

## NEWS RELEASE

### **Humana Europe, Ltd**

25 St George Street London W1S 1FS  
humana.co.uk

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FOR MORE INFORMATION, CONTACT:

Isabella Sharp

Humana Press Office

020 7526 3632 or 07831 307490

media@humana.co.uk

### **Staff wellness programme launched by NHS Stoke-on-Trent**

**LONDON, UK – 13<sup>th</sup> May 2009** – Humana Europe is working in partnership with NHS Stoke on Trent and Stoke City Council to launch an innovative wellness programme designed to encourage local public sector staff to get fit and healthy as they deliver important services to people in the city.

The “Walk this Way” programme was officially launched at the end of April and has already seen more than 1,700 staff enrol. The free-to-join scheme provides participants with a web-enabled pedometer which is linked to an interactive website where they can record the number of steps they take every day and monitor their activity and fitness levels. Staff will also have access to personal health coaches who provide advice, guidance and support over the phone.

The programme follows the success of Humana Europe and NHS Stoke-on-Trent’s wellness pilot scheme, launched in January 2008, where 71 per cent of participants in the Stoke area who were considered to be at high risk of diabetes and cardiovascular

disease succeeded in lowering their weight by an average of a stone and their BMI by an average of 2.0 points in less than a year.

To highlight the benefits of the “Walk This Way” Programme and to encourage local staff to take part, Stoke-on-Trent City Council held an event on 8<sup>th</sup> May in which Stoke-on-Trent City Council’s Interim Chief Executive, Chris Harman gave an opening speech to formally endorse the Programme.

In commenting on the “Walk This Way” Programme, NHS Stoke on Trent Assistant Chief Executive Dawn Wickham said, “this scheme which is open to all 14,000 city Council and PCT staff is designed to keep our employees, our most important resource, healthy and active. The scheme is all about getting fit, losing weight and feeling good by making small, easy changes, like increasing the number of steps you take each day.”

Dr Peter Reader, clinical director at Humana Europe who were commissioned by the Primary Care Trust to design and implement the programme, commented that “investing in health is crucial to stem the growing tide of obesity and its related long-term conditions including heart disease, diabetes and stroke and we are delighted to support the ‘Walk This Way’ Project”.

**END**

**Notes to editors:**

1. In January 2008, Humana Europe and Stoke on Trent PCT undertook a pilot to work with 227 individuals with either a BMI greater than 25 or with, or at high risk of, diabetes and cardiovascular disease. The programme involved a range of interventions including personalised Health Risk Assessments, a walking programme (measured by web-enabled pedometers) and personal health advisors providing telephone coaching. Seventy one per cent of participants succeeded in lowering their weight by an average of a stone and their BMI by an average of 2.0 points. The programme is currently being extended to high risk patients in the NHS Stoke on Trent area.
2. The “Walk This Way” Programme has been designed to encourage healthy lifestyle choices and behaviours, enhance the health and wellbeing of staff and their families both in the

workplace and at home, increase the quality of health and lifestyle, encourage weight loss and encourage greater interest on other workplace campaigns (e.g. giving up smoking).

3. The “Walk This Way” promotional event took place on Friday 8<sup>th</sup> May in Stoke-on-Trent where the City Council’s Interim Chief Executive; Chris Harman formally announced the launch of the Programme.
4. Headquartered in London since 2006, Humana Europe delivers expert commissioning services and support to the NHS in England. We are recognised as leaders in designing, developing and implementing innovative programmes, tools and solutions to support Primary Care Trusts (PCTs) to commission care in line with the health needs of their local populations. Our goal is to achieve a sustained improvement in public health through a unique combination of effective commissioning and empowering individuals to take control of their health. For more information please visit [www.humana.co.uk](http://www.humana.co.uk)