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Team from Rensselaer County Joins National Effort to Reverse the Obesity Epidemic

Part of Elite Group Participating in “Collaborate for Healthy Weight,” a Groundbreaking Initiative to Improve Obesity Prevention and Treatment in Local Communities

Rensselaer County, New York, March 1, 2012 – With obesity levels in the United States at all-time highs, Rensselaer County healthcare leaders are working together to make local improvements through “Collaborate for Healthy Weight,” a national effort to reverse the epidemic through innovative local partnerships between primary care providers, public health professionals, and leaders of community-based organizations. Rensselaer County is one of 50 locations across the country participating in this groundbreaking program that will bring solutions to the local community and share strategies on a broader scale. The effort is being led by the National Initiative for Children’s Healthcare Quality (NICHQ), in partnership with the Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA).

“We are delighted that NICHQ has selected our team from Rensselaer County to participate in this initiative based on our solid commitment to achieving healthy weight and health equity in our community,” said team leader Erin Sinisgalli, MPH, Co-Executive Director of the New York Public Health Association. “We look forward to sharing what we learn in this project with communities in other areas of the country.”

Along with New York Public Health Association, the cross-sectoral team also includes representatives from:

- Capital District Community Gardens
- New York State Healthy Eating and Physical Activity Alliance
- Seton Health Pediatrics
- New York State Department of Health- Healthy Heart Program

This project will focus on reaching underserved children and their families in Rensselaer County by targeting patients who receive care from Seton Health Pediatric Practice.

The 50 teams from across the country participating in the Collaborate for Healthy Weight initiative will learn from national experts, exchange ideas, and create plans for becoming best practice models for other communities to follow. The project will run through February 2013. To see a complete list of participating locations, go to: www.collaborateforhealthyweight.org/About/Collaborative/Meet-the-HWC-Teams.aspx.

“Obesity constitutes a grave threat to the health and well-being of our nation, with a

particularly strong impact on diverse and disadvantaged communities,” said Charles Homer, MD, MPH, president and CEO of NICHQ. He continued, “We are so proud of these communities that are laying the groundwork for tackling this complex and serious issue. As their work gets underway, these efforts will make a huge difference in the lives of children and their families across the nation.”

“Collaborate for Healthy Weight” is a two-phased project supported through the Prevention and Public Health Fund under the Affordable Care Act and made possible by a cooperative agreement from HRSA. NICHQ is leading a coalition of partner organizations that is managing all program logistics and overseeing the work of participating teams.

For more information about this initiative, visit www.collaborateforhealthyweight.org or www.NICHQ.org.

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