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ECHOCARDIOGRAPHY IN HYPERTENSION -- PROVIDING THE FULL PICTURE TO IMPROVE PATIENT CARE

Morrisville, NC – Hypertension, or high blood pressure, is one of the leading risk factors for death globally, leading to a wide variety of cardiovascular problems, including coronary heart disease and stroke. While most of the general public are familiar with the traditional method of measuring blood pressure, systolic pressure over diastolic pressure, those numbers alone don't offer much information to physicians about the actual damage that may be occurring within a patient's cardiovascular system. A new document, ***Recommendations on the Use of Echocardiography in Adult Hypertension: A Report from the European Association of Cardiovascular Imaging (EACVI) and the American Society of Echocardiography (ASE)***, provides detailed guidance for clinicians on how to use echocardiography to see the full picture of the patient's condition.

The paper, a joint project between EACVI and ASE, will appear in the July issue of the *Journal of the American Society of Echocardiography (JASE)*. ASE's co-chair of the writing group, Thomas H. Marwick, MBBS, PhD of the Menzies Research Institute in Australia, commented, "While the primary goal of treatment is to reduce blood pressure to goal, echocardiographic measures of changes to the left ventricle (LV), for instance, can help predict prognosis. This is the first international recommendation on how to use echocardiography in this patient population."

The majority of the document outlines in detail the pathophysiology of cardiac responses to hypertension, which echocardiographic measures are most significant, and how to perform them most accurately. "More research is still needed to show how clinicians can fully use the valuable information provided by echo to guide therapy and other clinical decisions," Dr. Marwick noted. "In the meantime, this paper represents a comprehensive guide on when, why, and how to gather the images and data that may influence clinician decision-making."

The full guideline document is available on the *Journal of American Society of Echocardiography (JASE)* website (www.onlinejase.com). This document and all ASE Guideline documents are also available to the medical community at www.asecho.org/guidelines.

As the largest global organization for cardiovascular ultrasound imaging, the American Society of Echocardiography (ASE) is the leader and advocate, setting practice standards and guidelines. Comprised of over 16,000 physicians, sonographers, nurses, and scientists, ASE is a strong voice providing guidance, expertise, and education to its members with a commitment to improving the practice of ultrasound and imaging of the heart and cardiovascular system for better patient outcomes. For more information about ASE, visit www.asecho.org or ASE's public information site, www.SeeMyHeart.org.

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