



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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**Veteran Healthcare Professional
Named Executive Director at HARC**

Eileen Packer to Manage Region-wide Healthcare Needs Assessment

(PALM DESERT, CA) – Long-time CEO of the California Dietetic Association, Eileen Packer, has been appointed Executive Director of HARC, the Coachella Valley's new Healthcare Assessment Resource Center.

The nonprofit agency has embarked on comprehensive research initiative in areas ranging from Calimesa to Blythe as part of an effort to shape the future of community health care across the region. Data gathered will be shared with various agencies and healthcare providers to help them design programs best suited to constituent needs.

In naming Ms. Packer to the post, the Board hired a credentialed healthcare executive with some 30 years of management experience. She most recently served as a Program Manager for the Desert Healthcare District and, prior, as a consultant to HADASSAH Southern California, where she focused on fundraising.

The registered dietitian and certified association executive began her career in the Los Angeles area as Director of Food and Nutrition Services at Tarzana Regional Medical Center. After 11 years there, she took the CEO reins at the 7,000-member California Dietetic Association in Los Angeles. She restructured the organization and its foundation during her decade-plus tenure there, restoring profitability and building a reserve fund to sustain future outreach.

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The Canadian educated professional moved to the Coachella Valley in 2000, serving in various management positions for the county's Office on Aging. Three years later, the Stroke Recovery Center hired her as Executive Director.

Ms. Packer will report to a 13-member board comprised of healthcare and civic leaders across the Coachella Valley. HARC Board President Dr. Glen Grayman says the breadth of experience she brings to the organization makes her an excellent fit for the group's mission.

"Eileen's outstanding work in the wellness field, coupled with her strong background in association management, made her an ideal choice to lead HARC," said Dr. Grayman. "Our work involves a lot of cooperation between healthcare providers, as well as public and private sector agencies. She understands the unique informational needs each stakeholder group has and how our research data will support them."

HARC brings together a steering committee of some 31 community partners and leaders, including hospitals, school districts, healthcare districts, county government, public safety and private sector interests. All are contributing substantial financial and human resources necessary to launch the comprehensive needs assessment.

Researchers hired by HARC recently completed in-field interviews. Once the initial survey data results have been tabulated and compiled, HARC plans to hold a public kick-off in late 2007, when a summary of the findings will be shared with the community.

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