NEWS RELEASE

Dignity Health Shares the Power of the Smile, Encourages People to Smile More During This Week's Great Kindness Challenge

National Survey from Health System Finds Nine-in-Ten Believe Smiling Impacts One's Health

SAN FRANCISCO – Jan. 23, 2017 – Dignity Health, one of the largest health systems in the nation, is encouraging people to smile more for their health, as part of the organization's participation in the Great Kindness Challenge, a worldwide kindness movement taking place this week.

The Great Kindness Challenge is led by non-profit Kids for Peace, and aims to create a culture of kindness in elementary, middle, and high school students worldwide. The event challenges students to complete a checklist of 50 kind acts in one week, and for the fourth year, thousands of Dignity Health employees will also be completing 50 kind acts along with the students.

The first item on the Great Kindness Challenge checklist, and also the most powerful, is to "smile at 25 people." Dignity Health is challenging people to smile more, finding that a simple smile has the tremendous power to foster human connection, without even saying a word. To explore the impact of a smile, Dignity Health conducted a national survey of 1,050 Americans revealing that a smile can start a ripple effect throughout a person's day that can impact their health, well-being, and happiness.

"We found that a majority (89 percent) of people say that the world would be a better place if more people smiled at strangers every day, and 84 percent of people say our communities would be healthier," said Stephanie Parmely, Ph.D., from Mercy Medical Group, a service of Dignity Health Medical Foundation. "These findings speak to something that we have long believed at Dignity Health – while medicine has the power to cure, it is humanity and kindness, such as a simple smile, that hold the power to heal."

Other notable results from Dignity Health's "Power of a Smile" survey include:

- **A smile truly improves people's day.**
  - Nearly all (96 percent) respondents said seeing a smile brightens their day, and seeing a smile from a significant other or spouse improves their day the most.
  - Sixty (60) percent said even a smile from a stranger improves their day.
  - Two-thirds (67 percent) of respondents have noticed a mood lift from taking a smiling selfie.
  - Respondents overwhelmingly said that people who smile are happier, more memorable, and more likeable.

- **Smiling can improve health.**
  - More than half of respondents said that smiling makes them feel kinder towards others.
  - Nine-in-ten (89 percent) respondents said smiling has a direct impact on their physical or mental health.
  - Eighty-four (84) percent said smiling makes them feel less stressed.
  - Fifty-four (54) percent of respondents said that smiling while sick has made them feel better.

"Think about smiling throughout your day. When you smile at yourself in the mirror, strangers on the street, or your loved ones, you'll feel the positive effects smiling can have on you, your health, and those around you," says Dr. Parmely.

Starting with smiling at 25 people, many of Dignity Health's more than 62,000 executives, employees, and physicians, participate in the Great Kindness Challenge, completing 50 acts of kindness alongside millions of students worldwide. Over 10 million students are expected to participate this year, completing more than 500 million acts of kindness.

Follow Dignity Health's acts of kindness at facebook.com/dignityhealth. For more information and results from the survey, and videos on the power of a smile, visit hellohumankindness.org/GKC2017.

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About Dignity Health
Dignity Health, one of the nation's largest health care systems, is a 22-state network of more than 9,000 physicians, 62,000 employees, and 400 care centers, including hospitals, urgent and occupational care, imaging centers, home health, and primary care clinics. Headquartered in San Francisco, Dignity Health is dedicated to providing compassionate, high-quality, and affordable patient-centered care with special attention to the poor and underserved. In FY16, Dignity Health provided $2.2 billion in charitable care and services. For more information, please visit our website at www.dignityhealth.org. You can also follow us on Twitter and Facebook.

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