News Release

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For IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Women’s Heart Foundation Registers Purple Ribbon
To Raise Awareness that Heart Disease is Women’s #1 Killer

Trenton, NJ – Heart disease is the leading cause of death for women age 35 and older. Cardiovascular disease kill more women than the next 14 leading causes of death combined and has killed more women than men every year since 1984.

As Nanette Wenger, MD, of Emory University in Atlanta, points out, “Unless women see heart disease as part of their disease profile, they’re not going to adhere to heart disease prevention messages early in life and they’re not going to respond to heart disease symptoms later on.”

As the population ages and a growing number of young women begin to smoke cigarettes, more women than ever are at risk for coronary heart disease (CHD).

In October 1999, several groups approached the Women’s Heart Foundation; a charity based in Trenton, New Jersey and asked the organization to start a ribbon campaign to raise awareness about CHD in women. Consequently, the Foundation – dedicated to women’s survival from heart disease – registered a Purple Ribbon January 6, 2000, as a new service mark to promote awareness, gender research and wellness programs that work for women.

More rigorous management of women’s risk factors was the recommendation posed by clinicians in a recent journal article from the Mayo Clinic (“Risks of Coronary Heart Disease in Women: Current Understanding and Evolving Concepts”, Tsang T. Et. Al, Mayo Clinic Proc, Dec2000, p 1289-1303). The article states that “Despite tremendous progress in treatment and prevention, cardiovascular disease continues to disable and kill more women each year than any other disease” and that “Women must learn the early warning signs of CHD to avoid delay in seeking
and receiving help, be educated to take steps to prevent CHD events and be provided with all proven effective therapies for both treatment and prevention of this disease.”

The Women’s Heart Foundation has incorporated the Purple Ribbon Campaign into Women’s Heart Week February 1-7, a week commemorated each year since 1995 to raise awareness about heart disease in women. The nonprofit group is asking women to wear a Purple Ribbon during the week and to promote gender-separated outcomes research and wellness programs that work for women. The organization also is inviting women to visit the WHF Website at www.womenheartfoundation.org to learn how heart disease affects women differently and to take the online Women’s Heart Risk Quiz to learn about individual risk.

The site has more than 100 pages of information on heart disease and heart wellness in women including an online E-newsletter with recipes. A program order form is available as a pdf for medical professionals to order Power Point slides on “Recognizing Heart Disease in Women”, “Medication Safety”, Women’s Heart Week program, bookmarks, guides and other materials.

For more information about Women’s Heart Week, write to or call Women’s Heart Foundation, P.O. Box 7827, West Trenton, NJ 08628. Phone 609.771.9600; Fax 609.771.9427.