

BHWV Receives Funding From Anthem Blue Cross and Blue Shield Foundation

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Better Health Wabash Valley Receives Funding from Anthem Blue Cross and Blue Shield Foundation for Pomeroy Wellness Program

(Terre Haute, IN) Today, Better Health Wabash Valley (BHWV) announced funding of a major community wellness program, "Pomeroy Wellness Program: A Heart Healthy Model for Better Health in the Wabash Valley," by the Anthem Blue Cross and Blue Shield Foundation.

Saint Mary-of-the-Woods College (SMWC) and The Maple Center for Integrative Health are the major beneficiaries of the program which will bring \$100,000 to provide a comprehensive wellness pilot program focusing on healthy lifestyle that improves coronary health in residents of western Vigo County.

"Today's announcement is very exciting not only for the population which will be directly impacted, but also for the solid foundation this builds for the entire Better Health Wabash Valley initiative," stated Ken Brengle, President/CEO, Terre Haute Chamber of Commerce. "Our many thanks to not only the Anthem Blue Cross and Blue Shield Foundation for their contribution to our community, but also to Dr. Dottie King and Saint Mary-of-the-Woods College, as well as Dr. Kathy Stienstra and The Maple Center for Integrative Health, for putting together such a solid pilot program which BHWV can continue to build upon."

BHWV is an initiative of the Terre Haute Chamber of Commerce and has been charged with identifying the health needs that are most pressing in the Wabash Valley and helping to identify and develop programming to improve the overall health of the community. In conjunction with two of the area's largest healthcare providers, Regional Hospital and Union Hospital, BHWV developed the Community Health Needs Assessment (CHNA) which includes a detailed, statistical analysis of wellness-related data from six Indiana counties: Clay, Greene, Parke, Sullivan, Vermillion and Vigo. With this tool, BHWV has identified the three most serious health needs of our community: obesity and childhood obesity, tobacco usage and cardiovascular disease.

"Saint Mary-of-the-Woods College is pleased to bring wellness programming to western Vigo County and explore community partnerships that will focus on living a healthier lifestyle," stated Dottie King, Ph.D., President, Saint Mary-of-the-Woods College. "We feel a social responsibility to our residents on and off campus, and find ourselves extremely grateful for Anthem Blue Cross and Blue Shield Foundation's partnership and dedication to focusing on better health practices for adults and children. The most recent survey provided by Better Health Wabash Valley and the Community Health Needs Assessment indicates western Vigo County as one of the least healthy sections of our community; we must address this reality for the good of our community."

The Pomeroy Wellness Program will begin in fall 2014.

“With the financial support of this Anthem Blue Cross and Blue Shield Foundation grant, the Maple Center for Integrative Health is thrilled to be joining St Mary-of-the-Woods College and the other Better Health Wabash Valley Chamber partners in 2014 to provide low cost healthy lifestyle education for adults and children that is able to prevent, arrest and reverse chronic illnesses like heart disease, diabetes, high blood pressure, obesity, gout, etc.,” stated Dr. Kathaleen Steinstra, MD, Board Chair of the Maple Center for Integrative Health.

Additional community entities participating in this project will include, Union Hospital, Terre Haute Children's Museum and Terre Haute YMCA. The project will serve as a pilot for BHWV members to implement other wellness activities across a six-county region.

"Improving the health of an entire region is no small undertaking, but we believe Better Health Wabash Valley has developed a strategy for success," said Lance Chrisman, executive director of the Anthem Blue Cross and Blue Shield Foundation. "We're proud to work together with the coalition not only to offer affordable and accessible health programs to residents, but to empower them to reduce their risk for heart disease and other chronic conditions through a healthy, active lifestyle."

BHWV was established in 2009 and includes support from Regional Hospital and Union Hospital, as well as: Sullivan County Community Hospital, Hamilton Center, Inc. and United Way of the Wabash Valley.

“We are very thankful to the Anthem Blue Cross and Blue Shield Foundation. We hope this program for the West Terre Haute area, where 20% of children live in poverty and which currently has no centralized program or facility for adults, will be the springboard for additional efforts,” stated Mary Ann Conroy, CEO, Regional Hospital. “By offering activities and education that address major health concerns of the region, projects through Better Health Wabash Valley will lead to a healthier future for our communities.”

"This grant from the Anthem Blue Cross and Blue Shield Foundation allows Union Hospital along with Better Health Wabash Valley and its partners to make a true impact on the health needs of residents in western Vigo County," stated Dr. John Bolinger, DO, Vice President of Medical Affairs and Chief Medical Officer, Union Hospital. "This funding provides Union Hospital with the opportunity to offer valuable health screenings to the community including body mass index, blood glucose and cholesterol. Individuals can use the information from these screenings to make lifestyle changes that will improve their overall quality of life".

For more information about Better Health Wabash Valley, visit www.terrehautechamber.com. The full Community Health Needs Assessment can also be accessed from this website. For more information, contact Ken Brengle, President/CEO, at kbrengle@terrehautechamber.com or (812) 232-2391.

- See more at:

<http://www.terrehautechamber.com/news/newsarticledisplay.aspx?articleid=24#sthash.NTgCesPo.dpuf>