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**For Immediate Release**

**THE AMERICAN BOARD OF ADDICTION MEDICINE FOUNDATION LAUDS  
CASA COLUMBIA REPORT:**

***ADDICTION MEDICINE: CLOSING THE GAP BETWEEN SCIENCE AND PRACTICE***

Chevy Chase, Maryland – June 26, 2012 – The American Board of Addiction Medicine Foundation (ABAM Foundation) today lauded the significant findings and recommendations in the landmark report just published by CASA Columbia, *Addiction Medicine: Closing the Gap between Science and Practice*.

“*Addiction Medicine* is the most up-to-date report on the availability of effective, life-saving and cost-saving treatments for unhealthy substance use and addiction to alcohol, nicotine and other drugs, including some prescription medications,” said ABAM Foundation President Jeffrey H. Samet, MD, MA, MPH. “It is thorough and well-documented. This country suffers from an inexcusable lack of access to treatment for patients in our healthcare system who suffer from addictive diseases.”

Samet continued: “The report pointedly highlights the inadequacy of education for physicians and other healthcare professionals about addiction.”

It is a matter of grave concern that physicians and other medical professionals receive little education or training in addiction science, prevention and treatment, despite the fact that unhealthy substance use and addiction are the largest preventable and most costly public health and medical problems in the U.S. American medicine has missed opportunities to engage patients and families and improve the health status of our nation.

Physician training in addiction medicine is sorely lacking. Addiction medicine receives little attention in medical schools, and there are no addiction medicine residencies among the 9,034 Accreditation Council for Graduate Medical Education (ACGME) accredited residency programs in the nation’s hospitals. Prior to the establishment of the American Board of Addiction Medicine (ABAM) and The ABAM Foundation, only one medical specialty (psychiatry) offered sub-specialized training and certification in addictions.

ABAM's goal is to have a member board of the American Board of Medical Specialties (ABMS) certify physicians in addiction medicine. The ABAM Foundation's purpose is to support ABAM's mission and to establish and accredit programs to train physicians from all specialties to recognize, intervene and treat patients and families.

“Clinical training, coupled with passage of ABAM's rigorous certification examination, will provide physicians with knowledge of evidence-based addiction treatments,” said Samet. “And patients will have access to specialized medical care for substance use disorders related to alcohol, tobacco and other addicting drugs at any entry point patients to the healthcare system. Trained addiction medicine physicians will join their addiction psychiatry colleagues and other addiction professionals in the interdisciplinary care of patients with addictive disorders.”

The CASA Columbia report (<http://www.casacolumbia.org>) offers a comprehensive set of recommendations to overhaul current intervention and treatment approaches and to bring practice in line with the scientific evidence and with the standard of care for other public health and medical conditions.

The report is issued at a time of increasing promise for addiction treatment, and more pressing need for trained treatment providers. Scientific research has confirmed that addiction is a chronic disease of the brain caused by biological and developmental factors, with unique vulnerabilities and pathology, and a predictable course, if not interrupted by effective treatment. An increasing number of medically-based addiction treatments are now available, and more are on the horizon.

ABAM and The ABAM Foundation are governed by 15 distinguished physicians from a range of medical specialties, each of whom is certified by a member board of the American Board of Medical Specialties (ABMS).

Information on ABAM and The ABAM Foundation is available at: <http://www.abam.net>.