MEDIA ADVISORY

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Quincy/Weymouth Wellness Initiative to Testify at Informational Hearing on Prevention & Wellness Trust Fund

Who: The Quincy Weymouth Wellness Initiative, a coalition funded by the Prevention and Wellness Trust Fund, is one of two coalitions that have been invited to bring panels to testify about their local work before the Massachusetts Legislatures' Joint Commission on Public Health. **Quincy/Weymouth panel members include Cynthia Sierra, CEO of Manet Community Health Center, Karen Peterson, Association Director of Healthy Living for the South Shore YMCA and a PWTF community participant** who has benefitted from the programs. Also testifying :**Monica Bharel, Public Health Commissioner; Jim Hunt, Massachusetts League of Community Health Centers; Peter Doliber, Alliance of Massachusetts YMCA; and Stephanie Lemon, UMass Medical School and chair of PWTF Evaluation Committee**.

The public and media are invited to attend.

What: Informational Session on the Massachusetts Prevention and Wellness Trust (PWTF) Fund

When: 10 a.m., Tuesday, June 14, 2016
Where: State House, Rm. A2

Why: The Massachusetts Legislature's Joint Committee on Public Health will hold an informational session on the Massachusetts Prevention and Wellness Trust Fund (PWTF) to educate and update the committee members on the current work and progress of PWTF, which is entering its final year of funding.

The Prevention and Wellness Trust Fund was established by the Massachusetts Legislature in July 2012 (as part of health care cost containment legislation, Chapter 224) to challenge communities across the Commonwealth to reduce health care costs by stimulating community-based partnerships to work together to provide research-based interventions to prevent chronic health conditions. In January 2014, nine communities received PWTF grants, including the Quincy Weymouth Wellness Initiative, which includes Manet Community Health Center, South Shore Hospital, Granite Medical Group, the City of Quincy, Town of Weymouth, Bay State Community Services, Enhancing Asian Community on Health (EACH), South Shore Elder Services, South Shore Workforce Investment Board and South Shore YMCA. Together, the partnership has launched a variety of no-cost, evidence-based interventions and health education programs for Quincy and Weymouth residents that address the priority areas of diabetes, hypertension, falls prevention among older adults, tobacco, and substance abuse.

"The Prevention and Wellness Trust Fund has helped us to build an unprecedented partnership among clinical, community and municipal partners -- all working together to create the linkage between clinical and community resources to help prevent and control chronic diseases in our communities," says Sierra. "We are proud to share our successes and challenges and we are confident that the legislature will see the value and promise of PWTF programs and the potential for impact on health outcomes in the future."

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About Quincy Weymouth Wellness Initiative: *The Quincy Weymouth Wellness Initiative offers a variety of free wellness programs for residents of Quincy and Weymouth. Our goal is to improve the health of our communities by reducing the incidence and risk of hypertension, diabetes, falls in the elderly, tobacco use and substance abuse by using evidence based education programs and interventions. These programs are conducted by trained experts and are held in a multitude of clinical and community settings in Quincy and Weymouth. For more information go to: www.QuincyWeymouth.Wellness.org.*

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