

For Immediate Release

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Catherine Alfano of National Cancer Institute Joins American Cancer Society As Vice President for Cancer Survivorship

ATLANTA (March 2, 2015) -- The American Cancer Society announced today that Catherine M. Alfano, MS, Ph.D., of the National Cancer Institute (NCI), U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, will join the Society as vice president for cancer survivorship. Alfano, a program director in NCI's Behavioral Research Program, will be a member of the Society's Cancer Control team and of the Patient and Caregiver Support Department, headed by Katherine Sharpe, senior vice president of patient and caregiver support.

Alfano brings national and international leadership in cancer rehabilitation and survivorship as well as extensive scientific expertise in optimizing symptom management, follow-up care, healthy behavior change and self-management to reduce risk of cancer's late effects, and the biological drivers of survivors' co-morbidities, aging, well-being and prognosis.

"Catherine is nationally and internationally recognized figure in cancer survivorship," says Sharpe. "She has worked tirelessly to improve cancer rehabilitation and ways to improve the health and quality of life for cancer survivors. Catherine's role will allow her to be positioned as the intersection of survivorship activities at the Society and move our life-saving cancer control in new and innovative ways."

Alfano joined the NCI in 2008, where she held several leadership positions including deputy director of the NCI Office of Cancer Survivorship and acting chief of the Health Behaviors Research Branch in the Behavioral Research Program. At the NCI, she was responsible for key strategic research initiatives, national and global survivorship policy issues and collaborations with external organizations.

Alfano directed or co-lead strategic initiatives to understand the underlying biology driving accelerated aging in cancer survivors and the mechanisms through which physical activity and weight control may influence prognosis; determine optimal models of survivorship care planning. She worked to promote collaborations between researchers, survivors, clinicians, public health personnel, and community leaders to translate cancer survivorship research into care. She contributed leadership to American Society of Clinical Oncology's (ASCO) energy balance working group and contributed to the ASCO position statement on obesity and cancer and ASCO obesity toolkits for providers and patients. She worked to incorporate goals and tracking of cancer survivors' health as part of Healthy People 2020.

As an NCI Global Ambassador, she has worked to build international collaborations focused on improving survivorship research and care--both by learning from countries with more advanced, coordinated survivorship care and contributing expertise to low- and middle-income countries for whom survivorship is novel. She lead the CancerCare Annual Cancer Survivorship Teleconference Series from 2008-2011 to disseminate cutting-edge survivorship research and clinical knowledge to 3000+ survivors and healthcare providers in three dozen countries. She is a frequent international speaker and has taught

survivorship modules of the NCI Summer Curriculum in Cancer Prevention and Control to fellows from all over the world.

Prior to joining the NCI, Alfano was a faculty member at the Ohio State University College of Public Health, the OSU Comprehensive Cancer Center, and the OSU Institute for Behavioral Medicine Research. Her work focused on understanding the interrelationships between physical activity, energy balance, and biological mechanisms underlying risk for chronic and late effects of cancer treatment and prognosis.

She holds MS and Ph.D. degrees in clinical/rehabilitation psychology with an emphasis in behavioral medicine from the University of Memphis. She completed additional clinical training as a resident in rehabilitation psychology at the University of Washington Medical Center and clinical fellow in oncology at the Seattle Cancer Care Alliance, as well as a post-doctoral research fellowship in Bio-behavioral Cancer Prevention and Control at the Fred Hutchinson Cancer Research Center. At the NCI, she has been the recipient of several awards including MERIT awards in recognition of her contributions integrating survivorship into the Trans-disciplinary Research on Energetic and Cancer initiative and of her 10 years of leadership on the NCI Health, Eating, Activity, and Lifestyle (HEAL) study. She also is a recipient of the NCI Outstanding Mentor Award and is an elected member of the Academy of Behavioral Medicine Research.

About the American Cancer Society

The American Cancer Society is a global grassroots force of more than three million volunteers saving lives and fighting for every birthday threatened by every cancer in every community. As the largest voluntary health organization, the Society's efforts have contributed to a 22 percent decline in cancer death rates in the U.S. during the past two decades, and a 50 percent drop in smoking rates. Thanks in part to our progress nearly 14.5 million Americans who have had cancer and countless more who have avoided it will celebrate more birthdays this year. We're determined to finish the fight against cancer. We're finding cures as the nation's largest private, not-for-profit investor in cancer research, ensuring people facing cancer have the help they need and continuing the fight for access to quality health care, lifesaving screenings, clean air, and more. For more information, to get help, or to join the fight, visit cancer.org or call us anytime, day or night, at 1-800-227-2345.

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