

# NEWS RELEASE

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### **Deborah Zimmerman, MD, Joins ESSENCE Healthcare as Chief Medical Officer**

ST. LOUIS, MO (February 4, 2009) – ESSENCE Healthcare today announced that Deborah Zimmerman, MD, has joined the company as Chief Medical Officer, responsible for developing and implementing strategies and programs that continue to improve the health status of ESSENCE *Advantage* members.

Zimmerman most recently served as Chief Medical Officer of Chesterfield-based Mercy Health Plans. She replaces Tom Doerr, MD, ESSENCE's interim Chief Medical Officer, who will serve as Chairman of a new Clinical Strategy Committee of the Board of Directors.

“Dr. Zimmerman has a long and distinguished history of medical leadership at health plans such as CIGNA, GHP and Health Partners of the Midwest,” said Frank Ingari, Chief Executive Officer of ESSENCE. “She is also an accomplished entrepreneur, having co-founded a successful disease and complex care management company. Dr. Doerr and I are delighted and enthusiastic that she is joining our team.”

Doerr has served as interim Chief Medical Officer for approximately nine months, and will continue as a full-time central contributor to the company's vision and operations. In addition to serving as Chairman of the Board's new Clinical Strategy Committee, Doerr will work with the national health care policy community to promote a promising new model of care, and will continue to identify and evaluate innovations that can help ESSENCE achieve its mission.

### **About ESSENCE**

ESSENCE is an innovative Medicare managed care organization that provides comprehensive medical, hospital and prescription drug coverage to nearly 25,000 Medicare beneficiaries in five states. Headquartered in St. Louis, Missouri, and with an extensive background in health care information technology, ESSENCE collaborates with primary care physicians and other medical professionals in unprecedented ways to improve how health care is accessed, delivered, measured, improved and reimbursed.