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Quality Quest for Health of Illinois Awarded \$2.4 Million to Help Create Healthier Communities in Peoria and Tazewell Counties

15 Organizations To Collaborate as the Partnership for a Healthy Community

Affordable Care Act to improve health in states and communities, which can control healthcare spending

(Peoria, IL) -- Today, **Quality Quest for Health of Illinois** was awarded a grant of **\$2.4 million** for reducing obesity, increasing adherence to preventive care recommendations, and decreasing death and disability due to tobacco use, heart disease, and stroke in Peoria and Tazewell Counties. Quality Quest applied for the 2-year funding on behalf of 15 collaborative partners that came together as the Partnership for a Healthy Community.

Collaboration partners include the Central Illinois Wellness Council, Peoria County Health Department, Tazewell County Health Department, City of Peoria, YMCA, The George Washington Carver Association, Hult Center for Health Education, Gifts in the Moment, Family Core, Heartland Community Health Clinic, American Red Cross Central Illinois Chapter, Children's Hospital of Illinois, University of Illinois College of Medicine at Peoria Center for Outcomes Research, and Quality Quest for Health of Illinois.

In the United States, chronic diseases such as heart disease, cancer, and diabetes are the leading causes of death, disability, and healthcare costs, accounting for 70% of all deaths each year and 75% of the \$2.5 trillion spent annually on healthcare. In Peoria and Tazewell counties, the leading causes of death are heart disease, cancer, stroke, and chronic lower respiratory disease. Although chronic diseases are among the most common and costly health problems in the country, they are also among the most preventable.

"The biggest drivers of healthcare costs are the individual choices Americans make about how they live, the food they eat, and the activities they partake in," said Congressman Aaron Schock. "My hats off to Quality Quest for focusing their efforts on helping bring down the cost of healthcare and giving people the tools to live healthier and longer lives"

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 healthcare 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.

"This grant builds on the work of Quality Quest and the Central Illinois Wellness Council (CIWC). CIWC is a merging of the Quest Healthy Lifestyles School Project and the Peoria City/County Health Department's strategic priorities group. The grant will fund a variety of activities that CIWC collaborators have in the works and will expand on those efforts," said Gail Amundson, MD, President and CEO of Quality Quest.

(more)

Awardees will conduct activities in one or more areas that contribute to the overall goals of the CTG program and help achieve positive changes in one or more of the following outcome measures: 1) weight, 2) proper nutrition, 3) physical activity, 4) tobacco use, and 5) social and emotional well-being.

“The Partnership for a Healthy Community will improve the health of more than 300,000 residents in central Illinois through a combination of efforts. People need information, tools, resources, and a supportive environment to make healthy lifestyle changes. We have interventions for youth, adults, and families, as well as healthcare providers,” said Bonnie Paris, grant principal investigator and program development manager at Quality Quest.

The Partnership for a Healthy Community will address nine key issues to reduce premature death and avoid disability through:

- Tobacco-free living
- Breastfeeding education and promotion
- Proper nutrition in schools
- Physical activity in schools
- Proper nutrition in the community
- Physical activity in the community
- US Preventive Services Task Force recommendation use
- School-based dental sealant program
- Social and emotional wellness

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 Quality Quest’s prevention and wellness projects, visit www.qualityquest.org.

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

About Quality Quest for Health of Illinois

Quality Quest for Health of Illinois is a non-profit regional health improvement collaborative working to transform healthcare in our state. The organization brings physicians, hospitals, health plans, employers, patients, and families together to focus on creating healthier communities with better patient outcomes. Data related to specific Quest projects is collected and publicly reported to the medical community and the public. The information helps providers compare their performance to peers and regional / national benchmarks and gives consumers data to make informed healthcare decisions. For more information, visit qualityquest.org. Find us on [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#), or [LinkedIn](#).

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