THE CHALLENGE OF CARE DISPARITIES IN HEART FAILURE

HFSA Annual Meeting will hold an opening plenary session that will discuss disparities in heart failure and identify strategies to reduce or eliminate them

LAS VEGAS (September 15, 2014) – The Heart Failure Society of America (HFSA) will host its 18th Annual Scientific Meeting and will feature an opening plenary session entitled “The Challenge of Care Disparities in Heart Failure.” The session will take place on Monday, September 15th from 8:30 AM – 10:00 AM, where a panel discussion will be directed by Clyde W. Yancy, MD and Monica Colvin, MD.

As statements of fact, there are overt disparities of care in heart failure with different rates of hospitalization, decidedly different rates of re-hospitalization, different mortality characteristics as well as differences in the use of and response to evidence based medical and device therapies. All of these reasons make it necessary to take proactive steps to reduce or eliminate heart failure disparities.

The session will consist of didactic presentations and a panel discussion from recognized leaders in the field that will address the challenge of care disparity in heart failure. This session will discuss why patients from different racial, ethnic and cultural origins experience different outcomes. Panel commentary will be provided by:

- Joseph R. Bentancourt, MD, who will discuss Racial/Ethnic Disparities and Cross Cultural Care: The Role of Academic Centers;
- Bruce Siegal, MD, MPH will discuss Future Policy Strategies to Eliminate Disparities in Care;
- Nakela L. Cook, MD, MPH will speak to the topic of Bridging the Gap for Heart Health Disparities in Women;
- and Robert C. Like, MD, MS, a champion of cultural competency, will round out the panel discussion.

“These conversations have never been top of mind in any major medical meeting. We are emboldened by the vision of the HFSA to recognize the need to identify and then address disparate care. This is especially the case for heart failure care—thus making this a topic of great importance to the community providing care for those patients. We must understand how the disease occurs in different cohorts and identify the root causes for differences in outcomes with a goal towards eliminating disparate heart failure care,” said Dr. Yancy. “This will be one of the first times on a large scale that we will have a conversation about cultural competency, care in safety net hospitals and care differences
affecting women with heart failure. If we ever hope to appropriately eliminate disparities in care and bring the best care in an equitable manner to all patients affected by heart failure, this conversation must occur.”

For a complete list of annual meeting sessions or for details on attending the conference, visit www.hfsa.org and click on Annual Scientific Meeting. There is also an app for the Annual Meeting available in the Apple Store by searching HFSA. There is no registration fee for accredited journalists. Interview areas will be available on-site in addition to a press room. You may follow news from the meeting on Twitter @HFSA and #HFSA.

**About Heart Failure**
Heart failure is a progressive condition in which the heart muscle becomes weakened after it is injured, most commonly from heart attack or high blood pressure, and gradually loses its ability to pump enough blood to supply the body's needs. Many people are not aware they have heart failure because the symptoms are often mistaken for signs of getting older. Heart failure affects 4.6 to 4.8 million individuals in the United States. Demographic and clinical evidence strongly suggests that the prevalence of heart failure will increase throughout the next decade. Ten to 15 years ago heart failure was considered a "death sentence;" however, recent advances in treatment have shown that early diagnosis and proper care in early stages of the condition are key to slowing, stopping or in some cases reversing progression, improving quality of life, and extending life expectancy. For more information on heart failure, please visit www.abouthf.org.

**About the Heart Failure Society of America**
The Heart Failure Society of America (HFSA) is a nonprofit educational organization, founded in 1994 as the first organized association of heart failure experts. The HFSA provides a forum for all those interested in heart function, heart failure research and patient care. The Society also serves as a resource for governmental agencies (FDA, NIH, NHLBI, CMS). The HFSA Annual Scientific Meeting is designed to highlight recent advances in the development of strategies to address the complex epidemiological, clinical and therapeutic issues of heart failure. Additional information on HFSA can be found at www.hfsa.org.