



**For further information, contact:
Athia Hardt, 602-861-6800**

**NEWS
8/20/07**

Delaware Physicians Care Encourages Walking For a Healthy Life, Obesity Prevention

A new program to teach members of Delaware Physician's Care, Incorporated (DPCI) to "fit walking into your life" is being launched this month, with a goal of helping both youth and adults avoid and combat the national "epidemic of obesity."

"We really want to get people excited about doing something physically active to improve their lives," said Kimberly Smalls, DPCI prevention and wellness coordinator.

The four-week program is seeking to enroll about 900 adult members of the health plan. In addition, a voluntary program for children and youth will be conducted at four after-school locations.

In the adult program, members will be provided with a walking pedometer and asked to weigh-in weekly at their doctor's office. Those who log their steps and weigh in weekly will receive a \$10.00 gift card for Wal-Mart as an incentive reward.

In the part of the effort aimed at children and youth, a "fun" exercise program utilizing colorful gym equipment and providing activities such as relays will be organized three afternoons a week after school. Healthy eating information also will be shared in the after-school program.

"Health trends show that the epidemic increase in obesity in children and adults is leading to more cardiovascular disease and diabetes and a variety of other health problems," Smalls said. "We want to impact that by helping them learn how to live healthier lives."

-more-

Page Two – Delaware Physicians Care

In addition to obvious health impacts, a study recently found, obese elementary school children are absent more school days on average as well. Researchers from Penn and Temple University studied fourth to sixth graders for a year in nine Philadelphia schools. Of 180 school days, researchers found that, on average, normal weight students missed 10.1 days, while overweight kids missed 10.9 days and obese children missed 12.2 days.

Delaware Physicians Care (DPCI), which provides health care services for the majority of Delaware's Medicaid members, is owned by Schaller Anderson, Incorporated, a company that administers physical and behavioral health care for Medicaid, Medicare, commercial and employer self-funded plans in eight states.

Schaller Anderson is a division of Aetna, a 150-year company that is a leader in cooperating with physicians and hospitals, employers, patients, public officials and others to build a stronger, more effective health care system.

Aetna is one of the nation's leading diversified health care benefits companies, serving approximately 34.9 million people with information and resources to help them make better informed decisions about their health care. Aetna offers a broad range of traditional and consumer-directed health insurance products and related services, including medical, pharmacy, dental, behavioral health, group life, long-term care and disability plans, and medical management capabilities. Our customers include employer groups, individuals, college students, part-time and hourly workers, health plans and government-sponsored plans. www.aetna.com

-end-