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Opening Plenary Speaker at World Conference on Lung Cancer Examines How Serious Illness Can Create Important Sense of Meaning for HCPs, Caregivers and Patients

Lucy Kalanithi, M.D., Explores Themes in Late Husband's New York Times' Bestselling Memoir

Toronto, Canada – September 24, 2018 – The importance of having a professional and personal sense of meaning when dealing with serious illness, such as lung cancer, is the topic of today's opening Plenary Session, "Patients First," at the International Association for the Study of Lung Cancer's (IASLC's) 19th World Conference on Lung Cancer (WCLC) in Toronto, Canada. Lucy Kalanithi, M.D., explores this critical issue from a unique dual perspective; as a physician and also a caregiver who lost her spouse to Stage IV lung cancer.

Dr. Kalanithi's husband Paul had just completed his neurosurgery training when he received his diagnosis at age 36. Dr. Kalanithi experienced first-hand how Paul's remarkable medical team helped give his life value after diagnosis, and how the targeted therapies developed by medical researchers enabled her husband to achieve milestones, such as returning to work to practice neurosurgery and becoming a father, that gave his life meaning prior to passing away 22 months post-diagnosis.

"When you are a medical professional who works with an illness as serious as lung cancer, that challenge comes with an inherent opportunity to add value and a sense of meaning not only to your patients' lives, but also to your own," said Dr. Kalanithi. "This profession is not just a job, it's a calling, and our lives are enriched by our ability to connect to and enhance our patients' lives. The value of that sense of meaning to patients, caregivers and HCPs should not be underestimated."

Dr. Kalanithi's debut presentation at the WCLC, *When Breath Becomes Air*, shares the title of her husband's number-one *New York Times* best-selling memoir, for which she wrote the epilogue. Her presentation also draws from the teachings of Austrian psychiatrist and Holocaust survivor Viktor Frankl. Frankl proposed that the sources of meaning in human lives are love, work and suffering, and said that suffering provides its own special source of meaning by offering a path to triumph.

The WCLC joins Dr. Kalanithi in recognizing the importance of multidisciplinary care for those living with lung cancer. Since its first meeting in 1978, the WCLC has evolved from a conference for medical oncologists, radiation oncologists, surgical oncologists, epidemiologists, radiologists, pathologists, pulmonologists and health outcomes experts to an expanded event that also welcomes patients, patient advocates, nurses and allied health professionals involved in lung cancer.



About the WCLC

The World Conference on Lung Cancer (WCLC) is the world's largest meeting dedicated solely to lung cancer and other thoracic malignancies, attracting over 7,000 researchers, physicians and specialists from more than 100 countries. The conference will cover a wide range of disciplines and unveil research studies and clinical trial results. For more information, visit <http://wclc2018.iaslc.org/>. Follow the conference on social media with: #WCLC2018.

About the IASLC

The International Association for the Study of Lung Cancer (IASLC) is the only global organization dedicated solely to the study of lung cancer and other thoracic malignancies. Founded in 1974, the association's membership includes more than 7,500 lung cancer specialists across all disciplines in over 100 countries, forming a global network working together to conquer lung and thoracic cancers worldwide. The association also publishes the *Journal of Thoracic Oncology*, the primary educational and informational publication for topics relevant to the prevention, detection, diagnosis and treatment of all thoracic malignancies. Visit www.iaslc.org for more information. You can also follow the IASLC on [Twitter](#), [Facebook](#), [LinkedIn](#) and [Instagram](#).

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