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April 27, 2009

ATTORNEY GENERAL MADIGAN REACHES AGREEMENT IN LAWSUIT AGAINST CHRISTIE CLINIC

Settlement Ensures Additional Access to Primary Health Care Services for Medicaid Patients in Champaign County

Springfield — Attorney General Lisa Madigan announced today that she has reached an agreement with Christie Clinic of Champaign under which the clinic promises to guarantee access to primary care services to thousands of Medicaid patients in Champaign County. Madigan announced the agreement today after filing settlement documents with the Champaign County Circuit Court, which must review and approve the settlement before it becomes final.

The settlement resolves the lawsuit that Madigan's office filed in 2007 alleging that Christie and another healthcare provider, Carle Clinic Association, entered into an illegal agreement in March 2003 to stop accepting new Medicaid patients. Carle Clinic settled with Madigan's office in December 2008.

Madigan said the goal of the settlement is to ensure Medicaid patients greater access and choice for primary care services.

"This settlement is a victory for Medicaid patients throughout Champaign County," said Madigan. "They now have access to primary health care and many will even have a choice where to receive it."

Madigan notes that some of the important terms of today's settlement include:

- Christie Clinic has guaranteed that it will increase the number of Medicaid patients it will accept for primary health care services to 8,500 over the next three years.
- Under the agreement, Christie may not deny Medicaid patients primary care services because of existing medical debt incurred from March 2003 through September 2007 – the period during which these patients were turned away as qualified Medicaid patients and were charged for health care services.
- In addition, over three years, Christie must pay \$120,000 to Frances Nelson Health Center to help fund its primary care services for low-income patients and \$34,000 to the Champaign Urbana Public Health District to help pay for its dental program for low-income children.

Under Attorney General Madigan's settlement agreements, both Christie and Carle Clinics are committed to accept more than 17,000 Medicaid patients this year. The number of patients will grow to 20,000 over the next three years.

Claudia Lenhoff, the Executive Director of Champaign County Health Care Consumers, praised the settlement. "We are extremely grateful to Attorney General Madigan in reaching this agreement that will result in increased access to care for community members who, until now, have been locked out of the health care system."

Christie will reimburse the Attorney General's Office the amount of \$76,000 in attorneys' fees and costs related to the litigation.

Senior Assistant Attorney General Blake Harrop and Assistant Attorney General Chad Brooker handled the case for Madigan's Antitrust Bureau.

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