



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

February 4, 2013

**Health District commemorates American Heart Month;
*joins Million Hearts™ campaign***

LAS VEGAS – Heart disease remains the leading cause of death in Nevada and across the country. In 2009, heart disease caused the deaths of more than 4,000 Nevadans. To commemorate American Heart Month, the Southern Nevada Health District’s office of chronic disease prevention & health promotion is joining the national Million Hearts™ campaign to prevent more than one million heart attacks and strokes in the United States. Beginning February 4th, the health district will launch a coordinated social media awareness campaign that provides information, tips and resources to promote cardiovascular health on its Get Healthy Clark County website, www.GetHealthyClarkCounty.org and in Spanish on its Viva Saludable site, www.VivaSaludable.org. Information will also be distributed on the health district’s social media sites on Twitter, Facebook and the Get Healthy Clark County blogs.

“Too many men and women in our community are dying from heart disease and stroke. Many are not aware of their own risk factors. American Heart Month is an opportunity for us to work with our partners to raise awareness to educate people about risk factors and to help them reduce their risks. We want to help people take simple steps to better manage their health and live healthier, more productive lives,” said Rayleen Earney, Southern Nevada Health District health educator.

According to the 2011 Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance Survey (BRFSS), 37.3 percent of adult Nevadans surveyed were told they had high cholesterol and nearly 31 percent were told they had high blood pressure (BRFSS 2011). Additional information is available on the American Heart Association site, www.AmericanHeart.org and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), www.CDC.gov.

The Million Hearts™ initiative was launched in September 2011 to prevent one million heart attacks and strokes over the next five years. It is led by the CDC, the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services and additional federal agencies, such as the National Institutes of Health and private sector partners such as the American Heart Association and the YMCA, among others. Million Hearts™ brings together heart disease and stroke prevention programs, policies, and activities to raise awareness among health care providers, private-sector organizations, policymakers, and consumers about what can be done to prevent heart disease and stroke. Information about the Million Hearts initiative can be found by visiting: <http://millionhearts.hhs.gov>.

Heart disease is among the most preventable diseases. In the United States, the cost of all cardiovascular diseases is estimated to be more than \$475 million in 2009, according to the American Heart Association. These costs include health care services, medications and lost productivity.

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February is American Heart Month – add one

Heart disease facts:

- Approximately 27 percent of deaths in the United States are related to heart disease.
- About 600,000 Americans die from heart disease annually; half of the men and two-thirds of women who die suddenly from coronary heart disease were asymptomatic.
- Heart disease is the second leading cause of death for women aged 45-64 years old and the third leading cause of death for women aged 25-44 years old.
- In 2009, heart disease was the cause of death in 307,225 men (1 in 4), and 292,188 (1 in 4) women in the United States.

Prevention:

The usual suspects can help minimize the risk of developing heart disease, including quitting smoking, keeping blood pressure under control, achieving a healthy weight, exercising regularly, and limiting alcohol use. It is also important to keep cholesterol levels in check and to receive regular health care services especially if you have diabetes, or hypertension. Talk to your healthcare provider at each visit to discuss your blood pressure, cholesterol and lab test results and if they are higher than normal, ask for tips on reducing your risk of developing heart disease and stroke.

Updated information about the Southern Nevada Health District can be found on Facebook www.facebook.com/SouthernNevadaHealthDistrict, on YouTube: www.youtube.com/SNHealthDistrict or Twitter: www.twitter.com/SNHDinfo. The health district is now available in Spanish on Twitter www.twitter.com/TuSNHD. Don't have a Twitter account? Follow the health district on your phone by texting "follow SNHDinfo" to 40404.