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Linkage Between Diabetes and Heart Disease Clear in HARC Research
Local Numbers Spotlighted as Part of National Diabetes Month

(PALM DESERT, CA) – With more than 50,000 people across eastern Riverside County diagnosed with some form of diabetes, according to research conducted by HARC, the Health Assessment Resource Center, it is natural to feel concern about the long-term health implications for those individuals. Heart disease remains chief among those worries.

In fact 2007 data gathered from the Palm Desert-based research organization shows that diabetic adults here have been diagnosed with heart disease at a rate that's more than double than their non-diabetic counterparts (17.9% compared to 6.6%). The local diagnosis rate closely tracks the 2007 national average.

HARC data also reveals that of individuals who were told by their doctor, nurse or health care professional that they have diabetes, 76.7 % fall in to the category of overweight or obese. Findings reveal no significant differences between the proportions men and women diagnosed with the disease.

Causing additional concern for medical practitioners is the fact that nationally there are 1.6 million new cases of diabetes in the United States being reported among people aged 20 years and older each year. They join a group that now exceeds 23.6 million people, according to the National Diabetes Fact Sheet. Without an increase in exercise and weight loss, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention predicts up to 1/3 of American adults are on their way to become diabetic by 2050.



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“These are difficult numbers to ignore,” said Glen Grayman, MD, President of the HARC Board of Directors. “The long-term implications associated with this data should have every stakeholder in the public health arena assessing how best to prepare for the stiff challenges that lie ahead in term of programs, access to care and, of course, costs.”

Those findings and more will receive more attention in November as the health care industry acknowledges National Diabetes Month.

Diabetes represents a group of diseases marked by high levels of blood glucose resulting from deficiencies in insulin production, insulin action, or both. The condition can lead to serious complications such as heart disease, blindness, kidney failure, lower extremity amputations, and premature death.

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About HARC

Formed in 2006 by a consortium of more than 30 public and private healthcare agencies, the Health Assessment Resource Center (HARC) conducts a confidential community health status assessment in eastern Riverside County every 3 years to identify major health and quality of life issues. The nonprofit 501(c)3 organization is funded in part by contributions from community partners, as well as entities that contract with the agency for customized public health research. More information can be obtained by calling HARC at (760) 404-1945, or visiting the organization’s website at www.harcddata.org.