



FOR RELEASE: DRAFT
January 6, 2010

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**HARC to Administer Comprehensive Assessment of
Healthcare Needs in Eastern Riverside County**
HARC Set to Kick Off Second Major Research Initiative in January 2010

(PALM DESERT, CA) – Seeking updated, strictly confidential information about the health of residents in Eastern Riverside County, the Healthcare Assessment Resource Center (HARC) plans to conduct its second triennial research study beginning in early January 2010. The nonprofit organization encourages individuals to participate so professionals can more accurately identify the region's most pressing healthcare needs.

Beginning the week of January 11, residents across the Coachella Valley, as well as those residing in the Banning Pass and Blythe, will receive phone calls from a cadre of researchers tasked with gathering field data about a range of healthcare issues. Questions will focus on access to healthcare, behavioral risk factors, current health challenges, gaps in services, as well as demographics. The fieldwork phase concludes in April, followed by an extensive period of data tabulation, review and analysis.

The 2010 assessment follows the landmark 2007 HARC study, the results of which are published in the organization's *Community Health Monitor*. Health organizations from both the public and private sector regularly rely on the reference data to facilitate strategic planning and decision-making related to programs, funding and more.

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HARC To Undertake Region-Wide Health Study (continued) – 2

HARC Board President Glen Grayman, MD. said the 2010 needs assessment will not only help produce the most current, statistically valid data available today, it will also help healthcare professionals better understand the relative progress or setbacks that have occurred within specific categories.

“There clearly have been some interesting demographic shifts across the County within the past 3 years, and this updated triennial study will help us better understand how these changes have manifested themselves in terms of public health,” said Dr. Grayman. “Armed with the baseline data gathered in the 2007 Community Health Monitor, this updated study gives us an opportunity to identify trends with key metrics.”

HARC brings together a steering committee of more than 35 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.

The group has retained nationally recognized consultancy Macro International to conduct the assessment. Once the initial survey data is ready to be published, HARC plans to hold a public kick-off in early 2011, when a summary of the findings will be shared with the community.

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