



HEALTHWELL
FOUNDATION®

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News Release

HealthWell Foundation® Launches New Program to Help Patients with Ankylosing Spondylitis

Gaithersburg, MD (August 2, 2007) – The HealthWell Foundation® is pleased to announce a new program to assist patients who have been diagnosed with Ankylosing Spondylitis (AS). Since 2003, HealthWell has helped more than 35,000 patients afford the copayments and other out-of-pocket costs associated with the treatment of more than twenty serious and chronic health conditions.

Commonly referred to as AS, Ankylosing Spondylitis is a type of arthritis of the spine that can start in late adolescence or early adulthood. Over time, AS can fuse vertebrae together, severely limiting movement. The disease is more common in men, and it often runs in families. Proper diagnosis of AS is often delayed because its symptoms are frequently confused with common back pain. Early and accurate diagnosis can help minimize years of discomfort, but many AS patients do not continue their treatments, resulting in permanent mobility loss.

"Patients with AS are extremely overlooked when it comes to medical treatment," said Dr. Nancy Carteron, MD, FACR, a Fellow of the American College of Rheumatology and a Vice President of the Foundation's Board of Directors. "Since the Foundation's inception, we have helped patients with a wide range of health conditions. Some are well-known, such as breast cancer, and others are lesser-known conditions, such as AS, but it's rewarding to know that the HealthWell Foundation can make a substantial difference in all of their lives."

HealthWell provides financial assistance to patients living with rheumatoid arthritis, lung cancer, colon cancer, asthma, psoriasis, non-Hodgkin's lymphoma and many other conditions.

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Since 2003, the HealthWell Foundation® has helped more than 35,000 patients with serious and chronic conditions meet their cost-sharing obligations for treatment. HealthWell is an independent 501(c)(3) non-profit association that provides financial assistance to cover the cost of prescription drug coinsurance, co-payments and deductibles, health insurance premiums, and other selected out-of-pocket healthcare costs. The Foundation considers individual financial, medical and insurance situations when determining assistance eligibility. For more information, please visit www.healthwellfoundation.org.