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Community Health Works announces plans for first annual Central Georgia Regional Health Summit

FORSYTH, Ga. (September 1, 2009) – Community Health Works, a non-profit organization devoted to improving healthcare in Central Georgia, announced today plans to hold the first annual Central Georgia Regional Health Summit this October, a new initiative that will bring industry leaders together to address regional health and healthcare issues.

Community Health Works President and CEO Gregory J. Dent said the purpose of the summit “is to bring together healthcare providers, business leaders, local public officials and other stakeholders to begin a dialogue about the health problems that most impact Central Georgia.” Dent said the summit would focus especially on obesity and other health conditions commonly associated with obesity, including diabetes, hypertension and heart disease.

“If we can make progress on those fronts,” Dent continued, “we will automatically be improving the health status of our citizens and reducing the region’s overall healthcare costs.”

The Health Summit will kick off on October 7 with The Medical Center of Central Georgia as the Presenting Sponsor and Houston Healthcare as the Platinum Sponsor. The annual Leadership Breakfast, hosted by the Mercer University School of Medicine, will be an opportunity for public officials to give and receive information about the state of health in central Georgia.

On October 21, community leaders from seven central Georgia counties – Bibb, Crawford, Houston, Jones, Monroe, Peach and Twiggs – will gather for a day-long planning conference at Macon State College. Central Georgia government, business and healthcare leaders will have the opportunity to participate in plenary sessions and small-group moderated discussions designed to set a year-long agenda to address obesity and conditions associated with it. Quarterly meetings held throughout CHW’s seven-

county service region will solicit public participation in health and health services planning at the local level.

The October 21 Summit will be keynoted by Alice Yoder, Director of Community Health at Lancaster General Health, a Lancaster, Penn., hospital that has been named to U.S. News & World Report's list of the nation's top 50 hospitals for six of the past seven years. Employed for 26 years in the healthcare industry, Ms. Yoder has conducted several community health assessments, organized community partnerships and coalitions and spoken at numerous conferences on a variety of health improvement topics. As Director of Community Health, Ms. Yoder is responsible for leading the Health System's strategic goals related to Mission & Community Benefit.

Through the inaugural event and quarterly public meetings to be held over the next three years in each of the seven counties comprising CHW's core service region, the Summit will serve as an ongoing, community-responsive dialogue around the health issues that matter the most to local communities and healthcare systems alike.

Community Health Works is a growing network of regional healthcare institutions, physicians, and community organizations working together to serve Central Georgia as a regional center for health innovation. The Regional Health Summit will allow CHW to achieve its larger vision to provide better health for all people through communities working together.

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FOR MORE INFORMATION

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Summit web site:

www.cgrhs.org