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**For Immediate Release:** November 4, 2010

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## **\$4 Million in Obesity Prevention Funding to be Awarded in Suburban Cook County**

*Officials bring the fight against obesity home to the local level with the Model Communities program.*

Today, officials from the Cook County Department of Public Health (CCDPH) and the Public Health Institute of Metropolitan Chicago (PHIMC) are announcing the availability of \$4 million in funding for local efforts to combat obesity in suburban Cook County.

Funding for the Model Communities program is made possible by the Communities Putting Prevention to Work (CPPW) grant that was awarded from the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention to CCDPH and PHIMC in March 2010. Successful applicants from local governments, community organizations such as faith based institutions and healthcare settings, and schools serving suburban Cook County will receive funding between \$25,000 and \$200,000 to advance their proposed local initiatives focused on making it easier for individuals and families to make healthier choices.

“Today’s announcement is part of a nationwide effort aimed at curbing the obesity epidemic by focusing on community-level change,” said CCDPH chief operating officer Stephen A. Martin, Jr., Ph.D., M.P.H. “The Model Communities program is aimed at transforming community and school environments to support healthy eating and active living. The goal of the funding is to make local-level policy, system and environmental changes that result in increasing access to healthy foods, making unhealthy foods less available, and creating safe places to be physically active.”

Obesity is one of the largest epidemics in suburban Cook County. Poor nutrition, physical inactivity, and lack of healthy options in the places people live, work, and play contribute to the burden of obesity. The condition of obesity carries a huge price tag. According to a report from United Health Foundation, the American Public Health Association and Partnership for Prevention, obesity costs the State of Illinois about \$3.5 million a year in direct health care costs.

To download the Model Communities Request for Proposal (RFP), to learn about upcoming RFP information sessions for potential applicants and to see important application deadlines, please visit: [www.cookcountypublichealth.org](http://www.cookcountypublichealth.org) and click on the RFP link under *Important CPPW Links*. For more information, contact CPPW staff via email at [cppw@phimc.org](mailto:cppw@phimc.org) or call 708-524-5156.

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