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SURVEY REVEALS MORE 100-YEAR-OLDS USING NEW TECHNOLOGY; MOST KEEP UP WITH POP CULTURE AND CURRENT EVENTS

- *Use of text messages, IM and iPods increasing among centenarians*
- *90 percent believe volunteering creates a stronger, healthier America*
- *Three out of 10 feel the current economic downturn is more severe than the Great Depression*

MINNETONKA, Minn. (May 4, 2010) – Evercare by UnitedHealthcare has released its fifth annual Evercare 100@100™ Survey. The national poll of 100 Americans turning 100 years of age or older this year reveals that centenarians are staying connected to family, friends, current events and pop culture and are increasingly using the latest technologies, including text messages, IMs and iPods, compared with two years ago.

In addition, centenarians weighed in on societal issues and values. Thirty percent feel the current recession is more severe than the 1930s Great Depression, and 90 percent believe that volunteering will create a stronger, healthier America. Eighty-nine percent say they want to be remembered most as a good parent – more so than as a good spouse, friend or employee.

“Part of our mission as a health and well-being company is to guide Americans on the road to healthy aging and longevity, and who better to serve as a ‘GPS navigator’ than our centenarians,” said Dr. Mark Leenay, UnitedHealthcare senior vice president of medical management and physician services. “The Evercare 100@100 survey each year reinforces what we know as clinical experts: that making sound lifestyle choices – not just about health and exercise, but by staying connected to social networks and embracing new trends – is the pathway to a long, healthy life.”

The most recent report from the U.S. Census Bureau shows that there are currently about 84,000 centenarians living in the U.S. That number is projected to increase seven-fold to 580,000 by 2040. Evercare, a leading care coordination program that offers support to Older Americans in nursing homes, hospice care and services for family caregivers, currently has more than 1,000 centenarians among its health plan membership.

This year’s survey also compares centenarians’ lifestyles and beliefs with those of another group of “seniors” – those graduating from college. While more young Americans are expected to reach their 100th birthday than their predecessors, they also face health challenges their predecessors did not, such as an increasing prevalence of obesity and diabetes.

Among the key findings of the 2010 Evercare 100@100 Survey:

“OMG! GR8 Grandma Texting, Using an iPod and Working Out with Wii Fit!”

More than 80 percent of the centenarians surveyed say they talk to/communicate with a friend or family member daily. The survey also uncovered an increase in the number of centenarians who say they are using text messaging, IMs, iPods and other technologies.

- Eight percent of centenarians surveyed say they have sent someone a text message or an instant message, compared to just 1 percent two years ago.
- Twelve percent of centenarians surveyed have listened to music on an iPod or similar device, up from 4 percent three years ago.
- Other technologies centenarians have used include: YouTube (11 percent), TiVo (5 percent); Facebook (2 percent); and Nintendo’s Wii Fit (1 percent).

Keeping Up with Celebrity Gossip

- Centenarians chose Betty White (57 percent) as their top dinner guest, edging out Bill Cosby (55 percent), the No. 1 guest for the last two years. Rounding out the top five are Bill Clinton (54 percent), Michelle Obama (44 percent), Sarah Palin and Nancy Pelosi (tied at 31 percent). Actually, Bill Cosby was the top choice among college seniors (72 percent).
- Two years ago Tiger Woods came in second behind Bill Cosby as centenarians’ top dinner guest pick. This year, 57 percent of centenarians surveyed say he would not be invited.

Comparing Today’s Recession with the Great Depression

- Centenarians have weathered many an economic storm. When asked about the current recession, 30 percent of centenarians surveyed say that it is more severe than the Great Depression, and more than a third (35 percent) say that the recession has affected their ability to continue to live out their retirement/end-of-life plans.

“Eat. Pray. Exercise.” – Centenarians Reveal Lifestyle Choices for a Long Life

In the current era where obesity and related diseases such as diabetes and heart disease threaten to shorten the lives of America’s youth, centenarians surveyed again remind us that choosing healthy foods and exercising are essential for a long, healthy life.

- Three out of four centenarians surveyed say they eat nutritionally balanced meals every day, while only 44 percent of college seniors say they do the same. Nearly one-third of the centenarians say they eat organic foods regularly.
- Forty-one percent of centenarians surveyed say they walk or hike at least once a week; 31 percent garden; 6 percent practice Tai Chi, yoga or meditate; 5 percent play a sport such as basketball, tennis, baseball or soccer; 4 percent ride a bike; and 2 percent run.
- 62 percent of centenarians surveyed pray, meditate or engage in spiritual activity daily.

“Raise Your Hand” – Both Groups of Seniors Say Volunteering Is Important for Health

Several studies have shown the benefits of volunteering on people’s health and well-being, and the Evercare 100@100 Survey findings support this theory:

- Nearly 20 percent of centenarians surveyed say they currently do some type of volunteer work.
- Nine in 10 centenarians and 94 percent of college seniors agree that volunteering can help create a stronger, healthier America.

“The bottom line in longevity is consistent and clear: be active until you can’t. Stay connected and engaged. Try new things and challenge yourself. These are the common themes among those who live into their later years,” said Dr. Leenay.

For complete Evercare 100@100 Survey results, visit: www.Evercare100at100.com

Survey Methodology

GfK Roper interviewed 100 centenarians (ages 99 and higher at the time of the interview) by telephone between March 22-April 1, 2010, obtained from a non-probability sample of older Americans. The poll did not include older respondents whose potentially frail condition would not allow them to participate in a telephone interview. Therefore, the responses for these centenarians should be interpreted as being indicative (not statistically representative) of the views of healthy and articulate Americans in this age range. GfK Roper also conducted a total of 1,002 online interviews between March 22-April 2, 2010, with U.S. residents age 20-22 who expect to graduate from a four-year college or university in 2010.

About Evercare

Evercare by UnitedHealthcare is one of the nation’s largest health care coordination programs for people who have, long-term or advanced illness, are older or have disabilities. Founded in 1987, Evercare serves people through Medicare special needs plans, hospice care, and caregiver support programs. Evercare's integrated care model delivers personalized health care services that help people stay healthy and independent in the most appropriate setting of their choice. For more information about Evercare visit www.AboutEvercare.com.

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