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CONTACTS: Amanda Penn
Manager, Public & Community Relations
702-242-7784
amanda.penn@sierrahealth.com

SOUTHWEST MEDICAL ASSOCIATES INITIATES NEW “MY SMA HEALTH ONLINE” Patients Set, Change Own Appointments, Renew Medications and View Medical Records

Las Vegas, Feb. 5, 2008– Southwest Medical Associates (SMA), a wholly-owned subsidiary of Sierra Health Services, Inc. (NYSE SIE), announced the second phase in an industry-leading initiative to provide paperless, electronic access to medical information and services: “My SMA Health Online.”

“My SMA Health Online” improves the patient experience by giving SMA customers 24/7, touch-of-a-finger access to communications with their medical providers. Now SMA patients with e-mail accounts can:

- Schedule, change or cancel primary care and pediatric doctor appointments
- View their medical records and test results
- Request prescription renewals from their physicians
- Receive e-mail confirmations on appointments
- Set up and use a new account in real time
- Manage and update personal and account information
- View outstanding payment balances
- Authorize others to schedule appointments online on their behalf
- Receive e-mail alerts and notifications regarding certain account activity.

In 2003, Sierra Health Services’ Southwest Medical Associates became one of the industry’s first to utilize technology to create a paperless physicians’ electronic prescribing system and allow online patient access to medical records. “My SMA Health Online” is the second phase of that initiative to make access to medical services and information better, faster and easier.

“Our adoption of e-prescribing has proven to be an excellent investment in improving patient satisfaction and the quality of care delivered at SMA,” said Jonathon Bunker, president, Sierra Health Services. “This new Web portal is our continued response to meeting the needs of our patients and to allow them greater control in and access to their medical care.”

Prior to the online system, patient call volume at SMA's Call Center exceeded 150,000 calls per month. Additionally, an estimated 100,000 calls were managed at the clinic level. Calls and interactions ranged from simple provider appointments to requests for prescription refills and test results. Years of data on patient requests for information in the electronic medical records and patient management systems resulted in the plans for a Web-based, patient self-service system. The goal was to remove or reduce caller wait time and frustration in order to increase customer satisfaction by providing a convenient, automated alternative to telephone service for more routine requests.

Using additional input from focus groups and SMA physicians, Sierra Health Services' information technology developers designed a Web site that is easy to understand and navigate even for new Internet users. The initial pilot was released in spring of 2007. To ensure consumers' privacy and HIPAA compliance, the "My SMA Health Online" web portal was developed on HTTPS (Hypertext Transfer Protocol over Secure Socket Layer) standard, and will be subject to monthly internal and third-party intrusion detection scans. All data is secured behind a corporate firewall.

To date, over 11,000 patients have already established and used their accounts. "My SMA Health Online" users quickly exhibited a preference on the site — over 30,000 "hits" or visits have been made to the medical records link since the new system went live.

According to Dr. Craig Morrow, SMA Medical Director, he's gotten positive feedback from his patients who have used "My SMA Health Online:" "Patients who've used the system like the fact that it is so uncomplicated and easy to use. We've experienced a reduction in calls in our office, mainly because patients don't have to wait to get their test results. This also reduces the time we usually spend with patients answering questions about their EKG or cholesterol count. They already know this when they come in for a follow-up appointment, so the dialogue is more focused."

With the success of the first phase of "My SMA Health Online," the information systems developers and healthcare providers are continuing rollout of the site's capabilities. SMA Web users will soon be able to pay bills online; schedule appointments with specialists; access test and procedure preparations and precautions; check prior authorization and referral status; and receive annual exam e-mail reminders. A Spanish-language version of "My SMA Health Online" is also in development.

Sierra Health Services, Inc., based in Las Vegas, is a diversified healthcare services company that operates health maintenance organizations, indemnity insurers, preferred provider organizations, prescription drug plans and a multi-specialty medical group. Sierra's subsidiaries serve over 860,000 people through health benefit plans for employers, government programs and individuals. Southwest Medical Associates is a wholly-owned subsidiary of Sierra and operates 14 medical clinics throughout Las Vegas, including several urgent care centers and an outpatient surgery center. The clinics are staffed by approximately 250 physicians and physician extenders. For more information on Sierra Health Services and its subsidiaries, visit the Company's website at www.sierrahealth.com.