National Association of Community Health Centers, American Cancer Society Join to Commemorate National Health Center Week

ATLANTA, Aug. 14, 2017 /PRNewswire-USNewswire/ -- In an effort to bring attention to the importance of Community Health Centers in the fight against cancer, The American Cancer Society and the National Association of Community Health Centers (NACHC) are partnering to recognize National Health Center Week (August 13-19th).

Health centers are the family doctor to one in 13 Americans, or 25 million people. They provide quality and affordable services to individuals who typically struggle to access health care because they are either uninsured or underinsured, or live in places where basic health care services are scarce. Not only to do health centers provide screenings for early detection of cancer, they also regularly deal with patients who are confronted with a cancer diagnosis and a scarcity of resources and support to navigate the complexities of a life-altering illness. Every patient encounters a host of challenges after receiving a cancer diagnosis and confront tough decisions about treatment options along with worries about finances and job security.

For the medically underserved and uninsured, these considerations can be overwhelming. "Community Health Centers are the most important source of care for individuals who face barriers to achieving health, such as lack of insurance or access to affordable medical care," said Richard C. Wender, MD, chief cancer control officer of the American Cancer Society. "The dedicated health professionals who work at these centers provide vital services such as lifestyle counseling and cancer screening, as well as support and navigation for people undergoing cancer treatment."

"Health centers not only provide access to early screenings for cancer, they also go beyond the medical chart for solutions to the complex problems patients confront that may affect their health and recovery," said Ron Yee, Chief Medical Officer at NACHC. "For instance, we know health center patients who suffer from depression as a result of their cancer diagnosis, or may struggle with a lack of resources to afford prescription drugs or child care as they recover from surgery or treatment. Health centers by mission are problem-solvers and for a medically underserved cancer patient such an approach can be a lifeline."

There are NHCW events scheduled across the country, including health fairs, visits by Members of Congress and state officials to local health centers, press conferences, back-to-school drives, community breakfasts, patient appreciation events, free health screenings and dental cleanings, and much more.

To learn more about NHCW and the listing of events please visit: www.healthcenterweek.org.

You can also follow the conversation using #NHCW17 on Twitter.

SOURCE American Cancer Society

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