the schwartz center
FOR COMPASSIONATE HEALTHCARE

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Schwartz Center Medical Director Beth Lown Named "Champion in Health Care"
Boston Business Journal honors Brookline resident and Mount Auburn Hospital internist

Boston (August 24, 2011) – Beth Lown, MD, medical director of the Schwartz Center for Compassionate Healthcare, has been named a 2011 "Champion in Health Care" by the *Boston Business Journal* for her work in strengthening the relationship between patients and caregivers and ensuring that compassion is not lost in today's world of high-tech, fast-paced medicine. She and other honorees will be honored at a breakfast at the Omni Parker House in Boston on August 26.

In addition to serving as the Schwartz Center's medical director, Dr. Lown is also an internist at Mount Auburn Hospital in Cambridge and an associate professor of medicine at Harvard Medical School. She is a graduate of the Tufts University School of Medicine and is a Brookline resident.

According to Schwartz Center Executive Director Julie Rosen, "Beth has taught thousands of medical students and practicing clinicians how to communicate more effectively with patients, how to involve patients in decisions about their own health and health care, and how to motivate patients to improve their health. She has also developed curricula and programs to teach these skills. She has made an important contribution to an aspect of medicine that is often undervalued and underappreciated, but which research has shown is critically important to health outcomes and quality of life."

Dr. Lown began her career as a staff physician at Beth Israel Deaconess Medical Center and Mount Auburn Hospital. She knew from the beginning of her practice that compassion, emotional support, and effective communication were essential aspects of care and began teaching this in 1983. Since that time, she has taught and written extensively about the psychological and emotional aspects of healthcare. From 2003-2005, she served as president of the American Academy on Communication in Healthcare and was instrumental in establishing an alliance with the European Association on Communication in Healthcare that resulted in the joint sponsorship of an annual international conference conducted alternately in the U.S. and Europe. She has also served as a content expert and served on task forces on communication skills for many other organizations, including the Association of Professors in Gynecology and Obstetrics, the National Board of Medical Examiners, and the Association of American Medical Colleges.

At Harvard Medical School, Dr. Lown taught students and faculty how to use and teach effective, empathic communication to improve the practice of medicine for 16 years. During that time, she and other colleagues developed communications curricula and introduced and implemented a uniform communication skills assessment instrument.

Since joining the Schwartz Center in 2010, Dr. Lown has conducted peer learning sessions among healthcare leaders and facilitators across the country who participate in Schwartz Center Rounds®, a unique program that brings together caregivers in more than 235 hospitals in 33 states to talk about the difficult emotional and psychosocial issues that arise in caring for patients. She is also helping the Schwartz Center bring greater national attention to the importance of good communication and emotional support in driving better health outcomes and quality of life and lowering health care costs.

The Schwartz Center for Compassionate Healthcare (www.theschwartzcenter.org), based at Massachusetts General Hospital in Boston, is a national nonprofit organization founded in 1995 by the family and friends of Ken Schwartz, a prominent Boston healthcare attorney who died of lung cancer at the age of 40. The center is dedicated to strengthening patient-caregiver relationships and promoting compassionate healthcare. It does this through programs in more than 235 hospitals in 33 states and through grants that support innovative projects that advance compassionate care.

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