

## **WellCare Announces Commitment To American Diabetes Association As Presenting Sponsor Of Tampa Bay's 2014 Step Out: Walk To Stop Diabetes**

*Sponsorship Announcement Kicks Off American Diabetes Association's Alert Day® Urging Americans To Take Diabetes Risk Test*

**TAMPA, Fla., (March 25, 2014)** — WellCare Health Plans, Inc. (NYSE: WCG) and the Southwest Florida region of the American Diabetes Association (ADA) are pleased to announce that the WellCare Community Foundation will serve as the Presenting Sponsor of Tampa Bay's 2014 "Step Out: Walk to Stop Diabetes," which will be held on October 18 in downtown Tampa, Fla. The WellCare Community Foundation, a non-profit, private foundation that helps people live healthy, safe and productive lives, has donated \$35,000 to this chapter of the ADA to become the major supporter of the walk, which is the ADA's largest annual fundraiser and community event in the Tampa Bay area. WellCare and its employees have been longtime supporters and partners to the ADA, having raised more than \$385,000 since 2009.

"We are proud and pleased to be the Presenting Sponsor of this year's Step Out: Walk to Stop Diabetes," says senior vice president and chief medical officer of WellCare, Dr. Steven Goldberg. "A significant portion of WellCare's total membership struggles with diabetes every day, as do many of our employees, family members and friends, so awareness, prevention and education are of critical importance to us."

Diabetes is a serious disease that strikes nearly 26 million Americans, including more than 300,000 living in the Tampa Bay area alone. One quarter of the people affected by diabetes are not aware that they have the disease. An additional 79 million, or one in three American adults, have pre-diabetes, which means that their blood glucose (sugar) is higher than normal, but not high enough to be classified as diabetes. Recent estimates project that as many as one in three American adults will have diabetes by 2050. The primary risk factors are being overweight, sedentary, over the age of 45 and having a family history of diabetes. African Americans, Hispanics/Latinos, Native Americans, Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders are at an increased risk for developing the disease.

Tuesday, March 25 marks the 26th Annual ADA Alert Day, a one-day, "wake-up call" asking the American public to take the Diabetes Risk Test to find out if they are at risk for developing type 2 diabetes. Once risks are identified, preventative measures can be taken. Studies have shown that type 2 diabetes can be prevented or delayed by healthy eating; engaging in physical activity for 30 minutes a day, five days a week; and by losing just 7 percent of body weight (15 pounds for a person who weighs 200 pounds).

"Unfortunately, diagnosis often comes seven to 10 years after the onset of the disease, after disabling and even deadly complications have had time to develop. Therefore, early diagnosis is critical for successfully treating the disease and delaying or preventing some of its complications such as heart disease, blindness, kidney disease, stroke, amputation and death," Goldberg continues.

"The tagline for our 26th Annual ADA Alert Day is 'Take it. Share it. Step Out.'" says ADA Leadership Board Chairwoman, Erin Smith Aebel. "We will not only be encouraging the public to take the risk test and share it, but we will be asking them to start living a healthy and active lifestyle. Another great way to do this is by joining our Step Out: Walk to Stop Diabetes on October 18. What better way to get active now than by gearing up for a walk?"

The Diabetes Risk Test asks simple questions about weight, age, family history and other potential risks for becoming pre-diabetic or prone to type 2 diabetes. It provides health tips and advises those who are identified as high risk to speak with their health care providers. The test is free and available in English or Spanish on the ADA's Facebook page at <https://www.facebook.com/AmericanDiabetesAssociation>, the ADA website at [stopdiabetes.com](http://stopdiabetes.com), and by calling 1-800-DIABETES (1-800-342-2383). Although Alert Day is a one-day event, the Diabetes Risk Test is available year-round.

#### **About The American Diabetes Association**

The American Diabetes Association is leading the fight to Stop Diabetes and its deadly consequences and fighting for those affected by diabetes. The Association funds research to prevent cure and manage diabetes; delivers services to hundreds of communities; provides objective and credible information; and gives voice to those denied their rights because of diabetes. Founded in 1940, our mission is to prevent and cure diabetes and to improve the lives of all people affected by diabetes. For more information please call the American Diabetes Association at 1-800-DIABETES (1-800-342-2383) or visit [www.diabetes.org](http://www.diabetes.org). Information from both these sources is available in English and Spanish.

#### **About WellCare Health Plans, Inc.**

WellCare Health Plans, Inc. provides managed care services targeted to government-sponsored health care programs, focusing on Medicaid and Medicare. Headquartered in Tampa, Fla., WellCare offers a variety of health plans for families, children, and the aged, blind, and disabled, as well as prescription drug plans. The company serves approximately 3.3 million members nationwide as of January 2014. For more information about WellCare, please visit the company's website at [www.wellcare.com](http://www.wellcare.com).

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