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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

VANTAGE/AFFINITY RECOGNIZES BETTER HEARING AND SPEECH MONTH

Vantage Health Plan, Inc. (Vantage) and Affinity Health Group, LLC (Affinity) recognize May as Better Hearing and Speech Month. Communication disorders are among the most common disabilities in children nationwide, and almost 15% of U.S. children between the ages of 6 and 19 experience hearing loss.

Children with undiagnosed communication disorders often suffer academically due to a lack of accommodation and understanding. Hearing loss commonly results in a child performing at one to four grade levels lower than their projected grade level, and can contribute to behavioral and social problems in the classroom. Other common communication issues include stuttering, articulation problems, voice disorders, and language disorders. With the help of a Speech-Language Pathologist, these serious issues can be treated and improved.

For older adults, hearing loss and communication disorders can affect relationships, self-confidence, and learning capability. Since the balance system is controlled by the inner ear, older people with hearing loss are also at a greater risk of falling, which results in over 2.8 million injuries treated in emergency departments annually.

Early detection is key to managing communication disorders. If you suspect you or your child of experiencing a communication disorder or hearing loss, don't wait to have an evaluation. Dr. Lorra Pettit, Aud.D, reminds the public that hearing loss affects the health of the whole body, and should be treated by a professional. Stephanie Durham, Speech-Language Pathologist, encourages the public to seek treatment for speech and language disorders, as treatment can significantly improve social interactions and quality of life.

To speak with a Speech Language Pathologist or Audiologist about your or your child's hearing or communication disorder, call 318-807-4900 today!

The Affinity Ear, Nose & Throat Clinic is offering basic hearing screenings at no charge on Friday, May 18th, and Friday, May 25th from 10 a.m. to 11:45 a.m. Call today to schedule!

Affinity providers and their staff serve 22 clinics in north Louisiana. Affinity employs a total of over 500 medical and administrative professionals. At Affinity Health Group, our mission is to proactively seek opportunities to improve the quality of healthcare while balancing the cost of that care. Affinity is committed to service, patient satisfaction, healthy solutions, and overall wellness of patients. For more information about Affinity Health Group, visit www.myaffinityhealth.com or call **318-807-7875**.

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