To:  Local News Media  
From:  Central Michigan District Health Department  
RE:  Central Michigan District Health Department receives $1.6 million Community Transformation Grant  
Release Date:  October 1, 2012

Central Michigan District Health Department Awarded $1.6 million to Help Create Healthier Communities in Central Michigan area. Affordable Care Act to improve health in states and communities, which can control health care spending

Today, Central Michigan District Health Department (CMDHD) was awarded a grant of $1.6 million to implement programs that aim to reduce obesity and reduce death and disability due to heart disease, stroke, and tobacco use in Arenac, Clare, Gladwin, Isabella, Osceola and Roscommon Counties. The programs that will be implemented coincide with the health improvement activities created through CMDHD’s Together We Can initiative.

This grant is a part of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services’ (HHS’s) Community Transformation Grants (CTG) to support public health efforts to reduce chronic diseases, promote healthier lifestyles, reduce health disparities, and control health care spending in small communities.

By focusing on where people live, work, learn, and play, the CTG program is expected to improve the health of more than four out of 10 U.S. citizens—about 130 million Americans. Through this grant, CMDHD will work with schools, local governments, aging agencies, local businesses, and other community partners to implement projects and programs that will improve health in the region. Support from the business community, school districts, community-based organizations, and other non-traditional partners is critical to reducing deaths and health costs due to heart attacks, strokes, cancer, diabetes, and other serious health problems.

Overall, HHS awarded approximately $70 million in prevention grants to 40 awardees focused on improving the health of small communities across the nation. Administered by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), the CTG Program is a comprehensive prevention and wellness initiative launched in 2011 and funded through the Affordable Care Act’s Prevention and Public Health Fund. These new funds will support areas with fewer than 500,000 people in neighborhoods, school districts, villages, towns, cities, and counties. Awardees represent organizations committed to improving health from a multitude of sectors.

“We are certainly thrilled to receive this funding for our Together We Can Initiative” stated CMDHD Health Officer, Mary Kushion. “We have held meetings with our community partners for the past two years to develop a comprehensive plan to improve the health status of the citizens in
The central Michigan area. The CTG grant will provide us with the necessary funds to successfully implement many of the interventions included in our plan” Kushion added.

CMDHD will conduct activities that contribute to the overall goals of the CTG program and help achieve positive changes in the following outcome measures: 1) weight, 2) proper nutrition, 3) physical activity, and 4) tobacco use. They will do so by collaborating with area schools, local governments, early childhood centers, aging agencies, restaurants, local businesses and Michigan Works throughout the six-county region. Half of the funding awarded is given out to the community to improve the community’s health.

“The overall goal of the grant funding and the Together We Can initiative is to reduce the incidence of chronic diseases such as heart disease, cancer and diabetes which are the leading causes of death, disability and health care costs” Kushion stated.

The Community Transformation Grants are one piece of a broader effort by the Obama Administration to address the health and well-being of U.S. communities through initiatives such as the President’s Childhood Obesity Task Force, the First Lady’s Let’s Move! Campaign, the National Prevention Strategy, the National Quality Strategy, and HHS’ Million Hearts™ initiative. The Prevention and Public Health Fund, as part of the Affordable Care Act, is supporting the CTG program and other initiatives designed to expand and sustain the necessary capacity to prevent chronic diseases, detect them early, manage conditions before they become severe, and provide states and communities the resources they need to promote healthy living.

To learn more about the Community Transformation Grant Program, including a list of all awardees, visit www.cdc.gov/communitytransformation.

More information about the Together We Can! Initiative can be found at http://www.cmdhd.org/county_health_rankings.htm. This article is brought to you by the staff at Central Michigan District Health Department, which serves residents in the counties of Arenac, Clare, Gladwin, Isabella, Osceola, and Roscommon. Join us (Central Michigan District Health Department and Together We Can! Health Improvement Project) on Facebook.

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