



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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**SEVERAL CONTINUUM HEALTH PARTNERS PHYSICIANS CERTIFIED BY NEW
ADDICTION MEDICINE BOARD**

American Board of Addiction Medicine to Address Significant, Unmet Need

New York, NY (July 28, 2009) Continuum Health Partners is proud to announce that seven of their physicians are among the first in the United States to be certified by the American Board of Addiction Medicine, a new independent medical specialty board. The American Board of Addiction Medicine (ABAM) has begun to certify addiction medicine physicians from several specialties, including emergency medicine, family medicine, internal medicine, obstetrics and gynecology, pediatrics, preventive medicine, psychiatry, neurology and surgery. There was previously only addiction-related board certification for psychiatrists, offered by the psychiatry and neurology board. ABAM set standards for physician education, assesses physicians' knowledge, and requires and tracks life-long continuing education.

“We want addiction prevention, screening, intervention and treatment to become routine aspects of medical care, available virtually any place health care is provided,” said Kevin B. Kunz, MD, President of the American Board of Addiction Medicine.

The Continuum physicians to receive ABAM certification are:

- **David Lehman, MD** – Psychiatry, St. Luke's-Roosevelt Hospital Center
- **Petros Levounis, MD, MA** – Psychiatry, St. Luke's-Roosevelt Hospital Center
- **Ronald Lonesome, MD** – Psychiatry, St. Luke's-Roosevelt Hospital Center
- **Lawrence Mass, MD** – MMTP, Beth Israel Medical Center
- **Edwin Salsitz, MD** – Chemical Dependency, Beth Israel Medical Center
- **Randy Seewald, MD** – Chemical Dependency, Beth Israel Medical Center
- **Wendy McGahee, MD** – Internal Medicine, St. Luke's-Roosevelt Hospital

Although one in five Americans entering the health care system has a substance abuse problem, there has never been a medical specialty board, drawn from all areas of medicine, dedicated to

certifying addiction specialists. Now, patients have a way to find specialized medical care for substance abuse use disorders related to alcohol, tobacco and other addicting drugs, including some prescription medications. Physicians are often at a loss for what to do about substance use and addiction issues, and may even misdiagnose the problem.

“We are thrilled that so many of our physicians are joining the cadre of specialized physicians across medical specialties that addicted patients will turn to for help,” says Stanley Brezenoff, CEO of Continuum Health Partners. “Furthermore, they will be able to educate their physician colleagues so they can better recognize patients who may need addiction services.”

About the American Board of Addiction Medicine:

Created in 2007, with the assistance and encouragement of the American Society of Addiction Medicine, ABAM offers a rigorous certifying examination that was developed by an expert panel and the National Board of Medical Examiners, as well as a re-certification examination to ensure that ABAM-certified physicians maintain life-long competence in addiction medicine. ABAM has formed a governing body of 15 distinguished physicians from across a range of medical specialties, each of whom is certified by a member board of the American Board of Medical Specialties (ABMS).

ABAM is in the process of seeking recognition from ABMS, and plans to certify physicians in multiple specialties. ABAM is also taking steps to create addiction medicine training programs affiliated with the nation’s top medical schools, and will apply to the ACGME to accredit these programs.

The new medical specialty board is being launched at a time of increasing promise for addiction treatment. Recent discoveries have added to the preponderance of evidence that addiction is a chronic disease of the brain, with unique vulnerabilities and pathology, and a predictable course if not interrupted by effective treatment. An increasing number of medically based addiction treatments have become available, and more are on the horizon.

For more information, please contact Elizabeth Dowling in the Continuum Health Partners public affairs office at: 212-523-4047.