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Quad City Health Initiative Provides Award Winning Wellness Materials to Local Employers

The Quad City Health Initiative has announced that it will be providing the electronic versions of its award winning *Choose Health. Live Well.* materials to local employers free of charge. The materials will be available through Genesis Occupational Health and Trinity Work Fitness.

"We are excited to continue our partnership with Genesis Occupational Health and Trinity Work Fitness," says Nicole Carkner, Project Coordinator, Quad City Health Initiative, "and we believe that the *Choose Health. Live Well.* educational materials complement the wellness services offered by both organizations."

The Wellness Champions of the Quad City Health Initiative want the community to *Choose Health. Live Well.* by making healthy decisions regarding diet and exercise. As part of this goal, the team has been working to raise awareness of the risk factors for cardiovascular disease with a specific emphasis on encouraging employers to address these issues in the workplace. Over the last year, the Wellness Champions of the Quad City Health Initiative have been developing and testing a series of educational messages meant to prevent cardiovascular disease. These messages encourage individuals to:

Move It. Accumulate at least 30 minutes of activity most days of the week.

Lose It. Eat well-balanced meals. Reduce calories if you are overweight.

Check It. Get regular checkups.

Know It. Know your numbers, blood pressure and cholesterol. If high, get them treated.

Quit It. If you smoke, stop.

Chill It. Improve your mental and spiritual health, control your stress.

With the help of advertising agency, Charleston-Orwig, Quad City Health Initiative translated these messages into posters, payroll stuffers and email formats that can be used at worksites to promote community wellness. Pilot tests of the messages conducted by Trinity Work Fitness and Genesis Occupational Health at Augustana College and Nichols Aluminum yielded strong recall rates for these messages and positive changes in employees' attitudes and behaviors towards wellness when the messages were used as part of a comprehensive worksite wellness program. In addition, the *Choose Health. Live Well.* materials have garnered two Gold and two Silver Addy awards from the Quad City Ad Federation as well as Bell Awards in Best of Division (employee communications) and Best of Show at the Milwaukee Business Marketing Association.

"We're very pleased to be able to offer employers these high quality resources for worksite wellness", says Tom McGovern, Co-Chair for the Wellness Champions team and Co-President of Cleaveland Insurance Group. "The number one concern of small and medium-sized business owners is the rising cost of health insurance. Helping employees to develop healthier lifestyles and habits can have a major impact on their physical health which translates into higher employee productivity, lower absenteeism and ultimately lower health care insurance costs."

Organizations interested in using the *Choose Health. Live Well.* materials at their worksites are encouraged to contact Amanda Hess of Genesis Occupational Health (563-324-0696) or Jo Nicholson of Trinity Work Fitness (563-742-5953). The materials can be previewed at www.charlestonorwig.com/C_O_health_initiative/chill_it.html.

In QCHI's 2002 Community Health Assessment, obesity, high blood pressure and high cholesterol (all risk factors for cardiovascular disease) emerged as critical issues for the health of our region. Since December 2002, the Wellness Champions team has been working to reverse these trends by promoting daily exercise, nutrition and regular screenings for health risk factors. The Wellness Champions team includes about 75 individual representatives from 52 organizations across the Quad City community. The Wellness Champions were previously known as the Wellness Warriors.

The Quad City Health Initiative (QCHI) is a community partnership in active pursuit of a healthier community. The Initiative seeks to be a catalyst for improving the health and overall quality of life within the Quad City community. The Initiative raises awareness of health issues, encourages or creates projects to address gaps in health services and fosters community collaboration in all aspects of health. Major financial sponsors of the Initiative are Trinity Regional Health System and Genesis Health System. Additional sponsorship in 2006 is provided by Royal Neighbors of America. For more information or to join the efforts of the Quad City Health Initiative, please call 563-421-2815 or visit our website at www.qchealthinitiative.org.

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