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## **COMMUNITY CARE OF NORTH CAROLINA HONORED AS INNOVATIONS IN AMERICAN GOVERNMENT AWARD WINNER**

### ***Harvard University's Ash Institute & The Annie E. Casey Foundation Celebrate Program Benefiting Children and Family Services***

**Cambridge, Mass., – September 25, 2007** – The Ash Institute for Democratic Governance and Innovation at Harvard University's John F. Kennedy School of Government today announced the state of North Carolina's Community Care program as the winner of the 2007 Annie E. Casey Innovations Award in Children and Family System Reform. Community Care was one of seven award winners announced at yesterday's Innovations in American Government Awards twentieth anniversary reception in Washington, D.C. Honored for its work establishing integrated care programs for North Carolina's Medicaid children and families, Community Care will receive a \$100,000 grant for state-level and national promotion efforts.

Community Care supports 750,000 Medicaid children and family recipients in North Carolina with a network of more than 3,500 primary care physicians. Reporting annual cost savings of \$100 million and with a reduced overhead cost of six percent, the Community Care model takes a collaborative

approach to meeting the health care needs of low-income children and families while also addressing issues in child development, dental access and disparities in care.

Previously, Medicaid beneficiaries struggled to navigate through multiple health care networks and hundreds of outside support services to gain health care assistance and information. Community Care now unifies these diverse facets of an individual Medicaid beneficiary's care plan under one health delivery network overseen by a locally-based care manager.

Community Care's centralized structure enables medical directors to develop improvements in care treatments and to influence the generation of larger-scale public health programs that share model practices statewide. Examples include the Assuring Better Child Health and Development project, Mental Health Integration and Dental Varnishing for 0-3 year olds. Ten states have proposed developing pilot programs based on the Community Care platform and 20 additional states have requested information about replicating similar Medicaid health care delivery models.

"Community Care is really the centerpiece of North Carolina's statewide health care strategy," said Governor Mike Easley. "The long-term goal is to raise the quality of health care for the patient while at the same time making it cheaper for the state. When patients are healthier, they do not end up in hospitals. That improves their quality of life and saves us money. We are pleased to be able to share our health care strategies nationwide to continue improving the quality of health care for citizens."

"Community Care's approach makes a lot of sense in delivering health care and shows us what works in this critically needed area," said Douglas W. Nelson, president of the Annie E. Casey Foundation. "We are very pleased with the selection of Community Care as the second winner of the Annie E. Casey Innovations Award in Children and Family System Reform. The fact that other states have developed pilot programs based on the Community Care model emphasizes that this program has made a strong connection with communities that are serving low-income children and families."

"North Carolina's low-income children and families gain significant assistance from Community Care's collaboration with physician groups and social services organizations," said Stephen Goldsmith, director of the Innovations in American Government Program at Harvard's Kennedy School of Government. "Local case managers simplify access to medical services and family

support services. We are pleased to honor the achievements and innovation demonstrated in this program and look forward to celebrating its future success as its best practices are shared across the nation.”

Since 1986, the Ash Institute’s Innovations in American Government Award Program at Harvard University’s John F. Kennedy School of Government has honored 174 federal, state and local government agencies through Ford Foundation support. Through this annual competition, the Program provides concrete evidence that government can work to improve the quality of life of citizens. Many award-winning programs have been replicated across jurisdictions and policy areas, and some have served as harbingers of today’s reform strategies or as forerunners to state and federal legislation. By highlighting exemplary models of government’s innovative programs over the past 20 years, the Program drives continued progress and encourages research and teaching cases at Harvard University and other academic institutions worldwide.

**About The Annie E. Casey Foundation**

The Annie E. Casey Foundation is a private charitable organization, whose primary mission is to foster public policies, human-service reforms, and community supports that more effectively meet the needs of today’s vulnerable children and families. For more information, visit [www.aecf.org](http://www.aecf.org).

**About The Ash Institute for Democratic Governance and Innovation**

The Roy and Lila Ash Institute for Democratic Governance and Innovation advances excellence in governance and strengthens democratic institutions worldwide. Through its research, publications, leadership training, global network and awards program – developed in collaboration with a diverse, engaged community of scholars and practitioners - the Ash Institute fosters creative and effective government problem-solving and serves as a catalyst for addressing many of the most pressing needs of the world’s citizens. The Ford Foundation is a founding donor of the institute. Additional information about The Ash Institute is available at [www.ashinstitute.harvard.edu](http://www.ashinstitute.harvard.edu). Organizations are encouraged to apply to the 2008 Innovations in American Government Awards by October 15, 2007 at [www.innovationsaward.harvard.edu](http://www.innovationsaward.harvard.edu).

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