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PRESS RELEASE

GMFA Websites Awarded 'Health On The Net' Accreditation As Visitor Numbers Double

London, 15 July 2009 – GMFA, the gay men's health charity, today announced that it is the first gay charity in the UK to receive the Health On The Net Code (HONcode) accreditation. This is awarded to the increasingly popular group of health information websites at www.gmfa.org.uk and is validation of their adherence to the ethical and quality HONcode. Its Sex & Sexual Health site at www.gmfa.org.uk/sex alone saw traffic double in the past year, reaching over 60,000 visitors between April and June 2009.

GMFA launched its Sex & Sexual Health website in December 2006 in response to the lack of online information specifically targeting gay men. The site was one of the first to provide frank and comprehensive sexual health information for gay men, containing up-to-date and friendly advice on topics such as the HIV risks of oral sex, Post Exposure Prophylaxis (PEP), HIV testing, and techniques for better sex.

Matthew Hodson of GMFA comments: "Gay men are more likely to turn to the web for safer sex information than any other source. We work to provide the services that the gay community wants and needs and it is important that we can deliver relevant and credible sexual health information online. The HONcode exists to help people tell which websites

they can trust to give them reliable information about their health so this is an important endorsement for us and for gay men.”

In addition to the main sexual health site, GMFA also provides detailed listings of sexual health services for gay men in London (www.gmfa.org.uk/londonservices), specific advice for HIV positive gay men (www.gmfa.org.uk/positive) and a guide to gay sports and social groups in London (www.gmfa.org.uk/theguide). The GMFA sites collectively received 112,420 visitors between April and June 2009.

The HONcode was created by the HON Foundation (www.HealthOnNet.org), a non-governmental organisation that is internationally known for its pioneering work in the field of health information ethics, notably for the establishment of its code of ethical conduct, the HONcode. The code is the oldest and most used ethical and trustworthy code for medical and health related information available on the internet.

Matthew adds: “Gay men are at the heart of what we do. Like all of our work, our websites draw upon our 17 years’ experience of delivering gay men’s work. We created the sites with our volunteers, most of them gay men, which I believe is what makes them so relevant, accessible and honest.”

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About GMFA

Founded in 1992, GMFA is the UK’s leading charity dedicated to gay men’s health. Its mission is to improve gay men’s health by increasing the control they have over their own lives. The organisation is based on the belief that the best health promotion for gay men comes from gay men themselves. For this reason, it uses the knowledge and ideas of its 170 volunteers, most of them gay men, to design and plan its thought-provoking sexual health interventions. These include a range of advertising campaigns, leaflets, postcards and booklets; FS, its health magazine, distributed in London’s gay bars and clubs; and national and London-based courses covering sex education, life skills and smoking cessation. In addition, GMFA creates targeted sexual health interventions for black gay men and HIV positive gay men. Independent surveys have concluded that GMFA’s campaigns reach up to 60% of the London gay population and that the organisation is the most reliable agency at reaching gay men. The charity runs a range of information websites:

- Sex & Sexual Health, www.gmfa.org.uk/sex - visited by a third of London's gay men in 2006;
- London Services, www.gmfa.org.uk/londonservices - detailed listing of sexual health services for gay men in London;
- Positive Gay Guide, www.gmfa.org.uk/positive - information for HIV positive gay men;
- The Guide, www.gmfa.org.uk/theguide - a guide to gay sports and social groups in London;
- About GMFA, www.gmfa.org.uk/aboutgmfa - for more information on GMFA.

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