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COOK COUNTY DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC HEALTH SELECTED FOR NATIONAL HEALTH & WELLNESS INITIATIVE FOR SUBURBAN COOK COUNTY
ACHIEVE Initiative Fuels Community-Based Approach to Combat Chronic Diseases

The Cook County Department of Public Health (CCDPH) has been selected to become part of Action Communities for Health, Innovation, and EnVironmental Change (ACHIEVE). The purpose of ACHIEVE is to bring together local leaders and stakeholders to build healthier communities by promoting policy, systems, and environmental change strategies that focus on physical activity, nutrition, tobacco cessation, obesity, diabetes, and cardiovascular disease. For suburban Cook County, the ACHIEVE project will be a catalyst in building a foundation of community leadership and engagement to strategically address the prevention of chronic diseases.

Out of 127 applications from local health departments, CCDPH was one of 10 sites selected to work directly with the National Association of County and City Health Officials (NACCHO). The agency joins 42 other newly funded sites from around the country to advance community leadership in the nation's efforts to prevent chronic diseases and related risk factors through a locally collaborative approach. This initiative is supported by five national organizations that will support ACHIEVE communities: the National Association of Chronic Disease Directors (NACDD), the National Recreation and Park Association (NRPA), the Society of Public Health Education (SOPHE) and the YMCA of the USA (Y-USA).

“The burden of chronic diseases in our country cannot be ignored. According to the CDC, chronic diseases account for 70% of all deaths in the U.S. and are among the most common and costly health problems,” said CCDPH chief operating officer, Stephen A. Martin, Jr., Ph.D., M.P.H. “Our health department is excited about the opportunity to coordinate with other key stakeholders and partners to develop a comprehensive plan to address chronic disease in suburban Cook County.”

The ACHIEVE project in suburban Cook County will combine public health expertise from CCDPH with the ideal experience of AgeOptions, the Area Agency on Aging for suburban Cook County which has a national reputation for working with a comprehensive network of community based senior service organizations that outreach to older persons, provide access to benefit programs, and provide home and community based senior services. CCDPH and AgeOptions will work with partners to develop a community action plan, addressing all age groups and aimed at increasing access to healthy food options, as well as opportunities for people to be physically active.

The challenges in addressing chronic disease in the communities of suburban Cook County are vast. To address the challenges, CCDPH and AgeOptions have received support from agencies such as the Active Transportation Alliance, the American Heart Association, the Center for Faith & Community Health Transformation, the Consortium to Lower Obesity among Chicago's Children, the Department of Health and Human Services, the Regional Office of Education and the Respiratory Health Association of Metropolitan Chicago.

To learn more about the ACHIEVE project in suburban Cook County, please call 708-492-2000. To view a list of other U.S. communities participating in ACHIEVE, please visit www.achievecommunities.org.