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NEVADA STATE HEALTH DIVISION NEWS RELEASE

WIC SMART CARD PROJECT CELEBRATES LAS VEGAS ROLL- OUT

Carson City – The Nevada State Health Division's, Women, Infants and Children (WIC) program and the Economic Opportunity Board (EOB) Community Action Partnership will launch the WIC Health Passport Smart Card project on Wednesday, January 19, 2005 at 10:00 a.m in Las Vegas. EOB is slated to issue WIC clients new Smart Cards at the Jones WIC Clinic, 2041 N. Jones, Suite 104. Following the issuance of the Smart Cards, a hands-on demonstration will be available at the Albertsons grocery store at 6140 West Lake Mead Boulevard.

In addition to EOB, the Clark County Health District and Sunrise Children's Hospital WIC programs will also begin issuing cards in Las Vegas in February and March.

The Health Passport Smart Card is a versatile ATM-like card that contains a computer chip and stores health records and eligibility for WIC. The card is expected to streamline the delivery of benefits to individuals to improve their health and the health of their families. According to State WIC Program Director Doug Schrauth, "This is the big payoff for the Nevada WIC Program and our Las Vegas WIC clients. When Nevada was selected as a pilot site in 1997, we knew it would be a number of years before the system would be proven and serviceable in the Las Vegas area. Now this project will begin providing our clients with a leading form of health information technology."

The roll-out of the Smart Card project makes Las Vegas the first city with a population over one million residents to use the new Health Passport Smart Card technology. "What makes it even more meaningful is that we have had the opportunity to help develop this technology from the ground up and customize it for our clients right here in Las Vegas," Schrauth said. Earlier this year U.S. Surgeon General, Richard Carmona, witnessed a demonstration of the new technology in a Nevada WIC clinic and applauded the Smart Card's efficiencies. To see an excerpt from the newscast and interview featuring the Surgeon General and the demonstration go to www.co.washoe.nv.us/health/cchs/index.php and click on W.I.C. Once you have accessed the WIC website, scroll down to the bottom of the page and select the newscast.

For more information about this and other WIC innovations in Nevada call 775-328-2448.

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