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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Wyoming Comprehensive Cancer Consortium Set to Meet

CHEYENNE - Members of the Wyoming Comprehensive Cancer Control Consortium (WCCCC) will be meeting in Casper on May 18 to identify priorities for the state cancer plan. The meeting will take place from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. in the ballroom of the Holiday Inn on the River.

The consortium gathers Wyoming resources and data as well as national information on best practice programming and initiatives in cancer prevention and control. The goal is the creation of a comprehensive cancer control plan for Wyoming using a collaborative approach to reduce the burden of cancer in the state. The plan will identify cancer-related resources, barriers, strategies, goals and outcomes for cancer control in Wyoming and work towards improved health and quality of life among Wyoming residents.

The complete cancer plan will be unveiled in October at the 2005 Wyoming Cancer Conference.

"Wyoming has a great many of cancer resources available to our citizens," said WCCCC member, Dr. Margaret Barnes, who works with the Heptner Radiation Oncology Center in Gillette. "Unfortunately, our cancer treatment centers are geographically dispersed and many patients and physicians must travel for hours to the smaller clinics in our more remote communities. By evaluating the existing resources, identifying the missing pieces, and coordinating cancer care through the state, we hope to offer our patients with cancer an enhanced state of the art cancer care system."

Cancer is the second leading cause of death in Wyoming, with 935 attributable deaths in 2003. According to the Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System Cancer Risk Factors Report, nearly 97 percent of Wyoming adults reported having one or more of the six preventable cancer-related risk factors. Another 54 percent of Wyoming adults reported having three or more cancer risk factors. These risk factors include tobacco use, eating fruits and vegetables fewer than five times per day, heavy drinking, physical inactivity, and sunburns.

The planning process has been funded through a Cooperative Agreement received from the Centers for Disease Control's National Comprehensive Cancer Control Program in 2004.

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