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HHS HONORS THE HEALTHPARTNERS 10,000 STEPS PROGRAM

Health and Human Services Secretary Tommy G. Thompson announced today that the 10,000 Steps program of HealthPartners of Bloomington, Minn., is one of eleven winners of the second annual Innovation in Prevention Awards.

The awards are presented each year by Secretary Thompson to highlight businesses and organizations that are leading efforts to promote healthy lifestyles. The awards are part of President Bush's *HealthierUS* initiative and Secretary Thompson's emphasis on preventing chronic disease and improving Americans' lives.

HealthPartners, a consumer-governed nonprofit health care organization, is recognized in the category of Health Care Delivery Systems. The 10,000 Steps program, now available nationwide, encourages people to walk 10,000 steps per day as part of a healthier lifestyle. Participants sign up online, receive a pedometer to wear and immediately can track their steps, online, toward achievable goals. Participants also receive daily motivational e-mails with practical tips for better nutrition. Walking 10,000 steps daily is a convenient way to meet the U.S. Surgeon General's minimum goal of physical activity for health, 30 minutes of moderate intensity activity on most if not all days of the week.

"10,000 Steps helps to promote healthier living across our nation," Secretary Thompson said. "The program puts better health literally within walking distance."

"The HealthPartners 10,000 Steps program is based on sound science applied in a simple and direct way to help people feel great and lose weight," said Dr. Nico Pronk, PhD, vice president of the HealthPartners Center for Health Promotion.

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Note: All HHS press releases, fact sheets and other press materials are available at <http://www.hhs.gov/news>. To request an interview or additional information, please contact Ira Dreyfuss.