



Natural Orifice Surgery Consortium for Assessment and Research (NOSCAR)

**A joint initiative supported by the
American Society for Gastrointestinal Endoscopy and the
Society of American Gastrointestinal and Endoscopic Surgeons**
1520 Kensington Drive ~ Suite 1520 ~ Oak Brook, Illinois 60523
630.573.0600 ~ info@noscar.org

LEADING GI MEDICAL & SURGICAL SOCIETIES PARTNER WITH ETHICON ENDO-SURGERY TO ADVANCE REVOLUTIONARY RESEARCH

October 11, 2006 - Oak Brook, Ill. – The Natural Orifice Surgery Consortium for Assessment and Research (NOSCAR), a joint effort of The American Society for Gastrointestinal Endoscopy (ASGE) and The Society of American Gastrointestinal and Endoscopic Surgeons (SAGES), announces a Request for Proposals based on a pledge of \$1,000,000 in research funds from Ethicon Endo-Surgery. This investment will support fundamental research in an emerging transdisciplinary therapy known as Natural Orifice Transluminal Endoscopic Surgery (NOTES), an approach that could ultimately represent a major paradigm shift in minimally invasive therapy.

“As a company committed to surgical innovation, Ethicon Endo-Surgery is proud to support critical research in this emerging therapeutic approach,” said Kevin Lobo, President, Ethicon Endo-Surgery. “We’re pleased to support research that will help the NOSCAR partnership explore what potentially may be the next frontier in surgery. As Ethicon Endo-Surgery moves into new and different procedures with new technology, we believe funding the responsible, effective and safe development of this new modality may lead to important surgical innovations.”

Proposals are due December 1, 2006, and must be submitted electronically. The complete request for proposal and more information is available online at www.NOSCAR.org.

About NOSCAR

Natural Orifice Transluminal Endoscopic Surgery (NOTES) might represent the next major advancement in minimally invasive therapy. To address this emerging technology, a working group consisting of expert laparoscopic surgeons from **SAGES** and a group of expert interventional endoscopists representing **ASGE** have joined together as the Natural Orifice Surgery Consortium for Assessment and Research (NOSCAR) Working Group on NOTES.

The growing capabilities of therapeutic flexible endoscopy have ushered in a new era in treatment of gastrointestinal conditions. Refinements in laparoscopic surgery have progressed to the point that complex surgical procedures, such as gastric bypass, can now be performed in a minimally invasive fashion. These trends have set the stage for the development of even less invasive methods to treat conditions in both the gut lumen and in the peritoneal cavity. It seems feasible that major intraperitoneal surgery may one day be performed without skin incisions. The natural orifices may provide the entry point for surgical interventions in the peritoneal cavity thereby avoiding abdominal wall incisions.

The NOSCAR group identified a number of baseline issues. For NOTES to mature into a viable technology, both procedure and device development must continue. At this stage, NOTES must be performed by a team that has the skills of an advanced therapeutic endoscopist and a laparoscopic surgeon who in many instances will bring unique but complementary skills. There are a number of other fundamental issues, many of which are identified in the white papers which may be accessed

via www.NOSCAR.org – the group’s official web site. These issues must be understood prior to the safe introduction of NOTES. These are best addressed in laboratory settings. Having supportive laboratory data is an essential step prior to approval from regulatory agencies like the FDA or Institutional Review Board for performing initial NOTES. The most important areas for initial study are: safe peritoneal access and secure gastric closure, intraperitoneal contamination, image display and maintenance of spatial orientation, development of stable working platforms, physiologic perturbations, and tissue approximation methods (suturing and others).

###

About the Society of American Gastrointestinal and Endoscopic Surgeons

The Society of American Gastrointestinal and Endoscopic Surgeons (SAGES) was founded in 1981 to foster, promote, support and encourage academic, clinical and research achievement in gastrointestinal endoscopic surgery. Our members are general and colorectal surgeons who perform endoscopy and laparoscopy as part of their practice as well as surgical resident, fellows, and other allied health personnel. The Society has grown from fewer than 50 original members to more than 5,500 from every state and over 80 countries. Visit www.sages.org for more information.

About the American Society for Gastrointestinal Endoscopy

The American Society for Gastrointestinal Endoscopy (ASGE), founded in 1941, is the preeminent professional organization dedicated to advancing the practice of endoscopy. ASGE, with more than 9,000 physician members worldwide, promotes the highest standards for endoscopic training and practice, fosters endoscopic research, recognizes distinguished contributions to endoscopy, and is the foremost resource for endoscopic education. Visit www.asge.org ; www.askasge.org; and www.screen4coloncancer.org for more information.

About Ethicon Endo-Surgery

Ethicon Endo-Surgery, Inc. develops and markets advanced medical devices for minimally invasive and open surgical procedures. The company focuses on procedure-enabling devices for the interventional diagnosis and treatment of conditions in general and bariatric surgery, as well as gastrointestinal health, gynecology and surgical oncology. More information on the company can be found at www.ethiconendo.com.

Media Contact:
Barbara Connell
630-570-5616
info@noscar.org