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**As National County Government Month Wraps Up,
Franklin County Commissioners Announce New Dental Discount Program**

Increases access to better dental health for seniors, working families and small business employees

There are over 3,000 county governments in the United States charged with directly serving the residents in their communities. Nationally, counties support nearly 2,000 local health departments, own 75-percent of nursing homes and 964 hospitals, spending over \$68 billion on healthcare services in 2007.

Recognizing the direct link between dental health and overall health, the Franklin County Board of Commissioners is offering a countywide Dental Discount Program to provide residents and families who are not covered by dental insurance with discounts on certain dental services and procedures.

The discount -- ranging from 5% to 50% on most dental procedures including routine oral exams, unlimited cleanings, dentures, root canals and crowns -- is available to all Franklin County residents regardless of age, income or existing health coverage.

"Franklin County is proud to be one of the first counties in Ohio to offer a way for all uninsured and underinsured residents to access significant savings on dental care," said County Commissioner John O'Grady, President of the Board. "The health of your mouth often mirrors the condition of your body as a whole. Gum disease can lead to other health complications such as a stroke and heart disease."

"This program is a tremendous benefit to anyone in a part-time or temporary job where dental insurance isn't typically offered," said County Commissioner Paula Brooks. "Many small businesses that are just getting started may offer employees some health care benefits but not dental coverage. This can help working families afford quality dental care which is critically important for pregnant women."

"Good dental hygiene and care are critical to a person's overall health," said Commissioner Marilyn Brown. "Without it, many individuals in our community may find themselves at an increased risk for health-related issues, such as diabetes, heart and lung disease. Thankfully, joining this discounted plan is easy and will save money so that more residents have the opportunity to receive better health care and lead healthier lives."

There is no cost to county taxpayers for Franklin County to offer this dental discount program.

The program is offered through Franklin County's membership in the National Association of Counties (NACo) and is administered by the Careington International Corporation, one of the most recognized professional dental networks in the nation.

Membership into the Franklin County Dental Discount Program costs \$6.95 per month for an individual or \$8.95 per month for a family. Rates drop significantly for those who buy an annual membership: \$59 for a single person or \$69 for the entire household.

With the dental discount program, a County resident simply schedules an appointment with a participating dentist or specialist and presents the membership card to receive a discount at the time of service.

There are no forms to complete after the initial enrollment and no limit on the number of times a member can use the card to receive discounted dental services during the year. Everyone in the household is eligible to receive a discount.

The Dental Discount Program can work in conjunction with health savings accounts, flexible spending accounts, and health reimbursement arrangements.

This is NOT dental insurance. Every resident that signs up for the program will receive a membership card, a toll free number, a list of participating providers, a list of services covered and a list of the cost of services.

To learn more or to sign up for a membership, residents can call (877) 354-NACo (6226) or go online to www.nacodentalprogram.com. The website also provides a full listing of the dentists in Franklin County who are part of this Dental Discount Program.

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