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## **UNPRECEDENTED, COMMUNITY-WIDE EFFORT LAUNCHED TO TRANSFORM DIABETES CARE IN GREATER CINCINNATI**

*Campaign to provide individuals with diabetes guidelines and tools to better manage their care*

CINCINNATI – November 24, 2008 – Cincinnati Aligning Forces for Quality (AF4Q) today launched the *Diabetes Footprints Campaign*, a groundbreaking initiative to help Greater Cincinnatians with diabetes improve the care they receive from their doctor and better manage their own health. AF4Q is a signature effort of the Health Improvement Collaborative of Greater Cincinnati in partnership with the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation to improve health outcomes.

One in four people in Greater Cincinnati will have diabetes by 2020 and 50 percent of African American and Latino residents will have the disease within a decade according to the Centers for Disease Control. Experts estimate that less than half of all people with diabetes receive the right medical care at the right time. Although proven guidelines for care and treatment of diabetes exist, many people with diabetes in Greater Cincinnati are not aware of them.

“There is both good and bad diabetes care being delivered in our community, and I know from experience that finding out about the right medical care can be tough in a confusing health care system,” said Michael Heile, MD, an individual living with diabetes who also treats diabetic patients. “Patients who don’t receive consistent, quality medical care are more susceptible to heart problems, blindness, leg amputation and many other complications. Fortunately there are actions that people with diabetes can take to ensure they receive the best diabetes care from their physician and also know how to take care of themselves. It is critical that we get that information in the hands of patients and their doctors.”

Nationally accepted, science-based guidelines recommended by the American Diabetes Association are available to help explain to doctors and patients what constitutes high quality diabetes care. But in a recent focus group conducted by Procter & Gamble for the *Diabetes*

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*Footprints Campaign*, not one of the 20 women with diabetes who were questioned was aware that standards of care exist that can ensure they are receiving high quality care for their disease.

The *Diabetes Footprints Campaign* will educate consumers about these quality indicators, and get educational materials into the hands of 100,000 Greater Cincinnatians with diabetes by the end of 2009. The Campaign will make these standards of care available through their website [www.diabetesfootprints.org](http://www.diabetesfootprints.org) as well as a toolkit of materials designed to facilitate communication between patients and their doctors. The centerpiece of the Campaign is a “Success with Diabetes” brochure that provides consumers with:

- A **checklist to use for a doctor visit** (including a list of American Diabetes Association tests that should be part of regular office visits, a simple explanation of each test, what the test result should be, and how often the test is typically needed)
- A **self-care checklist** for people with type 2 diabetes to use at home

The toolkit will be distributed through the *Diabetes Footprints Campaign* partners – a coalition of more than 50 local health care and community organizations. Campaign partners include area health plans such as Aetna and health care provider organizations such as the Mercy Health Partners Certified Diabetes Education program. Through vehicles such as TriHealth’s Corporate Wellness program, the message will also reach major employers such as General Electric and Procter & Gamble. A full list of partners can be found at [www.diabetesfootprints.org](http://www.diabetesfootprints.org).

Additional resources available on the website include: downloadable doctor-visit and self-care checklists, a Certified Diabetes Educators contact list, and a list of physician practices working with AF4Q to improve diabetes care.

“We know that people who are well-informed about their illness and fully engaged in their own care will make better decisions regarding lifestyle and self-care, and will enjoy greater health as a result,” said Heile. “Knowing and following these guidelines helps people be better partners with their doctors and increases the chances that patients are getting the best professional care and doing all they can for their own health.”

AF4Q, a national initiative being implemented in only 14 regions across the country, is an unprecedented community-wide collaboration which is applying groundbreaking approaches to improve health outcomes in Greater Cincinnati, with a particular focus on chronic illness care.

*For more information about the Diabetes Footprints Campaign, visit [www.diabetesfootprints.org](http://www.diabetesfootprints.org).*

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