To: Local News Media  
From: Central Michigan District Health Department  
RE: Clare-Gladwin Health Improvement Group Receives Health Policy Champion Award  
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Michigan Celebrates Local Heroes and Champions Committed to a Positive Return on Public Health Investments

LANSING – The Michigan Department of Community Health (MDCH) and its partners in local public health will celebrate Michigan Public Health Week April 14-20. The national theme this year is, "Public Health is ROI: Saves Lives, Saves Money."

Every year in the United States, seven out of 10 deaths are due to chronic diseases such as diabetes and heart disease, and of those, many cases can be prevented with lifestyle changes and public health interventions. In fact, chronic diseases account for a whopping 75 percent of national health care spending, yet only 3 percent of our health care dollars go toward prevention. Here in Michigan, two-thirds of our adults are either overweight or obese, which can lead to costly and potentially life-threatening chronic diseases. But there are steps we can take to help turn these statistics around.

Today, MDCH and its partners held its annual Public Health Week celebration to honor those committed to showing other Michigan residents the fun, easy and small steps they can take to make prevention a part of their lives. The event also showcased the value of investing in prevention: research shows that investing just $10 per person each year in proven, community-based public health efforts can save the nation more than $16 billion within five years. That’s a $5.60 return for every $1 invested.

The event, which is one of hundreds of National Public Health Week events happening in communities nationwide, was attended by public health leaders and other community members. During the event, three Michigan Health Policy Champions and eight Michigan Hometown Health Heroes were honored for their efforts in supporting public policies to improve the health and safety of Michigan residents. The participants came together to issue a call to action about the value of prevention to our lives, pocketbooks and futures.
Each year, Michigan Health Policy Champions honor individuals and organizations who have been "champions" for public health in the public policy arena in their communities and the state of Michigan. Michigan’s annual Hometown Health Hero Award recognizes the accomplishments of individuals and organizations that have gone above and beyond their normal duties to make a positive impact on the health of their local communities.

Michigan’s 2013 Health Policy Champions include:

- Jean C. Chabut with the Michigan Department of Community Health, retired
- Clare-Gladwin Health Improvement Group
- James Phillips, MD with the Branch-Hillsdale-St. Joseph Community Health Agency, retired

Michigan’s 2013 Hometown Health Heroes include:

- Dr. Colleen Allen with the Autism Alliance of Michigan
- Kathy Campbell with KidzKare, Inc.
- Kimberly Anne Gillary Foundation
- KAYLA Foundation
- Wes Leonard Heart Team
- Jim McGibbon from Southeast Michigan
- Lynn Saunders and Charmaine Stone with the Little River Casino and Resort Health and Wellness Committee

The Michigan Association for Local Public Health, the Michigan Public Health Association, the Michigan Public Health Institute, Michigan Association of Counties, Michigan State University, the University of Michigan School of Public Health, and Wayne State University have partnered with MDCH to implement Michigan’s Public Health Week activities.

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Photo Attachment Information: Clare-Gladwin Health Improvement Planning Members Receiving Award on April 17, 2013 in Lansing.

Pictured left to right: Noreen Rechlin (MidMichigan Medical Center - Gladwin), Julie Wright (MidMichigan Medical Center - Gladwin), Sarah M. Kile (Central Michigan District Health Department) and Geralyn Lasher, Senior Deputy Director of External Relations and Communication at MDCH.