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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Planned Parenthood Charleston Health Center Now Open

The Charleston Health Center of Planned Parenthood Health Systems, Inc (PPHS) has begun providing a full array of preventive reproductive health care services at its newly renovated health center on Rutledge Avenue. The medical staff, led by Center Manager Janet Stevens, began serving patients in December. The Planned Parenthood center is one of 13 PPHS health centers providing professional, affordable reproductive medical services and educational programming to women, men and teens. PPHS operates a second health and education center in Columbia.

“We have two criteria for successfully opening new health centers: local need for reproductive healthcare and strong community support. We have found both in Charleston,” said Walter Klausmeier, President & CEO of PPHS, a regional Planned Parenthood affiliate with centers in North and South Carolina, Virginia and West Virginia. Local donations from hundreds of contributors enabled the purchase, renovations and up-fitting of the center that will serve as a hub for the organization’s medical, education and public policy efforts. “Our new center is a partnership between Planned Parenthood and the local community. We are now able to complement and contribute to the existing prevention efforts already underway in Charleston.”

“Our top priority is to reduce unintended pregnancy and sexually transmitted disease, particularly among high-risk populations in Charleston,” says Janet Stevens, Health Center Manager. South Carolina ranks 5th in the nation in births to unmarried mothers, 4th in nation in prevalence of Chlamydia and 4th in gonorrhea as reported by the Centers for Disease Control. PPHS also operates a health center in Columbia.

The medical services now available at the Planned Parenthood in Charleston include:

- *Birth Control including Emergency Contraception and IUD Insertion*
- *Annual Gynecological Exams (including screening for Cervical and Breast Cancer)*
- *Pregnancy Testing and Counseling*
- *Sexually Transmitted Infection Diagnosis and Treatment*
- *Male Medical Examinations*
- *Immunizations including Gardasil to prevent HPV and protect against cancers*
- *Preventive Education Programming*

Tours of the facility will be provided to local media.

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Planned Parenthood Health Systems, Inc. is a private, nonprofit family planning agency that respects and protects the rights of each man and woman to make informed reproductive decisions. Our mission is to provide accessible, high-quality health care and information to clients and to serve as advocate and educator to the community on responsible human sexuality. We have offices in North Carolina, South Carolina, Virginia and West Virginia.