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ORANGE COUNTY UNVEILS WEB SITE ON COMMUNITY-BASED HEALTH CARE

Orange County Network of Care: A Road Map to Health Care (www.ochealthcare.org) empowers Orange County residents and service providers by providing online access to comprehensive services available within Orange County

Santa Ana, March 3, 2006 – Orange County today introduced Orange County Network of Care: A Road Map to Health Care – a breakthrough Web source for its residents and health-care service providers. Supervisor Lou Correa, Orange County Board of Supervisors, First District, addressed the Orange County audience for the official launch of the health information website. This site can greatly assist residents in finding the best health care in our community. It is a better way to connect the community that cares for our health.

The Orange County Network of Care: A Road Map to Health Care is sponsored by The HealthCare Foundation for Orange County in partnership with The California Endowment Foundation, St. Joseph Hospital of Orange, Children and Families Commission of Orange County and Info Link Orange County. Regardless of where individuals, families and agencies begin their search for assistance with health care, The Roap Map to Health Care ensures they will find what they need. The new website will enable people to educate themselves about their issues, understand current policy initiatives and advocate directly to elected officials, and better manage their healthcare activities, interactions and important records.

This project was initiated by The HealthCare Foundation for Orange County in August 2004 because as Doris Flander, CEO, stated, “the Foundation’s goal to increase access to needed healthcare for low-income families in the County has been better served by working with a group of impacted stakeholders dedicated to making a difference in the health care community to broaden its safety net coverage”. To low-income, uninsured and under insured families in Orange County, the healthcare system can be confusing and difficult to access. This issue has been brought home, graphically, to Orange County healthcare providers twice in the last five years, as the community mourned the loss of two toddlers, each dying from preventable illness at the hands of unlicensed healthcare providers. One was treated at a “backdoor” pharmacy with expired medications. One child’s death is one too many; yet, each year children and parents in Orange County are at risk of such treatment, or neglect of health concerns. Linda Simon, Vice President Mission Integration, St. Joseph Hospital of Orange stated “We are pleased to participate in such a fine effort to help the broader community access health information for themselves and their families.”

The Road Map to Health Care provides a comprehensive Service Directory of service providers in Orange County, putting people in touch with the right services at the right time. Angie Baur, Executive Director of Info Link Orange County, stated, “the more informed a person is about where to access services the sooner they obtain treatment that they need. This improves health and saves money”. The Road Map to Health Care also provides easy-to-search libraries and vital information about health care, as well as daily news articles from around the world concerning health issues.

To increase accessibility and accommodate Road Map to Health Care users, the site’s innovative technology provides access, regardless of literacy or income level, to Web-based services through a text-only version of the site and other adaptive technologies. The site is fully ADA-compliant and Bobby-approved. The Road Map to Health Care is available in multiple languages (Spanish, Cantonese, Chinese, Korean, Japanese, and Russian).

Service providers can share challenges and ideas, as well as create powerful new mechanisms to better serve healthcare needs, by embracing the Road Map to Health Care communication tools such as message boards. Service providers can even build their own free Web sites in the For Providers section.

Trilogy Integrated Resources LLC of San Rafael, Calif., created, developed and maintains Orange County Network of Care: A Road Map to Health Care for the local partnership. **For more information on this site please contact Doris J. Flander at 714-245-1650 or foundationnews@hfoc.org.**