

CONTACT:

[Amendola Communications](#) for **MJ Consulting Group**

Kate Donlon, 619-876-2654, kdonlon@ACmarketingPR.com

Jan Shulman, 480-664-8412 ext. 12, jshulman@ACmarketingPR.com

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

**JOHNS HOPKINS AND NATIONAL FIBROMYALGIA ASSOCIATION LAUNCH FIBROMYALGIA
EDUCATIONAL INITIATIVE TO BRIDGE CHASM IN DIAGNOSIS AND CARE**

*Collaborative program shifts paradigm with evidence-based platform to educate
providers on fibromyalgia management*

SAN FRANCISCO, CALIF. – OCT. 25, 2008 – The [Johns Hopkins University School of Medicine](#),
The [Institute for Johns Hopkins Nursing](#) and the [National Fibromyalgia Association](#)
announced today the launch of the Fibromyalgia Circle of Care Initiative at the [ACR/ARHP
Annual Scientific Meeting](#), October 24-29, 2008 in San Francisco. The outcomes-based
educational initiative will educate providers about the disease state and the latest therapeutic
options; thus, driving accurate and early diagnosis of fibromyalgia for the ten million US citizens
impacted by this disorder.

The multi-interventional series of educational activities is open to primary care physicians (PCPs), rheumatologists, psychiatrists, pain management specialists, nurses (RNs), nurse practitioners (NPs) and physician assistants (PAs). The program is designed to educate providers on disease state awareness, diagnosis, impact of early diagnosis and referral, and multidisciplinary care. Additionally, the initiative will share the latest therapeutic options and strategies, as well as review clinical trials that assess newer therapies for fibromyalgia.

“Many fibromyalgia patients see an average of four physicians—over a duration of five to eight years after the onset of the disease—before an accurate diagnosis of fibromyalgia is achieved. This represents five to eight years of underdiagnosis, misdiagnosis and inappropriate treatment of the patient,” said Victor Marrow, Ph.D., Executive Director, Office of Funded Programs/CME Johns Hopkins School of Medicine. “The Fibromyalgia Circle of Care Initiative will result in improved patient care by minimizing the lack of awareness among physicians which has been responsible for the inability or reluctance to accurately diagnose, contributing to the fragmentation of care.”

The Johns Hopkins University School of Medicine, The Institute for Johns Hopkins Nursing and the National Fibromyalgia Association are collaborating on this unique program to improve fibromyalgia patient outcomes. The integrated educational activities will deliver:

- Practical and interactive case-related content
- Summaries of clinical data and recommendations on how to implement management strategies into the provider's practice
- Updates on clinical practice guidelines and recommendations
- Evidence-based outcomes
- Patient communication content and materials
- Treatment adherence and compliance strategies

“The Fibromyalgia Circle of Care Initiative is unique in its collaboration among healthcare organizations and leaders to raise awareness of the disease state through an interactive program that effectively drives provider participation and implementation of evidence-based lessons within their own practice,” said Lynne Matallana, President and Founder, National Fibromyalgia Association. “After completion of this program, participants will be fully prepared to use the tools and lessons learned to positively and tangibly impact the quality of life of these patients.”

With fibromyalgia affecting up to ten million people in the United States, or up to six percent of patients seen in general medical practices, the impact to the U.S. economy is significant. According to a 2003 study by I. Jon Russell, et al., healthcare costs range from \$12 - \$14 billion per year and account for a loss of one to two percent of the nation's overall productivity. The study also found that total annual costs for fibromyalgia claimants were more than twice as high as the costs for the typical insurance beneficiary. Furthermore, the prevalence of disability among employees with fibromyalgia was twice as high as compared to all employees. Lastly, for every dollar spent on fibromyalgia-specific claims, employers spent approximately \$50 - \$100 on additional direct and indirect costs.

For more information or to register to participate in the Fibromyalgia Circle of Care Initiative, e-mail info@circleofcare.md.

ABOUT THE JOHNS HOPKINS UNIVERSITY SCHOOL OF MEDICINE

In July 2008, *U.S. News & World Report* ranked the Johns Hopkins Hospital #1 among American hospitals for the 18th consecutive year. In 2006, the Johns Hopkins Office of CME received “Accreditation with Commendation” for six years, the highest ranking issued by the ACCME. Hopkins CME has been recognized as a center for “Best Practices” and as a resource to ACCME-accredited providers. For more information, please visit www.hopkinscme.edu or contact Victor Marrow, Ph.D., Executive Director, CME's

Office of Funded Programs at vmarrow@jhmi.edu.

ABOUT THE INSTITUTE FOR JOHNS HOPKINS NURSING

The Institute for Johns Hopkins Nursing designs and delivers leading-edge continuing education for nurses. The Institute accesses the expertise of faculty and nurses from both the Johns Hopkins University School of Nursing and Johns Hopkins Hospital, including over 2,500 highly skilled clinicians in 10 clinical and countless subspecialty areas who are also world-renowned researchers and educators. For more information please visit www.ijhn.jhmi.edu.

ABOUT THE NATIONAL FIBROMYALGIA ASSOCIATION

The National Fibromyalgia Association (NFA) is a nonprofit 501(c)(3) organization whose mission is to develop and execute programs dedicated to improving the quality of life for people affected by fibromyalgia. The NFA publishes a quarterly magazine, *Fibromyalgia AWARE* and hosts an award-winning website at <http://www.FMaware.org>.

###