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**U.S. GOVERNMENT REPORT CONFIRMS SHORTAGE OF PEDIATRIC
RHEUMATOLOGISTS**

*Arthritis Foundation Supports Legislation Offering Incentives
to Increase Number of Pediatric Rheumatologists*

ATLANTA, July 16, 2007 – A new report released by the Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA), an agency of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, revealed there is a severe shortage of pediatric rheumatologists in the U.S. The report calls for a 75 percent increase in the number of pediatric rheumatologists. HRSA partnered with the Arthritis Foundation to gather data from pediatric rheumatologists which was used to compile the results.

“This report confirms what we have known for some time, and validates our efforts to increase the number of pediatric rheumatologists through support of the Arthritis Prevention Control and Cure Act,” said John H. Klippel, M.D., president and CEO of the Arthritis Foundation. “Nearly 300,000 children have juvenile rheumatoid arthritis, but there are fewer than 200 certified pediatric rheumatologists in this country. We are firmly committed to narrowing this gap and ensuring access to treatment for every child who suffers from this devastating disease.”

Juvenile rheumatoid arthritis is one of the most common chronic illnesses among children, and if left untreated can result in severe disability. Among the staggering statistics revealed in the HRSA report - 13 states in the U.S. do not have a practicing pediatric rheumatologist, and on average, children must travel 57 miles to reach the nearest pediatric rheumatologist.

The Arthritis Foundation supports the Arthritis Prevention Control and Cure Act (S. 626, H.R. 1283) recently introduced legislation that would authorize loan repayment programs for pediatric rheumatology, an increase in the number and size of institutional training grants to institutions supporting pediatric rheumatology, and expansion of public-private partnerships to encourage pediatric rheumatology education and training.

More information about the HRSA report, the Arthritis Prevention Control and Cure Act and the Arthritis Foundation research program is available at www.arthritis.org.

About the Arthritis Foundation

The Arthritis Foundation is the leading health organization addressing the needs of some 46 million Americans living with arthritis, the nation's number-one cause of disability. Founded in 1948, with headquarters in Atlanta, the Arthritis Foundation has multiple service points located throughout the country.

The Arthritis Foundation is the largest private, not-for-profit contributor to arthritis research in the world, funding more than \$380 million in research grants since 1948. The foundation helps individuals take control of arthritis by providing public health education; pursuing public policy and legislation; and conducting evidence-based programs to improve the quality of life for those living with arthritis. Information is available 24 hours a day, seven days a week at 1-800-283-7800 or www.arthritis.org.

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