

## **American Academy of Family Physicians Foundation Will Launch New Model of Peer Support to Drive Behavior Changes in People with Diabetes**

*“Peers for Progress” Created with \$15 Million Grant from Lilly Foundation*

**Leawood, KS – June 20, 2007** – The American Academy of Family Physicians Foundation today announced that it has received a \$15 million gift from the Eli Lilly and Company Foundation to help the diabetes community establish a new model of peer education for people with diabetes. The program will be rooted in peer-to-peer interactions, mentoring and role-modeling to create sustainable individual behavioral changes that will improve long-term outcomes.

The grant, distributed over five years, will fund *Peers for Progress*, a program that will identify and train lay volunteers who have diabetes and certify them to be “Diabetes Mentors.” These mentors will then assist other people with diabetes in better managing the emotional, social and daily self-care demands of the disease.

“We need a new approach if we are going to successfully fight this debilitating disease,” said Craig Doane, Executive Director of the American Academy of Family Physicians Foundation. “We believe that better patient outcomes can occur through grassroots, community-based programs that empower patients to help each other lead healthier lives.”

This new approach comes at a time when the healthcare system is facing a diabetes pandemic without a parallel increase in the number of healthcare professionals. Additionally, traditional diabetes education is under scrutiny.

“We believe that engaging people with diabetes to help and inspire other diabetics and those affected by their diabetes is a viable path,” said Larry Ellingson, president and chief executive officer, *Peers for Progress*. “The explosion in obesity, cardiovascular disease and diabetes has prompted the health care system to look at other models that can support care in these chronic conditions. People helping people can be very beneficial to patients and health care providers. This approach will ensure appropriate cost effective supportive care for people affected by diabetes.”

The goal of the initiative is to empower one percent of the people with diabetes in America, or 200,000 patients, to become Diabetes Mentors and to expand globally to include two million mentors around the world by 2020. The Diabetes Mentors will help other people with diabetes and become an integral part of the healthcare system by serving as a social resource for physicians and diabetes educators. Some will also contribute to the expansion and self-sustainability of the program by training other patients to become Diabetes Mentors.”

“Since 1923, the diabetes community has relied on Lilly to deliver an answer for one of the world’s most challenging diseases,” said Jose Caro, M.D., Lilly vice president of Global Diabetes Care Outcomes. “One of the ways we do that is to help organizations like the AAFP provide solutions that treat the whole person, not just the disease.”

### **About Diabetes**

Diabetes currently affects 246 million people worldwide and is expected to affect 380 million by 2025. It is the fourth leading cause of global death by disease. The humanitarian, economic, and social costs of diabetes are immense: Some 3 million people die annually from diabetes-related causes — one death every 10 seconds and in the same 10 seconds 2 people develops the disease, according to the International Diabetes Federation.

### **About the American Academy of Family Physicians Foundation**

The Foundation serves as the philanthropic arm of the American Academy of Family Physicians. Its primary goal is to enhance health care delivered to the American people by developing and providing philanthropic resources for the promotion and support of family medicine.

For more information, please visit [www.aafpfoundation.org](http://www.aafpfoundation.org).

### **About the Eli Lilly and Company Foundation**

The Foundation was established in 1968 to carry out the philanthropic interests of the company and its employees. The Foundation is funded from the company’s profits and is a major source of the company’s support for not-for-profit organizations.

For more information, please visit [www.lilly.com/products/access/foundation](http://www.lilly.com/products/access/foundation).

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