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Pain Medicine Doctor Chosen as Compassionate Caregiver of the Year
Dr. Pradeep Chopra honored at Schwartz Center event before 2,000 people

Boston, MA (November 25, 2013) – The Schwartz Center for Compassionate Healthcare, a national nonprofit organization dedicated to strengthening the patient-caregiver relationship and preserving the human connection in healthcare, has selected Pradeep Chopra, MD, as the recipient of its 2013 Schwartz Center Compassionate Caregiver Award®. His selection was announced November 21 at the 18th Annual Kenneth B. Schwartz Compassionate Healthcare Dinner in Boston before an audience of 2,000 people.

Dr. Chopra lives in Newton, Massachusetts, and practices medicine at the Interventional Pain Management Center of Rhode Island in Pawtucket, Rhode Island. He is a graduate of Harvard Medical School and is a clinical assistant professor of medicine at the Alpert Medical School of Brown University. As a young man, he worked with Mother Teresa in his native India.

Dr. Chopra cares for patients from across the U.S. who suffer from rare pain disorders. As one patient wrote of him, “Patients with these disorders get dismissed so easily by the medical profession. We then get nervous and afraid every time we have to see someone new. He gave me faith in the medical community again.”

In his remarks last night, Dr. Chopra said the key elements of compassionate care are hope, care and love. “Hope cannot be prescribed on a small piece of paper for the pharmacy to fill,” he said. “It is looking into your patient’s eyes and making a promise that you will do your best to help them. We may not always have an answer, but we can always offer hope.”

According to Schwartz Center Executive Director Julie Rosen, “Patients come to Dr. Chopra when they are at the end of their rope. He turns those ropes into lifelines. He is truly a role model for what compassionate care is and what it can accomplish. We are so pleased to be able to honor him and our other outstanding finalists.”

The Schwartz Center Compassionate Caregiver Award was established in 1999 to honor healthcare professionals who demonstrate extraordinary compassion in caring for patients and families. The award recipient and four finalists are chosen by a review committee based on how well they embody the characteristics of compassionate care, including outstanding listening and communication skills, respect for patients’ values and preferences, and always involving patients in treatment decisions.

The other four finalists for this year's award, who were also honored at the dinner, were:

- **Rachael Bedard, MD, of Cambridge Health Alliance in Cambridge, MA**, a chief resident at Cambridge Health Alliance pursuing a palliative care fellowship and lauded for her dedication to making compassionate care a priority in even the most trying situations. "Her compassion has no bounds – touching patients, staff and peers alike," says a colleague.
- **Raul Laguarda, MD, FCCP, of MetroWest Medical Center, Leonard Morse Campus, in Natick, MA**, an internist and director of medical education known for taking a special interest in his patients' lives outside of their medical needs to develop long lasting connections. A colleague notes that "Raul treats whole families and whole communities with a personal touch."
- **P. Lynn Ouellette, MD, of Mid Coast Hospital in Brunswick, ME**, a psychiatrist with a special interest in postpartum depression who also provides care to AIDS orphans in Kenya during her annual volunteer trips. "This is the inherent value of being an advocate – conveying the fundamental message that people are worthwhile, have value and deserve for you to stand up for them," she says.
- **Barbara Segal, RN, MS, of Fletcher Allen Health Care in Burlington, VT**, a clinical nurse specialist on Fletcher Allen's Palliative Care Service, which she co-founded 15 years ago. She defines compassionate care as "the willingness to enter into another person's experience, their suffering and vulnerability, and the attempt to comprehend what he or she is feeling."

The Schwartz Center Compassionate Caregiver Award is made possible through the generous support of CNA, the nation's 7th largest commercial insurance company, and Novo Nordisk, a global healthcare company. This award recipient receives a \$5,000 cash prize, and the four finalists receive \$1,000 each.

About the Schwartz Center

The Schwartz Center for Compassionate Healthcare (www.theschwartzcenter.org) is a national nonprofit organization dedicated to strengthening the relationship between patients and caregivers and preserving the human connection in healthcare. The Center's signature Schwartz Center Rounds® program has been adopted by more than 350 hospitals and other healthcare institutions across the country. The program provides an opportunity for caregivers to come together on a regular basis to discuss the most difficult emotional and social issues they face in caring for patients. It has been found to enhance compassionate care, improve teamwork, and reduce caregiver stress and isolation. The Schwartz Center also develops and funds other innovative programs, recognizes and honors outstanding caregivers, and works to make compassionate care a national healthcare priority. Read the Center's Call to Action at www.committocompassion.org.

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