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**DeCare**<sup>SM</sup>  
International

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**DeCare International Awards €2,900 Grant To County  
Meath's Summerhill Active Retirement Group**

*Funds Awarded to Stress Senior Oral Health*

**(DUBLIN, IRELAND) March 14, 2005** — DeCare International has committed €2,900 to the Summerhill Active Retirement Group, a Co. Meath-based voluntary organisation, in an effort to promote senior health – particularly oral health – and support educational initiatives that address innovative solutions to the challenges of healthy living.

“The Summerhill Active Retirement Group 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 Summerhill Active Retirement Group's program includes a series of information sessions on oral health and dental care, focused on key areas of concern for a growing senior population. The sessions will emphasise prevention and positive attitudes toward dental and oral health, including the link between oral health and general well-being.

“The aging process can lead to subtle, and sometimes dramatic, changes in the condition of teeth, mouth and gums, making regular dental visits crucial,” said Dr. Gerard Gavin, Chief Dental Officer for Ireland, DeCare International. “Proper oral care, including a daily oral hygiene routine and regular visits to the dentist, can provide full-body benefits. Maintaining a healthy mouth may keep the body healthier and help avoid heart disease and stroke.”

The Summerhill Active Retirement Group 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 €2,000, 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.

**The Health Services Executive ( HSE) North Western Area** – The dental services of the HSE North Western Area, based in Co. Donegal, was awarded €2,000 to support its Oral Health Promotion project. The program is designed to decrease dental caries (cavities), dental erosion and obesity through an increased awareness of the often hidden levels of sugar in foods and drinks.

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 Sytems 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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