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For Immediate Release

## **U.S. Preventive Medicine: Employers Can Help Workers Avoid Heart Attacks**

### **Prevention Expert Offers Tips for Benefits/HR Managers**

DALLAS, TX, June 23, 2008 – Employers and their corporate human resources departments can play an important role in preventing their workers from suffering crippling or fatal heart attacks, according to a leading prevention expert at U.S. Preventive Medicine, the leader in disease prevention.

Dr. Boyd Lyles, corporate medical director at U.S. Preventive Medicine, says it's not uncommon for heart attacks to strike individuals who seem relatively healthy or who feel good. "Unfortunately, people, by nature, do not seek out medical care when they don't feel bad. They don't want the possibility of getting bad news or to be told that they should be doing things that they don't want to do, such as eating differently, drinking less alcohol, not smoking, or exercising more regularly," says Dr. Lyles.

With employer health care costs continuing to rise at nearly double digit increases, prevention and wellness programs in the workplace are beginning to gain much more attention, noted Dr. Lyles.

"We are committed to helping employers make prevention their top priority when it comes to the health of their employees and families," says Dr. Lyles. "In a climate of increasing costs of living, including health insurance and co-pays for physician visits and medications, it is important to spend money wisely. A little reading or study can prove very helpful in making informed decisions about their health.

Dr. Lyles offers these suggestions for employers:

- 1) Provide a proactive, thorough, employee-friendly portal to preventive health care that eliminates the confusion about what and when to do to be truly preventive. This should include health risk assessments (HRAs), lifestyle/behavior education opportunities, as well as guidance for the appropriate medical testing. Health coaching, either by telephone or internet can be very effective.

- 2) Install a “library” that is easily accessible that features publications by the American Heart Association, American Cancer Society, American Dietetic Association, and other recognized health authorities.
- 3) Provide health insurance options that emphasize preventive care. These can include provisions for periodic physical exams and lab tests, mammograms, colon exams, and access to educational and support programs (smoking cessation, weight loss, exercise options, etc).
- 4) Sponsor health fairs, special health weeks and months (January for exercise, February for heart health, etc) when posters and special education opportunities are provided (e.g., brown bag lunches with speakers).
- 5) Create an expectation of wellness among employees and reward them for their participation and health improvement. Not only should employers provide the various benefits, programs and onsite health promotional activities, they should create an environment in which employees are expected to participate and be proactive about improving their health.

“Without question, everyone, including employers, must focus more attention on prevention, and not simply treating illnesses when they occur,” said Dr. Lyles. “Furthermore, the success of any prevention or health awareness program requires that it start at the top. Corporate benefit and human resource managers should help ensure that their senior management is engaged and committed to the effort for it to be successful.”

### **About U.S. Preventive Medicine**

U.S. Preventive Medicine<sup>®</sup>, a privately owned company, is building the first personalized medicine business in the United States and internationally focused on prevention. The company offers employers, government agencies and consumers proprietary products that include The Prevention Plan<sup>™</sup>, a groundbreaking health and lifestyle management program delivered online to individuals; The Prevention Plan CM<sup>™</sup>, field-based chronic disease management programs customized for employers and government agencies to reduce healthcare costs; and The Center for Preventive Medicine<sup>®</sup>, which offers high-tech diagnostic screenings delivered to consumers in partnership with hospitals, health systems and other providers. For more information, please visit [www.USPreventiveMedicine.com](http://www.USPreventiveMedicine.com).