



Photo Release

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For Immediate Release: November 5, 2008

AtlantiCare holds a day of education, awareness and movement for obesity research



AtlantiCare's Walk from Obesity volunteers included: Laurie Janssen, RN, CBN, ARMC's Center for Surgical Weight Loss & Wellness; Debbie Gullo, RN, ARMC's Center for Surgical Weight Loss & Wellness; Alexander Onopchenko, MD, FACS, medical director, ARMC's Center for Surgical Weight Loss & Wellness; Kelli Ireland, surgical services coordinator, ARMC; Robert Madara, Bariatric support group leader; Kathleen Craven, Bariatric administrative manager, and Laurie Moody-Tidcombe, RN, MSN, APN, C, ARMC's Center for Surgical Weight Loss and Wellness.

Former weight loss surgery patients, loved ones, supporters and those affected by obesity recently turned out for AtlantiCare's 2008 Walk from Obesity at the AtlantiCare Health Park, Egg Harbor Township. The event raised over \$3,800 to benefit independent educational and research initiatives of the American Society for Metabolic & Bariatric Surgery (ASMBS) Foundation and the Obesity Action Coalition (OAC).

AtlantiCare's Walk from Obesity was led by Karen J. Sparks, BBA, MBAEd and Julie M. Janeway, BBA, MSA, JD, ABD/Ph.D co-authors of *The REAL Skinny on Weight Loss Surgery: An Indispensable Guide to What You Can REALLY Expect!*, now in its second edition, and *Little Victories REAL Food Cookbook! Easy, practical, healthy foods your whole family will eat.*

Sparks and Janeway are major contributing authors of *The Encyclopedia of Obesity* and co-authors of two upcoming dietary science textbooks. During the event, they gave a “Getting Back on Track” presentation and hosted a Chinese Auction to raise funds for obesity research.

AtlantiCare’s Walk from Obesity was one of more than 70 walks that took place across the nation in September and October. The Walk from Obesity was established to raise awareness of the obesity epidemic and to support initiatives focusing on prevention, education, research, treatment and advocacy.

Following the 1-mile walk, Sparks and Janeway presented a lively “Getting Back on Track” discussion for those who have undergone weight loss surgery and others who support them.

“I want to start off by thanking the clinical and support staff here at AtlantiCare,” said Karen Sparks. “These individuals do what they do for a reason- they have a passion to fight obesity. They go above and beyond to help those who are struggling with the disease.”

Both Sparks and Janeway talked about their personal experiences with bariatric surgery five years ago. Sparks has since lost 260 pounds and Janeway is down 190 pounds. They mentioned that once the surgery is over, patients tend to feel like their struggles are over; like they have won. However, the two told the audience that following surgery, the journey to maintain weight loss has just begun.

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Karen J. Sparks and Julie M. Janeway, co-authors of *The REAL Skinny on Weight Loss Surgery: An Indispensable Guide to What You Can REALLY Expect!*, lead AtlantiCare’s 2008 Walk from Obesity at the AtlantiCare Health Park in Egg Harbor Township.

(AtlantiCare holds a day of education, awareness and movement for obesity research - add one)

They cited re-education such as, journaling, getting sufficient sleep, positive influencers and movement together with practices such as, portion control, taking small bites, drinking with meals, getting enough water and taking vitamins as vital to a continued life style of weight maintenance.

About the Center for Surgical Weight Loss and Wellness at ARMC

The Center for Surgical Weight Loss & Wellness at ARMC is an American Society for Bariatric Surgery (ASBS) Bariatric Surgery Center of Excellence (BSCOE). ARMC offers a multidisciplinary approach to the prevention and management of obesity. Surgical interventions the center offers include gastric bypass surgery, in which the stomach is divided into a small upper portion to reduce its size; laparoscopic adjustable gastric banding or lap-band, the placement of a silicone band around the upper portion of the stomach; and laparoscopic sleeve gastrectomy, in which the stomach volume is reduced by stapling, dividing it and removing more than 85 percent of it. The center also offers support groups for those who have had weight loss surgery.

For more information about ARMC's Center for Surgical Weight Loss or other AtlantiCare programs and services, call the AtlantiCare Access Center at 1-888-569-1000, or visit www.atlanticare.org.