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TACOMA BASED DIGESTIVE HEALTH SPECIALISTS RECOGNIZED BY LEADING GASTROINTESTINAL MEDICAL SOCIETY FOR QUALITY AND SAFETY

OAK BROOK, Ill. – Jan. 13, 2011 – The American Society for Gastrointestinal Endoscopy (ASGE), a leading gastrointestinal medical society, has recognized the Digestive Health Specialists' endoscopy centers as part of its program specifically dedicated to promoting quality in endoscopy, in all settings where it is practiced in the United States. Waldron Endoscopy Center, Fogel Endoscopy Center, Peninsula Endoscopy Center, Puyallup Endoscopy Center and Sunrise Endoscopy Center are five of 295 endoscopy units to be granted the recognition since 2009. The ASGE Endoscopy Unit Recognition Program honors endoscopy units that follow the ASGE guidelines on privileging, quality assurance, endoscopy reprocessing and CDC infection control guidelines and have completed specialized training on principles in quality and safety in endoscopy.

“We are honored to be recognized by ASGE for our efforts to enhance quality and safety in our endoscopy unit,” said Chalene Wilson, Director of Nursing. “The program course on improving quality and safety provided us with valuable knowledge to continue to give our patients the safest and best care possible.”

Upon completion of the program, units receive an ASGE "Certificate of Recognition" for promoting quality in endoscopy.

“ASGE is delighted to be recognizing these 295 endoscopy units, whose staff work hard every day to provide high-quality care to their patients in a safe environment,” said Bret T. Petersen, MD, FASGE, chairman, ASGE Quality Assurance in Endoscopy Committee. “There continues to be an outstanding response to this program. We are proud to acknowledge these ASGE members through our Endoscopy Unit Recognition Program for their commitment to promoting the highest standards of safety and quality.”

About the Program

To successfully complete the program and receive a Certificate of Recognition, a center must show proof of successful and current accreditation by a recognized accrediting body (AAAHC, Joint Commission); sign an attestation affirming that certain ASGE and CDC guidelines are adopted as minimum requirements of the unit policy; and have a representative of the unit complete the ASGE Recognition Course, “Improving Quality and Safety In Your Endoscopy Unit.” The Certificate of Recognition award is granted for a three-year renewable period.

The program is applicable to all settings in the United States where endoscopy is practiced, including office-based endoscopy units, hospital-based endoscopy units, and stand-alone ambulatory endoscopy or surgery centers.

An important component of the program is an educational course that thoroughly reviews related guidelines. Honorees attended this course, entitled “Improving Quality and Safety in Your Endoscopy Unit.”

ASGE and Quality

ASGE is the profession’s leader in setting standards of excellence in endoscopy through its safety guidelines and the training of its members so that patients receive the best and safest care possible. The Society constantly reinforces the importance of quality among its members through member communications, such as emails and newsletters, and its CME courses, including "Improving Quality and Safety in Your Endoscopy Unit.”

Digestive Health Specialists (DHS) offer several services for the treatment of illness and diseases of the digestive tract. Our experienced team of physicians is committed to a progressive, patient-centered approach to digestive health medicine. The DHS endoscopy centers are located in Tacoma, Gig Harbor, Federal Way and Puyallup, Washington. The centers are open Monday-Friday for procedures.

Visit www.dhsgi.com for more information or contact the communications liaison, Rosie Koponen at 253-341-0787.

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About the American Society for Gastrointestinal Endoscopy

Since its founding in 1941, the American Society for Gastrointestinal Endoscopy (ASGE) has been dedicated to advancing patient care and digestive health by promoting excellence in gastrointestinal endoscopy. ASGE, with nearly 12,000 members worldwide, promotes the highest standards for endoscopic training and practice, fosters endoscopic research, recognizes distinguished contributions to endoscopy, and is the foremost resource for endoscopic education. Visit www.asge.org and www.screen4coloncancer.org for more information and to find a qualified doctor in your area.

About Endoscopy

Endoscopy is performed by specially-trained physicians called endoscopists using the most current technology to diagnose and treat diseases of the gastrointestinal tract. Using flexible, thin tubes called endoscopes, endoscopists are able to access the human digestive tract without incisions via natural orifices. Endoscopes are designed with high-intensity lighting and fitted with precision devices that allow viewing and treatment of the gastrointestinal system.