



Wake Forest University Baptist  
**MEDICAL CENTER**®

# *News Release*

**For Immediate Release, Wednesday, Sept. 24, 2008**

## **Major Study Aims For New Approaches to Cardiovascular Disease Management**

BALTIMORE, Md. – The [Consortium for Southeastern Hypertension Control](#) (COSEHC), headquartered at Wake Forest University Baptist Medical Center, is launching a major five-year study designed to update current guidelines for treating cardiovascular diseases, improve disease management and reduce heart attacks and strokes in the Southeast.

“This initiative sponsored by COSEHC will provide a unique glimpse of the characteristics of hypertensive disease, and its management, in the southeastern United States – which contains a diverse population with unusually high cardiovascular risk factors – and allow participating physicians to address the role of high blood pressure within the context of associated risk factors such as dyslipidemia, obesity, and type 2 diabetes,” said Carlos M. Ferrario, M.D., COSEHC co-founder and current vice president of development. Ferrario is also the Director of the Hypertension and Vascular Research Center at Wake Forest University Baptist Medical Center.

“We greatly hope that the data gathered through our program might lead to new approaches to cardiovascular disease management and evaluation of such clinical outcomes as stroke, myocardial infarction and chronic renal failure,” Ferrario said.

The study was announced at COSEHC’s 15<sup>th</sup> annual scientific meeting titled “Prevention in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century: The Future Treatment of Cardiovascular Disease” being held Sept. 24 – 27, 2008, in Baltimore, Md.

“COSEHC is updating the guidelines originally established by the well-known Framingham, Mass., heart studies, by including information on a more diverse American

**Wake Forest University Baptist Medical Center**  
Office of Public Relations and Marketing  
Medical Center Boulevard • Winston-Salem, NC 27157-1015  
Phone: (336) 716-4587 • Fax: (336) 716-6841  
[www.wfubmc.edu](http://www.wfubmc.edu)

population located in the Southeastern United States. Data on ethnic minorities, women, and men will be analyzed for presenting cardiovascular risk factors, response to treatment interventions, and outcomes to identify what treatment approaches to reducing mortality and morbidity in this population work best,” said Michael A. Moore, M.D., co-founder and current president of COSEHC.

“Daiichi Sankyo, Inc., a leader in cardiovascular care, provided support to COSEHC to help us create the tools we needed to analyze the data. Daiichi Sankyo has a strong focus on cardiovascular treatments and saw the potential for our work to improve future treatment paradigms. Together we established a global risk management database and assessment program that will allow us to independently analyze data through ICON, our partner Clinical Research Organization. Their support for our initiative will ultimately benefit the health and well-being of people suffering from cardiovascular disease,” added Ferrario.

Cardiovascular disease has long been America’s leading health issue – over 80 million people suffer from one or more forms of the disease. It is worse in some southeastern states where half the population can expect to die from this disease. Experts still face many unanswered questions concerning the best provision of comprehensive cardiovascular patient care that can be truly effective in warding off heart attacks and strokes.

Since 1998, COSEHC has been raising awareness of the need for a better management paradigm of the global cardiovascular risk factors of hypertension, dyslipidemia, diabetes mellitus, and metabolic syndrome. A critical goal is to encourage health practitioners to recognize the importance of intervening in cardiovascular disease early with an integrated approach in order to improve patient outcomes. This approach is carried out by participating hypertension specialists in COSEHC’s [Cardiovascular Centers of Excellence™](#) network, which includes over one million patients in 27 institutions and medical practices.

In 2005, COSEHC developed an aggressive global approach to screening and scoring those patients at cardiovascular risk using a special risk factor tool. The COSEHC Cardiovascular Risk Assessment Tool went beyond the traditional Framingham questionnaire.

COSEHC in collaboration with Daiichi Sankyo and ICON developed a quality-improvement initiative targeting improved cardiovascular care. This initiative will collect and analyze treatment patterns of patients being managed by COSEHC’s Cardiovascular Centers of

Excellence™, which have established a rigorous collection method that would maintain patient confidentiality and comply with all HIPAA and other privacy and research regulations.

“This anonymous data collection will evaluate whether patients are achieving treatment goals, thereby reducing mortality and morbidity when physicians follow COSEHC’s suggested aggressive global approaches to cardiovascular risk factor management,” said William Bestermann, M.D., a COSEHC board member who presides over the Cardiovascular Centers of Excellence™ network. “COSEHC also provides ongoing quality improvement feedback to physicians and the Cardiovascular Centers of Excellence™ through monitoring and benchmarking reports, which are key to overall improvement in outcomes.”

###

#### **Media Contacts**

**Debra Wirth Simmons**  
**COSEHC Director**  
**[dwirth@wfubmc.edu](mailto:dwirth@wfubmc.edu)**  
**(336) 716-1130**

**Ann Hopkins**  
**WFUBMC**  
**[ahopkins@wfubmc.edu](mailto:ahopkins@wfubmc.edu)**  
**(336) 716-1280**

The [Consortium for Southeastern Hypertension Control \(COSEHC\)](#), headquartered at Wake Forest University Baptist Medical Center, has created a unique network of physicians and health organizations who work together to reduce the excess prevalence of hypertension and related cardiovascular risk factors in the 13 states in the Southeast. The creation of the network, which consists of 27 regional COSEHC-designated [Cardiovascular Centers of Excellence™](#), consolidates the efforts of over 600 physicians, scientists and health care personnel and serves a population that exceeds 1.5 million people at risk for hypertension-related cardiovascular events. For more information, go to [www.cosehc.org](http://www.cosehc.org).

[Wake Forest University Baptist Medical Center](#) is an academic health system comprised of North Carolina Baptist Hospital, Brenner Children’s Hospital, Wake Forest University Physicians, and Wake Forest University Health Sciences, which operates the university’s School of Medicine and Piedmont Triad Research Park. The system comprises 1,154 acute care, rehabilitation and long-term care beds and has been ranked as one of “America’s Best Hospitals” by *U.S. News & World Report* since 1993. Wake Forest Baptist is ranked 32<sup>nd</sup> in the nation by *America’s Top Doctors* for the number of its doctors considered best by their peers. The institution ranks in the top third in funding by the National Institutes of Health.

**Wake Forest University Baptist Medical Center**  
Office of Public Relations and Marketing  
Medical Center Boulevard • Winston-Salem, NC 27157-1015  
Phone: (336) 716-4587 • Fax: (336) 716-6841  
[www.wfubmc.edu](http://www.wfubmc.edu)