,” said Jon Strasser, MD, President of DSCO. “Rep. Carney’s work should be a model for other legislators on how policymakers can help contribute to progress against cancer.”
About ASCO:

Founded in 1964, the American Society of Clinical Oncology (ASCO) is the world's leading professional organization representing physicians who care for people with cancer. With more than 35,000 members, ASCO is committed to improving cancer care through scientific meetings, educational programs and peer-reviewed journals. ASCO is supported by its affiliate organization, the Conquer Cancer Foundation, which funds groundbreaking research and programs that make a tangible difference in the lives of people with cancer. For ASCO information and resources, visit asco.org. Patient-oriented cancer information is available at Cancer.Net.