



For Immediate Release

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June 17, 2009

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QCHI Hosts Inaugural Service Trailblazing Session on Navigating Local Behavioral Health Resources for the Prenatal and Early Childhood Periods

Over 65 professionals attended today's Quad City Health Initiative *QC Hearts and Minds: Building Bridges* inaugural Service Trailblazing Session on Navigating Local Behavioral Health Resources for the Prenatal and Early Childhood Periods. The event examined how behavioral health problems manifest during early childhood and how staff can help families navigate local available resources. The event featured presentations by Mike Terry, LCSW, Child Trauma Services Supervisor, Child Abuse Council; Shelly Hawk, MS, Child Development Associates; and Anabel Flaherty, ARNP, Vera French Community Mental Health Center.

"Our goal for the session was to enhance communication among mental health service professionals," says Nicole Carkner, Project Coordinator for Quad City Health Initiative, "and to provide community-based orientation for other professionals regarding awareness and access to local mental health services."

"The event also generated discussion about gaps in local services and new ideas for how to improve local information and referral processes," says Matt Mendenhall of the Community Foundation of the Great River Bend, who volunteered as a facilitator for this event. "Through discussions like this we discover new ways to network and share resources."

The QC Hearts and Minds: Building Bridges team was created in June 2008 by the Quad City Health Initiative to 1) Increase the community's understanding of mental health and thus reduce the stigma associated with mental health care; 2) Preserve and increase access to care for persons with mental illness; and 3) Promote mental health as integral to our overall health and well-being. The team includes representatives from over 60 organizations across our community who are working to increase awareness of mental health issues.

The Quad City Health Initiative (QCHI) is a community partnership that works to create a healthy 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 financial support is provided in 2009 by Alcoa, McLaughlin Family Foundation, Cleaveland Insurance Group, Trinity Lutheran Church Endowment Fund, Orthopaedic and Rheumatology Associates and QCHI Board Members. For more information or to join the efforts of the Quad City Health Initiative, please call 563-421-2826 or visit our website at www.qchealthinitiative.org.

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