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DeCareSM
International

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DeCare International Awards €2,000 Grant To Health Services Executive North Western Area

Funds Awarded to Stress Link Between Oral, General Health

(DUBLIN, IRELAND) March 14, 2005 — DeCare International has committed €2,000 to the dental services in the Health Services Executive (HSE) North Western Area in an effort to promote health – particularly oral health – and support educational initiatives that address innovative solutions to the challenges of healthy living.

“The HSE North Western Area and its programs play a vital role in the community and sets a positive example, helping others receive the care and education that they may otherwise go without,” said Michael Walsh, president and CEO of DeCare International. “DeCare International is committed to measurably improving the oral health of the Irish people through the support of charitable non-profit organisations, and we are pleased to partner with groups that share our goals.”

The grant is part of an €11,000 corporate giving and community investment initiative designed to improve oral health in Ireland, address societal needs and make a positive difference in the communities in which they operate. The HSE North Western Area’s program is designed to decrease dental caries (cavities), dental erosion and obesity through an increased the awareness of the often hidden levels of sugar in foods and drinks.

Increased sugar in the diet can increase the risk of tooth decay and obesity. Bacteria that live in the mouth thrive on foods containing sugar, producing acid as a result. Over a period of time, these acids destroy tooth enamel, resulting in tooth decay, according to Dr. Gerard Gavin, Chief Dental Officer for Ireland, DeCare International.

The HSE North Western Area was one of three groups to receive support through DeCare International’s philanthropic efforts. Additional programs receiving grants, in the amounts of €6,300 and €2,900, include:

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The Marie Keating Foundation – A €6,300 grant was awarded to the Marie Keating Foundation, a cancer raising awareness non-profit organisation, in an effort to promote health – particularly oral health – and support educational initiatives that address innovative solutions to the challenges of healthy living. The funds awarded to the Marie Keating Foundation will be used to raise awareness of oral cancer, train Marie Keating Foundation staff nurses and produce an informational leaflet on oral cancer.

Summerhill Active Retirement Group – A €2,900 grant was awarded to Co. Meath-based Summerhill Active Retirement Group to fund a series of information sessions on oral health and dental care, focused on key areas of concern for a growing senior population. The programmes will emphasise prevention and positive attitudes toward dental and oral health, including the link between oral health and general wellbeing.

Since 2001, DeCare International has contributed over €75,000 to support a variety of health and community-based programs in Ireland.

A global leader in oral health care management, DeCare International and its subsidiaries manage more than \$810 million in dental insurance premium, covering more than 3.9 million lives in the United States and Ireland. DeCare International is headquartered in Minnesota, with offices in New York, Iowa and Nebraska. DeCare International also operates DeCare Systems Ireland, a Web solutions company based in Cork; DeCare Operations Ireland, a claim processing center based in Claremorris; and DeCare Dental Insurance Ireland in Dublin, which (in partnership with Vhi Healthcare) offers Vhi DeCare Dental, a line of dental insurance products in Ireland.

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For questions on the DeCare International grant program, please contact:
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