ACS Foundation receives educational grant for patient skill kit

The Surgical Patient Education Program of the Division of Education of the American College of Surgeons has developed a patient skill kit to better prepare surgical patients for their ostomy care post-discharge. An educational grant from Coloplast, Inc. will support the production and distribution of 30,000 of these kits to surgical patients.

The program provides patients with a comprehensive, interactive learning kit that supports them in adopting the knowledge and skills for self-care following discharge. Specifically, the College is launching the program with a skill kit for patients requiring an ostomy. Each kit will contain a simple ostomy simulator, sample pouches, measurement guide, scissors, instruction booklet with images to guide each step of skill acquisition, and a CD featuring a demonstration of each skill, as well as a list of additional resources and support groups. (The educational content also describes potential complications and risks.)

Skills education for ostomy patients was chosen for this initiative because patients with bladder and colon cancer require extensive life-adjustment and skills training for continued home management.

An estimated 120,000 patients require an ostomy procedure each year, and yet research indicates that patients are leaving the hospital unprepared for home care. Skills training reduces common complications such as skin breakdown, and patients who feel confident about their care and changing their appliance have significantly higher quality of life scores in comparison with those who are not confident in their skills.

In response to the program's launch, David B. Hoyt, MD, FACS, Executive Director of the American College of Surgeons, said, "The Surgical Skills Patient Education Program will improve outcomes of surgical care and will establish a national standard for patient surgical skills education that ensures all patients and their families have the opportunity to participate in their surgical care and competently perform the skills required for their home care."

The ostomy skills kit was developed in collaboration with all of the professional organizations that provide care to the ostomy patient, including the American College of Surgeons, the Wound Ostomy Continence Nurses Society, the American Society of Colon and Rectal Surgeons, the American Urological Association, and the United Ostomy Associations of America.

While the program is being launched with materials for ostomy procedures, kits will also be created for a vast array of surgical procedures. All patient kits and professional training guides will be accompanied by detailed evaluations to support enhanced clinical outcomes and ensure that the education and access that patients require to recover from their operation is effective.

Coloplast, Inc. is supporting this Surgical Patient Education Program through an educational grant. According to Kim Herman, Coloplast, Inc. vice-president of marketing, "Coloplast welcomes the opportunity to enhance the efforts of the ACS, and we applaud the educational mission. As the global leader in ostomy care, we are proud to support the production and distribution of the skill kits to help support ostomy patients, as well as the physicians and nurses providing clinical and educational services to each of these individuals."

"The philanthropic support of donors like Coloplast provides essential resources for the American College of Surgeons as it furthers its commitment to patient safety and patient education through new programs like the home care skill kit for ostomy patients," said Thomas R. Russell, MD, FACS, Chair of the American College of Surgeons Foundation.

The skill kit for ostomy patients will be available in mid-April. Surgeons may order the materials online through the American College of Surgeons Web site at *http://www.facs.org/patienteducation*.