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FLORIDA DENTAL ASSOCIATION

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FLORIDA DENTAL ASSOCIATION PRESENTS DENTAL HEALTH WORKSHOP

SAFETY HARBOR – Representatives of the Florida Dental Association (FDA) today presented dental health information to staff members and administrators of nursing homes, assisted living centers and community-based senior programs at the Safety Harbor Resort and Spa. The effort is a part of the FDA's *Oral Health Education and Prevention Program for the Vulnerable Elderly*, funded by the Florida Dental Health Foundation (FDHF), the Alliance of the FDA and Renaissance Health Service Corporation.

By 2030, one out of every five Americans will be older than 65, according to FDA Immediate Past President Dr. Nolan W. Allen, one of the course presenters. "It is vital that we provide dental information to seniors and caretakers in order to protect the overall health of Florida's vulnerable elderly," he said.

At the presentation, Dr. Allen and Director of Dental Care and Health Bob Macdonald educated nursing home staff about the importance of maintaining the oral health of their residents. Each attendee received an information packet with DVD detailing basic dental hygiene methods.

Rep. Alan Hays (R-Umatilla), who donated funds to the FDHF for this program, said "Our senior population frequently is afflicted with chronic diseases or physical limitations that have adverse effects on their oral health. This in turn is detrimental to their general health. Many of these seniors have taken good care of their oral health in their younger years and we need to make every reasonable effort to help them continue through life with good health. For many, they simply do not have the dexterity or range of motion to properly care for themselves as they previously were able to. Older adults also face a variety of special oral health challenges including decay of the root surfaces and around old dental restorations, periodontal disease (gum infection), tooth wear, complete dentures, oral cancer and complications from prescription and over-the-counter medications."

Most people more than 65 years of age have at least one chronic health condition and/or limited access that make oral health care issues complex. Challenges affecting vulnerable elders' ability to attain oral health care include lack of financial security, decreasing

quality of life and general health, and limited independence and support from the community. Older adults also face a variety of special oral health challenges, including root and coronal caries, periodontal disease, tooth wear, edentulousness, oral cancer, and complications from prescription and over-the-counter medication.

The FDA will be implementing its *Oral Health Education and Prevention Program for the Vulnerable Elderly* in Pinellas, Orange, Palm Beach, Duval and Okaloosa counties in an effort to affect the oral health of large populations of seniors.

Renaissance Life & Health Insurance Company of America (Renaissance America) offers the flagship product, Renaissance Dental. With a focus on making dental benefits affordable for smaller businesses, Renaissance Dental has PPO and indemnity plans for groups with as few as five enrollees. Renaissance America is part of the Renaissance family of companies, which also includes Renaissance Health Insurance Company of New York, Renaissance Benefit Solutions, Dental Wellness Partners and Renaissance Systems & Services. The Renaissance family of companies dates back to 1957 and today has offices in Michigan, Ohio, Indiana, Tennessee, New York and Florida. Collectively, Renaissance provides coverage for more than six million people with annual revenues of nearly \$2 billion. For more information, visit www.RenaissanceDental.com.

The FDA is a Tallahassee-based, statewide, professional association representing member-dentists in Florida. Founded in 1884 by 12 dentists, the FDA now has almost 7,000 members, representing about 70 percent of all Florida-licensed dentists. The FDA maintains three offices in Tallahassee and has 60 employees. A constituent society of the American Dental Association, the mission of the FDA is to improve the oral health of Florida residents through high practice standards, continuous professional education, public advocacy and improving the practice environment. The Florida Dental Health Foundation is the FDA's dental charity and the Alliance of the FDA is an FDA support group.

For more information about dentistry in Florida, visit www.floridadental.org.

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