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**New Research Finds Dangerous Divide
Between Physicians and Their Patients with Hypertension**

Parsippany, NJ – July 15, 2009 – Despite the focus on African Americans' high risk of hypertension, there remains a worrisome gap between physicians and their African American patients when it comes to communicating and taking action to reduce the serious risks of uncontrolled hypertension, according to a new national survey, '**My Pressure Points**' commissioned by Daiichi Sankyo, Inc., in collaboration with the Association of Black Cardiologists (ABC).¹ High blood pressure affects about 73 million adults (age 20 and older) in the U.S. and is often called the "silent killer," with African Americans being more likely to develop the condition than any other racial or ethnic group, and often to a more severe extent.^{2,3} Survey findings showed that 88 percent of physicians are concerned that patients adhere to the lifestyle guidance they have given them only sometimes at best.⁴ Also cited as cause for concern with 82 percent of physicians, is their viewpoint that patients take a proactive approach to managing their condition only some of the time, at most. The survey was designed to better assess the attitudes and behaviors of African Americans with hypertension and compare to treating physicians' point of view, in the hopes of illuminating opportunities to bridge potential communication gaps, in an effort to achieve optimal care.

Nearly nine in ten physicians surveyed (87 percent) credit their patients with being aware of the consequences of uncontrolled hypertension, and similarly, 84 percent of African Americans surveyed with hypertension say they understand most, if not all, the risks. However, 86 percent of patients did not know that risks of hypertension include death, and 94 percent did not know it can result in diminished sight and even blindness.

Further, nearly four in ten physicians surveyed (38 percent) feel that their African American patients with hypertension currently don't manage their condition very well. Of the total physicians surveyed, many cite specific barriers to blood pressure control their patients face: 61 percent think obesity can stand in the way of proper disease management, while 48 percent feel poor dietary habits, such as the consumption of high fat and sodium-filled foods, is a barrier to managing their condition. And many of the African American patients with hypertension surveyed report that they have not been doing the three things physicians say are key to manage hypertension:

- Nearly one third (31 percent) report they are not eating healthier foods
- Over half (56 percent) report they are not exercising more frequently
- Nearly a quarter (24 percent) report they are not taking prescribed medication regularly

Interestingly, nearly two-thirds (63 percent) of the African Americans with hypertension surveyed say they worry about their finances more than their personal health. Almost half (48 percent) are also nervous about their work and careers. These external pressures people face every day – finances, work, family – may be taking focus away from their personal health.

The good news is that because of the trust patients place on the relationship they have with their physicians, nearly half surveyed (44 percent) said they would pay greater attention to their condition if their healthcare professional urged them to take action. This is encouraging, as it shows that physicians can have a significant impact on their patients' management of their high blood pressure.

“These survey findings reaffirm the critical need for physicians to ignite the hypertension conversation within the African American community one patient at a time,” said ABC Board member Icilma Fergus, M.D., Chief of Cardiology at Harlem Hospital Center in Harlem, New York. “Passive acceptance of the condition has become far too prevalent – there’s clearly a vital need for physicians to reinforce with their patients the serious dangers of uncontrolled hypertension and the need to remain engaged, proactive and vigilant in keeping this ‘silent killer’ in check.”

For 40 percent of physicians polled, the key to treating African American patients with hypertension effectively is providing more education about the condition. To help equip African American patients to take a more proactive approach towards their hypertension, the Association of Black Cardiologists in collaboration with Daiichi Sankyo, Inc. has unveiled new consumer education resources at www.mypressurepoints.com. The website has easy-to-follow advice for controlling and delaying onset of high blood pressure as well as culturally relevant tips for eating at home or dining out, and fitness tips to incorporate more physical activity into everyday activities. Browsers can also log on to take a survey and see how they fare against the national survey findings.

In the United States, approximately 42 percent of African American men and 44 percent of African American women have hypertension.⁵ African Americans with the highest rates of hypertension are also more likely to be overweight or obese, physically inactive, and have diabetes.⁶ African Americans are 1.5 times more likely to die from heart disease and 1.8 times more likely to die from stroke than Caucasians.⁷ High blood pressure is a major factor underlying lower life expectancy and is also the most important reason why African Americans are four times more likely to develop kidney failure versus Caucasians.⁸

Survey Methodology⁹

Kelton Research conducted the online survey within the U.S. between January 29 and March 6, 2009. The survey sample included 506 African Americans, aged 18 and over, who have been diagnosed with hypertension and 150 physicians with at least 20 percent African American patients. Results of any sample are subject to sampling variation. The magnitude of the variation is measurable and is affected by the number of interviews and the level of the percentages expressing the results. In this particular study, the chances are 95 in 100 that a survey result does not vary, plus or minus, by more than 4.4. percentage points (African American portion) or 8.1 percentage points (physician portion) from the result that would be obtained if interviews had been conducted with all persons in the universe represented by the sample. More comprehensive survey highlights can be found on www.mypressurepoints.com.

About the Association of Black Cardiologists

The Association of Black Cardiologists, located in Atlanta, GA, was founded in 1974 to bring special attention to the adverse impact of cardiovascular disease on African Americans. A nonprofit organization, the ABC has an international membership of more than 600 health care professionals and 1500 health advocates and created Spirit of the Heart, a well-organized effort to eliminate health disparities across the country. The ABC is dedicated to eliminating the disparities related to cardiovascular disease in all people of color. For more information, call 800-753-9222 or visit www.abcardio.org.

About Daiichi Sankyo

Daiichi Sankyo, Inc., headquartered in Parsippany, New Jersey, is the U.S. subsidiary of Tokyo-based Daiichi Sankyo Co., Ltd., which is a global pharmaceutical innovator. The headquarters company was established in 2005 from the merger of two leading Japanese pharmaceutical companies. This integration created a more robust organization that allows for continuous development of novel drugs for patients around the world. A central focus of Daiichi Sankyo's research and development is cardiovascular disease, including therapies for dyslipidemia, hypertension, diabetes and acute coronary syndrome. Also important to the company is the discovery of new medicines in the areas of infectious diseases, cancer, bone and joint diseases, and immune disorders. For more information, visit www.dsi.com.

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¹ Kelton Research. My Pressure Points Survey.2009.

² American Heart Association: What Is High Blood Pressure? Available at http://www.americanheart.org/downloadable/heart/119618261762612%20WhatIsHBP%209_07.pdf. Accessed February 9, 2009.

³ U.S. Department of Health and Human Services: What Every African American Should Know. http://hp2010.nhlbihin.net/mission/partner/african_americans.pdf. Accessed February 11, 2009

⁴ Kelton Research. My Pressure Points Survey.2009.

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- ⁵ American Heart Association, Key Statistics. Available at:
<http://www.americanheart.org/presenter.jhtml?identifier=3041646>. Accessed March 26, 2009
- ⁶ American Heart Association, "High Blood Pressure Statistics," Available at:
<http://www.americanheart.org/presenter.jhtml?identifier=4621>. Accessed March 26, 2009
- ⁷ American Heart Association, "Heart Disease, Stroke and African Americans" Available at:
http://www.americanheart.org/downloadable/heart/1157061665970SYH_HDStrk_Repros.pdf. Accessed June 24, 2009.
- ⁸ National Blood Pressure Education Program. "Prevent and Control American's High Blood Pressure: Mission Impossible." Available at http://hp2010.nhlbihin.net/mission/aboutmp/action_paper.pdf .Accessed May 5, 2009.
- ⁹ Kelton Research. My Pressure Points Survey.2009.