

Groundbreaking National Program to Reverse Obesity Expands to 50 Locations

Communities From Across the Nation Now Taking Part in “Collaborate for Healthy Weight” Initiative

March, 2012 – The second phase of a national effort to combat obesity, “Collaborate for Healthy Weight,” has been announced by the National Initiative for Children’s Healthcare Quality (NICHQ), in partnership with the Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA). Forty new teams of healthcare professionals and community leaders, from Pasadena to Philadelphia, have been selected, significantly increasing participation in this unique initiative. The new groups join 10 original teams that have been working since June 2011 to improve obesity prevention and treatment in their communities.

The 50 teams now participating in Collaborate for Healthy Weight are each composed of representatives from the primary care, public health, and community sectors, working together as never before, using quality improvement methods to identify, test, and implement high-potential changes coordinated across all sectors.

“We congratulate the 40 teams joining us in this unique community-based effort. We are confident that they, building on the accomplishments of our initial ten teams, will pioneer breakthrough solutions to this serious public health problem. We know they will help build momentum to a tipping point as communities come together to make ours a healthier nation,” said Charles Homer, MD, MPH, president and CEO of NICHQ.

The U.S. has the highest rate of obesity among all developed nations. At current rates, three in four Americans will become overweight or obese by 2020.

“Collaborate for Healthy Weight is a unique initiative that fosters innovative local partnerships across the nation to make a real difference in the battle against obesity and health inequity,” said Mary Wakefield, PhD, RN, HRSA’s Administrator. “We look forward to spreading the ideas generated through these projects to other communities throughout the country.”

Collaborate for Healthy Weight is a two-phased project supported through the Prevention and Public Health Fund under the Affordable Care Act and made possible by a cooperative agreement from HRSA.

NICHQ is leading a consortium of partner organizations that is managing all program logistics and overseeing the work of participating teams. The consortium includes: the Association of State and Territorial Health Officials (ASTHO), the Association of Maternal and Child Health Programs (AMCHP), Maine Medical Center/Let’s Go!, the National Association of County and City Health Officials (NACCHO), the National Association of Community Health Centers (NACHC), and Nemours.

The 50 teams now participating in this initiative are focused on areas as small as a single town and as large as an entire state, and they hail from all corners of the country. The 40 locations selected to participate in the second phase of the initiative are:

- Holyoke, Massachusetts
- Somerville, Massachusetts
- Waterbury, Connecticut
- Northwestern New Jersey
- Haverstraw, New York
- Rensselaer County, New York
- Schuylkill County, Pennsylvania
- Delaware
- District of Columbia
- Philadelphia, Pennsylvania
- Montgomery County, Pennsylvania
- Southwestern West Virginia
- Hamilton County, Tennessee
- Forsyth County, North Carolina
- Western North Carolina
- Durham County, North Carolina
- Fulton County, Georgia
- Fairfield County, South Carolina
- Lee County, Florida
- Northwestern Mississippi
- Tupelo, Mississippi
- Ho-Chunk Nation, Wisconsin
- Genesee County, Michigan
- Grand Rapids, Michigan
- Iosco County, Michigan
- Holmes County, Ohio
- Erie County, Ohio
- Adams County, Wisconsin
- Hennepin County, Minnesota
- Aurora, Illinois
- Taos, New Mexico
- Thomas County, Kansas
- Omaha, Nebraska
- Northeastern Iowa
- San Mateo County, California
- Santa Ana, California
- Pasadena, California
- Visalia, California
- Whatcom County, Washington
- Turtle Mountain Band of Chippewa Indians, North Dakota

They join the ten communities already participating in the first phase of the initiative:

- Woodruff County, Arkansas
- San Diego, California
- Sarasota County, Florida
- Boston, Massachusetts
- Kansas City, Missouri
- Yellowstone County, Montana
- Rochester, New York
- Columbus, Ohio
- Lee County, Virginia
- Lincoln County, Washington

The Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA), an agency of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, is the primary Federal agency for improving access to health care services for people who are uninsured, isolated or medically vulnerable.

The National Initiative for Children's Healthcare Quality (NICHQ) is an action-oriented, independent, not-for-profit organization dedicated to improving the care systems responsible for the health of all children. Founded in 1999 and based in Boston, NICHQ partners with healthcare systems, foundations, government agencies, payers, and family and community organizations to optimize healthcare system performance and identify and spread innovation and best practices.

For more information, visit www.collaborateforhealthyweight.org.