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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

**Ambulatory Surgery Foundation and Malignant Hyperthermia Association of the United States
Jointly Release Guidelines to Help ASCs Develop Malignant Hyperthermia Patient Transfer Plans**

ALEXANDRIA, VIRGINIA (AUGUST 17, 2010) – Guidelines are now available to help Ambulatory Surgery Centers (ASCs) develop individualized plans for transferring a patient who experiences malignant hyperthermia (MH) in an ASC to a Receiving Health Care Facility (RHCF) where the patient can receive extended care. The new guidelines are the result of a collaborative effort launched by the Ambulatory Surgery Foundation and the Malignant Hyperthermia Association of the United States (MHAUS).

MH is a complex, life-threatening medical event that requires close communication and collaboration between the patient's health care providers to manage the rapid diagnosis and treatment of the affected patient required for the patient to survive. In ASCs, consideration must also be given to transferring the patient to an RHCF for follow-up care.

To support ASCs as they develop their own MH transfer plans, the Foundation and MHAUS convened a panel of experts representing key medical specialties at critical points along the transfer continuum. Panel members included clinicians and administrators specializing in patient care at ASCs, anesthesia care providers, an emergency medicine physician, an emergency medical technician and experts in MH. The panel focused on helping ASCs answer key questions like "Exactly when, how and where should the MH patient be transferred?" "Who accompanies the patient in transfer?" and "Is the antidote drug available at every step of the way?"

To help ASCs ensure they have a comprehensive plan in place, the guidelines lead users through an evaluation of issues to consider during the transfer of an MH patient. For example, they remind users to consider the availability and skill level of emergency medical transport personnel, options with respect to an RHCF and the specific medical capabilities of the transport team and receiving facilities.

“ASCs that have comprehensive MH transfer plans in place prior to an MH event, will help ensure that, should an MH crisis occur, staff will be prepared,” says Keith Metz, MD, an anesthesiologist, ASC medical director and member of the team that developed the guidelines. “Using these guidelines, ASCs can review their existing emergency transfer plans and incorporate special considerations for MH patients. Developing and implementing an Emergent MH Transfer Plan at your ASC could save a life.”

“Handling an MH crisis in an ambulatory setting requires clear communication between personnel at all points along the transfer pathway, from the ASC to the hospital setting,” adds Henry Rosenberg, MD, CPE, MHAUS president, MH hotline consultant and director of the Department of Medical Education and Clinical Research at Saint Barnabas Medical Center in Livingston, New Jersey. “These guidelines are intended to assist ASCs in developing procedures and policies that will provide optimum care for the patient experiencing an MH crisis during transport and ensure communication during every step of the transfer process.”

Laminated, 17" x 22" posters containing the transfer guidelines are available from the Ambulatory Surgery Foundation and MHAUS for \$55 each, which includes postage and handling. They can be ordered at www.ascassociation.org/store and www.mhaus.org or by calling the Ambulatory Surgery Foundation at 703.836.8808 or MHAUS at 607.674.7901.

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The Ambulatory Surgery Foundation provides educational opportunities of many kinds for ASC professionals, policy makers and the public, promotes the highest standards for ASCs and is pursuing an expanded research agenda within the ASC community.

The Malignant Hyperthermia Association of the United States is a not-for-profit organization of more than 2,000 members, including MH-susceptible patients and their families, medical professionals, corporations and others who are keenly interested in MH. MHAUS strives to promote optimum care and scientific understanding of MH and related disorders.