



Heartland Dental Care Raises Funds for the Oral Cancer Foundation *Proceeds to Benefit Underserved Populations with Free Oral Cancer Screenings*

EFFINGHAM, Ill., Oct. 8 /U.S. Newswire/ -- Heartland Dental Care, a dental practice management group is committed to increasing the public's awareness about oral cancer and promoting the importance of annual oral cancer screenings. When found early, oral cancer is highly survivable. Unfortunately, too often early discovery of the disease does not take place, and nationally, 66% of the time it is found as a late stage killer. A simple, painless, 5-minute examination which finds the disease in its early stages, or even the pre-cancerous changes that take place in the mouth, can save lives. Dedicated HDC doctors and their staff made an all out effort this summer to help change this statistic, by focusing the combined power of their more than 175 home town dental practices on this issue.

But they did more than help those in their own patient populations. The practices donated \$10.00 from each screening fee to the Oral Cancer Foundation (OCF), a national non-profit charity dedicated to bringing down the death rate from this disease. At the end of their effort, HDC practices raised \$31,480 for OCF by performing 3,148 oral cancer examinations during a two-month time period. The top six practices providing the most exams included Westfield Dental Center in Westfield, Ind.; 21st Century Dental in Charleston, Ill.; Effingham Dental Group in Effingham, Ill.; South Street Family Dental in Lafayette, Ind.; Creative Smiles in Champaign, Ill.; and Terre Haute Family Dental Care in Terre Haute, Ind.

Brian Hill, the founder of OCF and a late stage oral cancer survivor himself, stated, "This organization and the individuals involved in the practices it represents, have not only done great service in their local communities. The funds they raised will help the foundation to increase awareness nationally about the dangers of a disease which few Americans hear about, even though each year it will take more lives than cancers more commonly in the news. Their donations will also help the foundation to distribute needed information, and conduct free public screenings in areas of the US where disparities in healthcare exist, from inner cities to rural communities. Their combined efforts not only represent the highest standards of patient care, but by extending the impact of their care outside of their local communities though OCF, reflects an altruistic philosophy of generosity and a commitment to a greater good. They certainly have lived up to their motto: "Doing the Right Thing for the Right Reasons."

The Oral Cancer Foundation is a non-profit 501(c)3, public service charity that provides information, support, and advocacy related to this disease. It maintains an educational and patient support web site (<http://www.oralcancer.org>) which receives over 15 million hits per month. At the forefront of this year's agenda is the drive to promote solid awareness in the minds of the American public about the need to undergo an annual oral cancer screening, and an outreach to the dental community to provide this service

as a matter of routine practice. Supporting the foundation's goals is a scientific advisory board composed of leading cancer authorities from varied medical and dental specialties, and from prominent cancer educational, treatment, and research institutions in the United States. For more information about the Oral Cancer Foundation, visit <http://www.oralcancerfoundation.org> .

HDC is a collection of more than 175 hometown dental practices located throughout Illinois, Indiana, Ohio, Michigan, Florida, Kentucky, Tennessee, Missouri, Iowa, Arizona, Texas, and Virginia. HDC currently is affiliated with more than 220 dentists and employs more than 1,750 individuals. In addition, HDC serves coaching clients in Illinois, Ohio, Iowa, Idaho, Oregon, California, Utah, Nevada, Arizona, Texas, Louisiana, Georgia, Florida, New York, New Jersey, and Puerto Rico.