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El Rio Community Health Center Diagnostic Laboratory Earns Gold Seal of Approval®- Handles over One Million Tests per Year

(Tucson, Arizona) El Rio Community Health Center is proud to announce the El Rio Diagnostic Laboratory has earned the Joint Commission's Gold Seal of Approval® for accreditation. This accreditation recognizes the laboratory's compliance with The Joint Commission's national standards for health care quality and safety in laboratories, and affirms the laboratory's dedication to continuous compliance with state-of-the-art standards.

"These standards highlight the essential nature of laboratory services in the health care delivery system," says Tony Zubieta, El Rio's Laboratory Director. "For our laboratory, achieving Joint Commission accreditation is an integral part of our commitment to excellence and to continually improving the care we provide," he adds. In addition to Joint Commission accreditation, the laboratory is also licensed by the Arizona State Department of Health Services and participates in the Proficiency Testing program of the College of American Pathologists.

El Rio's Diagnostic Laboratory underwent a rigorous unannounced on-site survey in December where surveyors evaluated the laboratory for compliance with standards of care that directly affect the quality and safety of diagnostic services and patient care. The survey assessed processes that follow laboratory specimens starting with the doctor's order and proceeding through specimen collection and processing, analysis and result reporting.

The El Rio Diagnostic Laboratory, located at 2501 E. Elm Street, is staffed by a team of 34 Board-Certified Medical Technologists, Laboratory Assistants, and Laboratory Information Systems staff. It performs over one million tests annually with seven drawing sites located throughout Tucson at El Rio health center sites.

El Rio Community Health Center is the largest provider of medical and dental services to uninsured and Medicaid populations in Pima County. With 17 sites in Tucson, El Rio serves the medical and dental needs of more than 76,000 patients annually. El Rio employs over 800 people with an annual budget of over \$90 million dollars. A national model of health care excellence, El Rio's mission is to: "Improve the health of our community through comprehensive, accessible, affordable, quality and compassionate care." For more information visit www.elrio.org.

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