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For Immediate Release

NEW ROBOTIC CATHETER SYSTEM MAKES NJ DEBUT AT GAGNON CARDIOVASCULAR INSTITUTE

MORRISTOWN, NJ JANUARY 2011 – A revolutionary new device incorporating a remote-controlled robotic arm designed to allow physicians to more easily perform procedures to correct abnormal heart rhythms was used for the first time in New Jersey this month by physicians at [Gagnon Cardiovascular Institute at Morristown Memorial Hospital](#).

The Amigo Remote Catheter System, from Mount Olive, NJ-based Catheter Robotics, Inc., navigated its way through the heart of a patient suffering from supraventricular tachycardia – heart palpitations – on Tuesday, January 4, 2010, as part of a clinical trial. The trial is a preliminary “mapping” study, to first determine how well the device can move within the heart, before it can be tested to perform procedures. The device is only available for clinical trials and not FDA approved in the United States. Gagnon Cardiovascular Institute at Morristown Memorial is the only site in New Jersey and one of ten sites in the country to participate in the FDA trial.

The Amigo system is operated using a wand-like remote-control, held by an electrophysiologist, to guide a robotic arm which moves a catheter inside the patient. This offers significant advantages to physicians currently performing procedures such as electrophysiology tests and ablation procedures by hand and could lead to better patient outcomes.

Jonathan Sussman, MD, the site principal investigator, and Timothy Mahoney, MD, both electrophysiologists with [Gagnon's Cardiac Rhythm Management program](#), who performed the trial procedure, said that the robot offers more steadiness than physicians would have performing the procedures by hand.

“It performs very well,” Mahoney said. “I think it holds a lot of promise for improving patient outcomes when we treat complex rhythm disturbances in the heart.”

Currently, electrophysiologists perform such procedures by hand, standing next to the patient. As these procedures involve the use of fluoroscopic radiation, physicians are required to wear lead-lined shielding, which can weigh about 20 lbs. By using the remote, electrophysiologists would be able to stand outside of the field of radiation, negating the need for the heavy vestments, and therefore avoiding radiation exposure, fatigue and potential orthopedic problems.

“Simply wearing that amount of weight can be quite taxing, let alone standing on one’s feet to perform delicate procedures which can take anywhere from 2 to 5 hours,” Mahoney said. “The remote-controlled Amigo system literally ‘takes a load off,’ of physicians like myself, which gives us an added level of focus and stability for the task at hand. Ultimately, that will lead to a better outcome for the patient.”

For more information about Gagnon Cardiovascular Institute, visit: www.atlantichealth.org/Gagnon/

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