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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**Weight Talk® Promises to Make Weight Loss Personal Again**

*New coaching program puts high-touch before high-tech.*

SEATTLE, Wash. November, 2011 - Alere Wellbeing (formerly Free & Clear) announced today a new behavioral weight loss program designed for employers looking to mitigate obesity-related healthcare costs and productivity losses.

Employers have seen steady increases in prescription drug costs, many of which are due to obesity and the growing number of obesity-related conditions. Today, for instance, obese adults spend 2 to 4 times more per year on prescription drugs than non-obese adults, and the five most common classes of drugs used by adults in the U.S. can be related to obesity.

“Behavioral weight loss programs have been proven to considerably improve the most common healthcare cost drivers: hypertension, diabetes, high cholesterol, asthma, gallstones, sleep apnea, and infertility,” says Dr. Jennifer Lovejoy, President of the Obesity Society and Vice President of Clinical Support at Alere Wellbeing. Moreover, the findings of a recent meta-analysis<sup>1</sup> show that personal behavioral coaching resulted in significantly more weight loss than stand-alone web-based interventions.

Alere Wellbeing’s new program, **Weight Talk®**, is a personal coaching program that guides participants in setting realistic weight loss goals and helps them develop the skills needed to achieve these goals. Through bi-weekly phone coaching sessions, supplemented by web-based learning, tracking, and social support, participants learn how the decisions they make each day can impact their weight and how small, simple changes can lead to major physical and psychological improvements. With the help of a coach, program participants develop personalized nutrition and physical activity plans. They then learn to master **The 8 Essential Practices**, which are a set of behavioral focus areas that address such topics as body image, emotional eating, sleep quality, stress, time management, environmental control, and cognitive dissonance.

“What makes this program unique is its emphasis on the importance of real human interaction for sustained behavior change,” says Sharen Ross, Senior Vice President of Marketing and Product Management at Alere Wellbeing. “While other companies are moving rapidly towards purely web-based programs for weight loss, ostensibly to reach more people at a lower cost, we’re sticking to our behavioral coaching roots and what the evidence says works best for achieving sustainable results. We believe that employers will respond favorably to Weight Talk® - a program that is designed for organizations serious about measurable weight loss that leads to a positive financial return.”

More information about Weight Talk® can be found at [www.alerewellbeing.com](http://www.alerewellbeing.com) or by emailing [wellbeingsales@alere.com](mailto:wellbeingsales@alere.com).

**About Alere Wellbeing**

Alere Wellbeing (formerly Free & Clear) drives sustained health behavior change by connecting individuals with knowledge and information, and then empowering them to act on that knowledge to improve their own health and wellbeing. Alere Wellbeing's evidence-based programs address modifiable health risks that contribute to chronic disease: tobacco use, poor nutrition, physical inactivity, and stress. Current clients include 27 state governments and more than 650 health plans and employers, 63 of which are in the Fortune 500. Alere Wellbeing is known and respected for its pay-for-performance business model, intense focus on scalable service quality, dedicated account management, continuous program improvement, and transparent reporting of measurable outcomes at the individual participant and aggregate population level. Alere Wellbeing has contributed to more than 100 published research studies and maintains collaboration with the American Cancer Society® and an active research program funded by the Centers for Disease Control, American Legacy Foundation, and the National Institutes of Health. More information about Alere Wellbeing can be found at [www.alerewellbeing.com](http://www.alerewellbeing.com).

**About Alere**

By developing new capabilities in near-patient diagnosis, monitoring and health management, Alere enables individuals to take charge of improving their health and quality of life at home. Alere's global leading products and services, as well as its new product development efforts, focus on cardiology, women's health, infectious disease, oncology and toxicology. Alere is headquartered in Waltham, Massachusetts. For more information regarding Alere please visit <http://www.alere.com>.

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i The Effect of Computers for Weight Loss: A Systematic Review and Meta-analysis of Randomized Trials. Virginia A. Reed, Karen E. Schifferdecker, Michael E. Rezaee, Sharon O'Connor and Robin J. Larson. Journal of General Internal Medicine, Online First™, 30 July 2011