



For Immediate Release

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Quality Quest for Health Changes Strategic Focus to Community Health Improvement

Peoria City/County Health Department to serve as Administrative/Fiscal Agent

(PEORIA, March 26, 2013) – Quality Quest for Health of Illinois, a regional health improvement collaborative based in Peoria, is shifting its strategic focus toward community and population health.

“The Quality Quest Board of Directors has been involved in a strategic planning process for several months. We looked at the work of other collaboratives around the country and at three local community health assessments to determine how Quality Quest can have the greatest impact in our area,” said Dr. John Gilligan, board chairman. “With healthcare reform requiring hospitals and physicians to do more reporting and quality improvement, it made sense to transition our future efforts to a community health focus.”

Quality Quest will be partnering with the Peoria City/County Health Department (PCCHD) and the Heart of Illinois United Way to focus on population health improvement within a six-county area in central Illinois - Stark, Putnam, Marshall, Peoria, Woodford, and Tazewell.

“There is a need for coordinated efforts to improve community health and Quality Quest is known for its role as a neutral convener. The \$2.4 million federal Community Transformation Grant awarded to Quest on behalf of 18 collaborating organizations is a prime example of this convener role,” said Michael Stephan, HOI United Way President and Quest board member.

As a result of this partnership, Greg Chance, PCCHD Public Health Administrator, will serve as Managing Director of Quality Quest effective April 1 and the organization’s offices are moving to space at the Health Department, 2116 N. Sheridan Road in Peoria. Chance has stepped down from his role as a Quality Quest board member.

“The Peoria County Board of Health has advocated for a community health system approach to achieve population health improvement within the region. This partnership with Quality Quest represents a unique opportunity to maximize resources and focus commitment in the development and initiation of collaborative strategies to improve community health”, said Greg Chance, Public Health Administrator for the Health Department.

The recent 2013 *County Health Rankings* report and online data (www.countyhealthrankings.org) released by the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation (RWJF) and the University of Wisconsin Population Health Institute (UWPHI), examines the health and well-being of people living in nearly every county in the United States. In

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Illinois, that covers all 102 counties. The report examines 25 factors that influence health so that counties can see what is making residents sick or healthy, and how they compare to other counties in the same state. The chart below compares data from Marshall, Peoria, Putnam, Stark, Tazewell, and Woodford counties. The first line (Health Outcomes) shows where each county ranked in all health measures among Illinois counties.

Compare Counties in Illinois

	Illinois	Woodford (WF)	Tazewell (TA)	Stark (SR)	Putnam (PT)	Marshall (MN)	Peoria (PE)
Health Outcomes		3	29	48	58	64	66
Mortality		9	28	22	61	60	65
Premature death	6,604	5,057	6,035	5,887	7,481	7,370	7,612
Morbidity		3	32	81	55	65	62
Poor or fair health	15%	8%	12%				12%
Poor physical health days	3.4	2.1	3.5				3.3
Poor mental health days	3.3	2.0	2.8				2.8
Low birthweight	8.4%	6.5%	7.3%	9.6%	7.9%	8.5%	8.9%
Health Factors		3	13	32	18	17	73
Health Behaviors		27	25	60	4	18	78
Adult smoking	19%	19%	21%		7%		21%
Adult obesity	27%	29%	27%	30%	29%	26%	29%
Physical inactivity	25%	24%	28%	30%	29%	30%	26%
Excessive drinking	20%	19%	15%				20%
Motor vehicle crash death rate	10	13	9	23	24	21	10
Sexually transmitted infections	473	114	280	217	100	174	914
Teen birth rate	38	20	34	29	20	25	52
Clinical Care		4	10	36	94	57	7
Uninsured	16%	9%	10%	12%	13%	14%	12%
Primary care physicians	1,292:1	2,035:1	2,257:1	5,937:1	6,005:1	6,317:1	887:1
Dentists	1,630:1	6,614:1	2,609:1		3,004:1		1,635:1
Preventable hospital stays	75	60	74	80	106	68	65
Diabetic screening	84%	94%	88%	91%	81%	87%	87%
Mammography screening	65%	69%	66%	65%	56%	64%	64%
Social & Economic Factors		2	16	30	48	28	88
High school graduation	82%	88%	84%	90%	83%	88%	77%
Some college	66%	71%	69%	59%	56%	58%	66%
Unemployment	9.8%	7.0%	8.3%	9.7%	10.8%	8.8%	9.5%
Children in poverty	21%	9%	15%	16%	13%	17%	29%
Inadequate social support	21%	12%	15%				18%
Children in single-parent households	31%	17%	26%	22%	24%	23%	41%
Violent crime rate	486	37	266	131	67	89	664
Physical Environment		19	32	71	2	13	28
Daily fine particulate matter	12.3	11.9	11.9	11.7	11.9	11.9	11.7
Drinking water safety	3%	1%	1%	0%	0%	0%	0%
Access to recreational facilities	10	8	13	0	33	8	9
Limited access to healthy foods	4%	1%	9%	10%	0%	4%	7%
Fast food restaurants	50%	42%	46%			31%	43%

“When we look at the most recent results of the *County Health Rankings*, we see there is plenty of opportunity for improvement and we believe Quality Quest can contribute to the efforts that are already underway,” said Gilligan.

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