



*Committed to Eliminating Hypertension and Its Consequences*

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**THE AMERICAN SOCIETY OF HYPERTENSION LAUNCHES  
EDUCATION PROGRAM FOR HYPERTENSION ACCREDITATION**

**NEW YORK (April 22, 2009)** – The American Society of Hypertension, Inc. (ASH) today announced the launch of a new educational initiative in hypertension and related cardiovascular disease – the ASH Hypertension Accreditation Program – to enhance the level of education of allied health professionals and pharmaceutical sales representatives. While this rigorous academic program will be tailored to meet the educational needs of each of the intended target groups, it is designed to improve all participants' understanding of hypertension and related cardiovascular disease, improve the flow of information and create partnerships with healthcare providers that seek to improve patient outcomes.

To inaugurate this initiative, ASH will offer the training first to pharmaceutical sales representatives to provide them with an even greater understanding of the underlying science of hypertension and cardiovascular disease. The program is based on ASH's Clinical Hypertension Review Course for physicians, which emphasizes state-of-the-art scientific principles and evidence-based clinical practice. Daiichi Sankyo, Inc. collaborated with ASH on the training concept and will be the first pharmaceutical company to have its sales force considered for the ASH Hypertension Accreditation Program.

"Physicians prefer to interact with well-informed pharmaceutical sales representatives who not only understand their company's products, but have a keen appreciation for the disease and underlying science," said Henry R. Black, M.D.,

president of the American Society of Hypertension. “The ASH Accreditation Program will focus on epidemiology, pathophysiology, treatment, clinical trials and patient case presentations—content that fully aligns with our skills and educational mission. Daiichi Sankyo understands the challenges physicians face, and the benefits of having meaningful conversations with healthcare providers about the underlying science of hypertension, not just treatment options.”

A recent “Hot Spot” survey conducted last year by Sermo (an online physician community) showed that physicians prefer to interact with more highly-trained biopharmaceutical sales representatives who are better educated and prepared to engage in higher-level discussion about relevant diseases and available treatments. Given the increasingly limited time sales representatives have with healthcare providers, the ASH training program will help ensure that sales representatives and others will be better equipped to use the available time to discuss treatment options with physicians from an academic and evidence-based perspective.

“We believe that by supplying healthcare providers with accurate and up-to-date information such as study results and new technologies, we can help them better serve their patients,” added John Sjovall, senior director, sales training for Daiichi Sankyo, Inc.

The ASH Hypertension Accreditation Program, which is set to begin in June 2009, will be led by members of ASH who are among the leading cardiovascular physicians and researchers in the world. ASH based the curriculum for the Hypertension Accreditation Program on one of its most highly evaluated physician educational programs, the ASH Clinical Hypertension Review Course. In developing the Hypertension Accreditation Program, committee members Jan N. Basile, M.D., Joseph L. Izzo, Jr., M.D. and Committee Chairman Robert A. Phillips, M.D., Ph.D. worked with Thornton Medical Communications, an independent medical education company, to adapt the Clinical Hypertension Review Course for sales representatives. The curriculum content focuses on the science behind hypertension and cardiovascular disease and will examine mechanisms that regulate blood flow, pathways to heart disease and organ involvement, as well as social and economic disparities that affect diagnosis, treatment, control and compliance.

“The burden of hypertension is soaring worldwide, and healthcare providers and drug makers need to work more closely together to better serve patients,” said Dr. Black. “The ASH Accreditation Program is an important step in that direction by better educating sales reps on hypertension and appropriate treatment strategies for patients.”

ASH is committed to training more than 700 Daiichi Sankyo, Inc. sales team members in the first year of the program and intends to open the program to representatives of other pharmaceutical companies in the future. To achieve accreditation, sales representatives will be required to complete approximately 10 hours of home study prior to the live course, 13 hours of intense classroom training over 2 ½ days, six hours of homework during the training program, and pass a 1 ½ hour written exam administered by ASH.

### **About the American Society of Hypertension**

The American Society of Hypertension (ASH) is the largest U.S. professional organization of scientific investigators and healthcare professionals committed to eliminating hypertension and its consequences. The Society serves as a scientific forum that bridges current hypertension research with effective clinical treatment strategies for patients. The mission of the organization is to promote strategies to prevent hypertension and to improve the care of patients with hypertension and associated disorders. Recently, ASH has begun offering a number of new initiatives to improve prevention, awareness, treatment and control of hypertension including educational programs for primary care doctors at its annual scientific meeting, in-service training for healthcare professionals at community clinics, and heart-health screenings across the country for the general public. For more information, please visit [www.ash-us.org](http://www.ash-us.org).

### **About Daiichi Sankyo, Inc.**

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 that enrich the

quality of life 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.dsus.com](http://www.dsus.com).

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