

**PRESS RELEASE: 2 November 2012 (FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE)**

**The European Society of Gynaecologic Oncology  
Endorses the Pearl of Wisdom as the Official Symbol  
of the Cervical Cancer Prevention Campaign in Europe**

Cervical cancer remains an important cause of disease and death within Europe although we know exactly what we need to do to prevent almost every case of this disease. We know that organised cervical cancer screening of adult women can prevent up to 80% of cervical cancers and we also know that vaccination of adolescent girls to protect them against the two most common types of Human papillomavirus (HPV) can reduce cervical cancer rates even further.

However, two problems still prevent us from achieving this goal. First, many European women still do not have access to these programmes because their political leaders are not aware of their importance and therefore have not prioritised their implementation. Second, even where these programmes are available, many women do not use them because they have not been made aware of their benefits. Raising awareness about the benefits of cervical screening and HPV vaccination is therefore essential to the prevention of cervical cancer.

Prof Vesna Kesić, President-Elect of the European Society of Gynaecologic Oncology, stated “Every year in Europe, 60,000 women develop and 30,000 die from cervical cancer when we already have the tools to prevent almost every case. A key priority must therefore be to raise awareness of the benefits of cervical screening and HPV vaccination. We must raise awareness among politicians so they prioritise the implementation of these programmes where they do not exist and we must raise awareness among the public so people use them where they are available. “

Prof Kesić continued, “Having an easily recognisable symbol that is unique to the Cervical Cancer Prevention Campaign is an essential element of a communications campaign and the European Society for Gynaecologic Oncology is proud to endorse it. We encourage all the organisations and people who are involved in cervical cancer prevention to join ESGO in adopting the Pearl of Wisdom as the symbol of the Cervical Cancer Prevention Campaign as this will greatly improve our abilities to raise awareness about cervical cancer prevention, to increase participation and thereby to prevent this cancer.”

Following on from Prof Kesić, Dr Philip Davies, Director General of the ECCA, said “The pink ribbon is recognised and trusted around the world, and it has been central to the success of the Breast Cancer Campaign. Now we need the same thing for the Cervical Cancer Prevention Campaign. We must have a single symbol that is uniquely associated with the campaign so we can build the public recognition and trust that is essential for the campaign’s success. The endorsement of the European Society of Gynaecologic Oncology, an organisation that is highly respected within the cervical cancer prevention community across Europe, is a very important advance for the Pearl of Wisdom and for the Cervical Cancer Prevention Campaign. ”



**Pearl of Wisdom  
Brooch**

**The Pearl of Wisdom  
Display Package**

### About the European Society for Gynaecologic Oncology (ESGO)

ESGO is an independent not-for-profit society which was founded in 1983 as a forum for healthcare professionals dedicated to the care of women with gynaecological cancer. Today, the ESGO gathers together more than 1.500 professionals dedicated to the prevention and treatment of women's cancers from all over Europe and worldwide. As Europe's leading gynaecological oncology learning society, ESGO strives to improve gynaecological cancer care by providing training standards, educational opportunities and breakthroughs in the prevention, treatment and study of gynaecological cancers. ESGO's ultimate aim is to improve the health and well-being of European women with gynaecological (genital and breast) cancers through prevention, excellence in care, high quality research and education.

As a leading gynaecological oncology society, ESGO holds biennial meetings where over 2,500 experts meet to discuss the latest advances in gynaecological cancer treatment and care. Together with the International Gynaecological Cancer Society, ESGO publishes the highly respected scientific publication, the International Journal of Gynecological Cancer, provides its members with high quality online educational content, provides training standards, runs hospital accreditations, organises workshops and meetings, provides fellowships and facilitates research. ESGO strives to create awareness about gynaecological cancers while facilitating a network of gynaecological cancer advocacy groups (ENGAGE). ESGO, the European Voice of Gynaecological Oncology!

For further information: [www.esgo.org](http://www.esgo.org)

### About the European Cervical Cancer Association (ECCA)

The ECCA was established in 2003 to advance public health strategies for the reduction of cervical cancer in Europe. The ECCA currently operates in 34 European countries and has 120 institutional members (charitable, non-profit or governmental organisations) with an interest in cervical cancer prevention including many of Europe's leading cervical cancer researchers.

The ECCA has two primary areas of interest: 1) raising awareness of cervical cancer and the means by which this disease can be prevented and 2) advocating for the implementation of population-based organised cervical cancer screening programmes. Uniquely, the ECCA programmes target three different groups: 1) politicians with healthcare responsibilities, 2) healthcare professionals and 3) the general public. The ECCA works to establish collaborative partnerships between these groups that must all be involved for effective cervical cancer prevention.

For further information: [www.ecca.info](http://www.ecca.info)

#### For further information:

European Society for Gynaecologic Oncology  
Ms Renata Brandtnerova  
Executive Secretary  
c/o Locus Workspace  
Krakovska 1307/22, 110 00 Prague, CR  
Email: [adminoffice@esgomail.org](mailto:adminoffice@esgomail.org)  
Tel: +420 731 803 052

European Cervical Cancer Association  
Ms Vicky Appleby  
Communications Officer  
121 rue Jourdan, 1060 Brussels, Belgium  
Email: [vicky.appleby@ecca.info](mailto:vicky.appleby@ecca.info)  
Tel: +32 2 538 2833  
Fax: +32 2 538 5833