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NEVADA STATE HEALTH DIVISION NEWS RELEASE

National Colorectal Screening and Awareness Event Enlisted 29 Physician Volunteers and Screened 22 Patients

Carson City – In recognition of March as National Colorectal Cancer (CRC) Awareness Month, the Nevada Colorectal Cancer Partnership conducted a **National CRC Screening and Awareness Event, March 29–31, 2012 with participating Gastroenterology Specialists across the state.** These efforts were in conjunction with the American Gastroenterological Association Institute and the Nevada State Health Division's, Colorectal Cancer Control Program. This partnership linked eligible patients with gastroenterologists who volunteered to perform colonoscopies at no cost to patients.

Northern Nevada Gastroenterologist and member of the Colorectal, Breast, Cervical Cancer Medical Advisory Board, Dr. John Gray, who participated in this awareness event said, "I want to thank my fellow colleagues for volunteering in this lifesaving event. We had a total of 34 Nevada gastroenterologists who volunteered for this project, but due to challenges with scheduling, 29 physicians were able to schedule procedures. The bottom line is early detection is the key for the best health outcomes and I encourage all Nevadans 50 years and older to get screened."

The prevalence of screening for certain segments of the population, such as those individuals without health insurance and ethnic disparities is low. This is the population that the Nevada Colorectal Cancer Partnership is working to reach.

Colorectal cancer screening saves lives. If everyone 50 years and older were screened regularly, as many as 60% of deaths from this cancer could be avoided. Approximately 50,000 people nationwide and almost 500 Nevadans die annually from colon cancer. Colorectal cancer (CRC) is the second most common cancer diagnosed in men and women in the U.S. and is the second leading cause of cancer death. CRC incidence rates have been decreasing for most of the past two decades, which has largely been attributed to increases in the use of screening tests that help detect and remove colorectal polyps before they progress to cancer.

For more information about the Nevada State Health Division, go to: <http://health.nv.gov>.

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