

For Immediate Release: November 2, 2004

Contact: Gina M. DiGravio, 617-638-8491, gina.digravio@bmc.org
Amy Vreeland, 617-746-2214, amy.vreeland@newbalance.com

**BMC Receives Grant from New Balance Foundation to
Expand Program for Overweight Children**

(BOSTON) - In an effort to meet the enormous public health challenge of overweight and obesity among young people, the New Balance Foundation has generously awarded Boston Medical Center (BMC) a \$1 million grant over the next three years. The gift will support the expansion of BMC's Nutrition and Fitness for Life Program (NFL) into the BostonHealthNet community health centers that partner most closely with BMC. The NFL program helps children and their families make broad improvements in fitness and eating through physical activity, behavior modification, education, and assessment of contributory medical factors.

During the last year, the NFL program, in collaboration with the Dorchester House Multi-Service Center, successfully piloted FANTastic Girls, an after school nutrition education and physical activity program for 10- to 12-year-old girls. The New Balance Foundation grant will be used to expand FANTastic Kids to eight Boston HealthNet community health centers, and to train primary care pediatricians to assess and treat overweight children. "Money from the grant will assist this cost effective approach to addressing pediatric overweight among low-income families across the city of Boston, helping to change family behaviors while providing a much needed outlet for youth with decidedly limited options," said Vivien Morris, NFL's Administrative Director.

"Expanding the reach of NFL is a major priority for BMC, and it wouldn't be possible without this partnership with the New Balance Foundation," said Carine Lenders, Medical Director of NFL. "These children and families deserve our strongest possible commitment and we are very happy for the opportunity to be one of the New Balance Foundations primary partners in this long-term campaign," she added.

"The New Balance Foundation has identified obesity, particularly childhood obesity, as one of our main areas of focus for the foreseeable future," says Anne Davis, executive vice president, New Balance Athletic Shoe, Inc. and founding trustee of the New Balance Foundation. "Of the 60 million Americans who are obese, almost one sixth -- nine million are our children. We are committed to participating in the fight against obesity and to affecting permanent societal change in the regions in which we have our facilities."

-more-

NFL-NB/2

Begun as a pilot clinic for 17 overweight teens in year 2002, today NFL program's capacity has grown to serve more than 170 children and their families, and NFL will double its capacity in 2005. Of the initial group of adolescents who received care in the pilot program, 94% either decreased in weight or halted an increase in their body mass indices measured over a three-month period. Further evaluations showed that children and adolescents in the clinic were able to maintain their BMI adjusted for age and gender at 6 months and one year.

Since the project's inception, retention rates for program participants have grown steadily. In the same period, NFL has quadrupled the capacity of the clinical program; placed more than 70% of active participants in community-based fitness programs; enrolled 50% of NFL families in on-site cooking demonstrations; and placed 30% of program participants in community-based nutrition programs.

The New Balance Foundation is a charitable foundation established and funded by New Balance Athletic Shoe, Inc. The Foundation supports programs that emphasize local outreach efforts, the involvement of the community, and children's initiatives that benefit the communities in which their employees live and work. For more information about the New Balance Foundation, log on to the company's website at www.newbalance.com. Click on "About Us" and "Community Involvement."

###