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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

**Karen E. Knudsen to Step Down as President of Association of American Cancer Institutes**

Association of American Cancer Institutes (AACI) President **Karen E. Knudsen, MBA, PhD**, announced today that she is resigning from Sidney Kimmel Cancer Center (SKCC) at Jefferson Health in Philadelphia. She will step down as AACI president and begin a new role as chief executive officer of the American Cancer Society (ACS) on June 1.

A member of AACI's Board of Directors since 2016, Dr. Knudsen began her term as president in October 2020. Since assuming the presidency, she has focused on leveraging the expertise of North America's 102 leading cancer institutes to understand and mitigate cancer health disparities.

Dr. Knudsen's presidential initiative aims to convert understanding of cancer disparities across AACI centers into meaningful, measurable actions to improve the lives of patients with cancer. To facilitate this, Dr. Knudsen is collecting and analyzing data to better understand the catchment areas covered by AACI cancer centers. As part of Dr. Knudsen's presidential initiative, AACI recently launched a cancer disparities podcast, *Accelerating Equity: Cancer Care for All*.

Dr. Knudsen is the third director of SKCC. With oversight of the cancer care and cancer discovery mission in the Jefferson Health enterprise, Dr. Knudsen also serves as the executive vice president of Oncology Services for Jefferson Health, and is the chair and Hilary Koprowski Professor of the Department of Cancer Biology.

Under Dr. Knudsen's leadership, SKCC was evaluated as "Outstanding" in its most recent National Cancer Institute (NCI) renewal and was one of only four cancer centers to be ranked "Exceptional" in Community Outreach and Engagement, a fundamental activity that enhances a cancer center's relationship with the communities they serve. SKCC has significantly extended the center's reach since 2015, now delivering cancer care in three Advanced Care Hubs outside the main academic site and offering clinical trials in a two-state region.

Dr. Knudsen's research is focused on the successful conversion of translational discoveries into clinical interventions for advanced prostate cancer. In addition to serving on the AACI Board of Directors, she has served on the board of the American Association of Cancer Research and on the NCI's Board of Scientific Advisors. Dr. Knudsen is an editor for several leading oncology journals and has received numerous awards for her accomplishments.



## Association of American Cancer Institutes

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At ACS, Dr. Knudsen will lead the 107-year-old nonprofit in its mission to save and celebrate lives and lead the fight for a world without cancer through discovery, advocacy, and patient support.

"I am honored to have served on the AACI Board of Directors and look forward to working through innovative partnerships to further accelerate progress against cancer," said Dr. Knudsen.

Vice President/President-elect **Caryn Lerman, PhD**, will begin her term as president in June. Dr. Lerman is director of the USC Norris Comprehensive Cancer Center in Los Angeles.

"Dr. Knudsen has boundless energy and a passion for improving the lives of people with cancer," said AACI Executive Director **Jennifer W. Pegher**. "As a dedicated member of AACI's Board of Directors—and president since last fall—she has taken the lead on promoting diversity and inclusion in the oncology leadership pipeline and reducing disparities in cancer research and care. AACI remains committed to these efforts."

Pegher added, "We congratulate Dr. Knudsen on this significant accomplishment and anticipate continued collaboration with her in the next chapter of her career, along with new opportunities to engage with ACS."

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*AACI is dedicated to accelerating progress against cancer by enhancing the impact of North America's leading academic cancer centers. For more information, please visit [aaci-cancer.org](http://aaci-cancer.org).*