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CRI Partnership Time to Talk CARDIO Recognized with Prestigious National Award for Excellence in Health Literacy

Institute for Healthcare Advancement Presents Time to Talk CARDIO with 2010 Award for “Innovative Program”

Irvine, Calif. - May 6, 2010 – A Canyon Ranch Institute (CRI) partnership, Time to Talk CARDIO (Creating A Real Dialogue In the Office), was recognized today by the non-profit Institute for Healthcare Advancement (IHA) for outstanding achievement in health literacy. The award announcement was made at the Ninth Annual IHA Health Literacy Conference, “Health Literacy in the Real World: Programs & Solutions That Work,” in Irvine, Calif.

Cardiovascular disease causes more than 870,000 deaths in the United States each year. Time to Talk CARDIO is an educational program that focuses on advancing health literacy about heart health.

Time to Talk CARDIO was collaboratively developed by CRI, the American Academy of Family Physicians Foundation, Merck & Co., Inc., and RIASWorks. A key component of Time to Talk CARDIO is a free, online, communication skill-building tool that features more than 550 videos demonstrating methods to help make the most of the limited time in a medical visit.

CRI President Richard H. Carmona, M.D., M.P.H., FACS, 17th U.S. Surgeon General (2002-2006), is chair of the Time to Talk CARDIO Advisory Board, and CRI Executive Director Jennifer Cabe, M.A., serves on the board. CRI Health Literacy and Research Director Andrew Pleasant, Ph.D., coordinated in-clinic research to assess the impact of the Time to Talk CARDIO skill-building tool and resources among patients and health care professionals. Ms. Cabe and Dr. Pleasant accepted the IHA award on behalf of CRI.

“Heart disease is the leading cause of death in the United States, yet is largely preventable,” explained Dr. Pleasant. “There is strong evidence showing that improving communication between patients and their health care professionals offers many benefits for patients, including increased understanding and satisfaction, and may improve health outcomes.”

Dr. Carmona helped introduce Time to Talk CARDIO to the public in February 2010. “Two priorities of my service as Surgeon General of the United States and of my life’s work are to increase the attention and effort focused on preventing disease and to improve the health literacy of all people,” said Dr. Carmona. “While we’ve made great progress in the prevention and management of cardiovascular disease, many patients fail to experience the full benefit from their treatment plans for a variety of reasons.”

Piloted in 2009 by AAFP practices in Missouri, North Carolina and Mississippi, initial research among 144 patients showed that the Time to Talk CARDIO program significantly increased overall use of communication skills and improved overall satisfaction with medical visits. Likewise, preliminary testing with 24 health care professionals also reported a significant increase in overall communication skill use and statistically significant improvement in overall satisfaction with visit communication. In separate research conducted with 100 patients at the Oregon Health & Science University in conjunction with CRI, results found a significant improvement in several dimensions of effective patient-provider communication and satisfaction, however; they did not show a statistically significant overall change. The program is currently being used in health care settings across the United States, and several physician practices are continuing to assess Time to Talk CARDIO this year.

“Time to Talk CARDIO is another example of the innovative, evidence-based work to reduce the burden of chronic disease that Canyon Ranch Institute was founded to develop and help make available to all people,” said Ms. Cabe. “Along with our outstanding partners, we are extremely pleased to receive this recognition from IHA, and we hope everyone takes advantage of the free online resources at www.timetotalkcardio.com to improve communication between patients and their health care professionals.”

About Canyon Ranch Institute

Canyon Ranch Institute (CRI) catalyzes the possibility of optimal health *for all people* by translating the best practices of Canyon Ranch and its partners to help educate, inspire, and empower every person to prevent disease and embrace a life of wellness. As a 501(c)3 non-profit organization, CRI collaborates with partners to improve health literacy, prevent disease, and eliminate health disparities. For more information, visit www.canyonranchinstitute.org.

About Time to Talk CARDIO

Time to Talk CARDIO is an educational program underwritten by Merck/Schering-Plough Pharmaceuticals. The program, developed in partnership with the AAFP Foundation, CRI, and RIASWorks, is dedicated to advancing cardiovascular health by helping to improve the dialogue between patients and health care professionals. The Time to Talk CARDIO tool was modeled after LEAPS, a framework developed by Debra Roter, Dr.P.H., M.P.H., of RIASWorks, to assist health care professionals and patients in improving their in-clinic conversations. LEAPS addresses five key areas: Listen, Educate, Assess, Partner and Support. The Time to Talk CARDIO program also offers many free cardiovascular-focused educational resources, including patient and health care provider brochures, posters and goal setting work sheets. Materials are available free to download or order from the Time to Talk CARDIO web site at www.timetotalkcardio.com.

About the Institute for Healthcare Advancement (IHA)

IHA is a La Habra, California-based not-for-profit organization dedicated to empowering people to better health. It is nationally recognized for its efforts in health literacy and provides healthcare information through its various publishing efforts, the Internet, and its renowned local and national education programs. Tel: 1-900-434-4633. Visit: www.ih4health.org.