



NEWS RELEASE

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Regional Healthcare Transformation in Action

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
March 24, 2010

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GDAHC launches Diabetes Education for Employees at local worksites

Employers and health plans invest in on-site education

Detroit – The **Greater Detroit Area Health Council (GDAHC)** through its **Save Lives Save Dollars** program has launched the **Diabetes Self Management Education (DSME)** program at three southeast Michigan work sites. Employees of **General Dynamics Land Systems, Trinity Health** and **MGM Grand Detroit** are participating in this program that provides diabetes education in worksite and community settings.

The innovative program helps people with diabetes learn how to effectively manage their disease through in-depth educational and sharing sessions. Offered at a convenient time and location, participants learn how to control dangerous blood sugar levels with diet, exercise, self-monitoring and medication.

Despite the seriousness of complications, only about one half of people with diabetes receive formal training in what they must know to manage this life-long illness. “Our aim is to make it convenient for people to participate in learning sessions where they work and gather as a community,” said Vernice Davis Anthony, president and CEO, Greater Detroit Area Health Council. “By making DSME more readily available, more people with diabetes are able to learn what they need to do to better manage their care. This goes a long way in improving community health status and preventing many of the costly and common complications of diabetes such as heart disease and amputation.”

According to the American Association of Diabetes Educators, research shows that reducing harmful blood sugar levels for people with diabetes yields fewer absences, better job productivity and reduces the costly need for treatment by specialists and visits to the emergency department or hospital to deal with complications.

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, Michigan ranks 15th in the nation for type 2 diabetes prevalence. Data from the Michigan Department of Community Health shows diabetes ranked as the sixth leading cause of death in Michigan for 2006, accounting for 2,823 deaths (3.3% of all deaths) and was a contributory cause for another 5,812 deaths. The high cost of diabetes impacts multiple sectors of society through higher insurance premiums, reduced earnings through productivity loss, and reduced overall quality of life for people with diabetes and their families and friends. The total cost of diabetes for people in Michigan is estimated at \$6.5 billion in 2007, based on reports from the American Diabetes Association.

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GDAHC's DSME program was a collaborative effort. Preliminary work to establish the program was generously funded by grants from **Novo Nordisk** and **Sanofi Aventis**. **Blue Cross Blue Shield of Michigan** helped identify interested employer groups and agreed to cover the program costs on a pilot basis. **Health Alliance Plan** is participating at one worksite. The DSME program was developed by Rochester-based Medical Network One, which partners with GDAHC to deliver the program to employees.

For more information about the Diabetes Self Management Education program, contact GDAHC at 313-963-4990.

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About the Greater Detroit Area Health Council

The Greater Detroit Area Health Council is a regional health care coalition of more than 75 that provides leadership on health care quality, access for all people and cost in southeastern Michigan with an end result of improving community health status. The Health Council is a United Way agency. GDAHC Save Lives Save Dollars is an initiative of the Health Council that focuses on improving health care quality and decreasing health care costs.

About Medical Network One

Founded in 1981, Medical Network One and its chronic disease management division, The Michigan Institute for Health Enhancement, design, develop and deliver high-quality, cost-effective, chronic disease prevention and management programs and wellness programs in conjunction with physicians, nurses, allied health professionals, employers and corporate health partners. Additionally, Medical Network One offers administrative support services to physicians throughout Michigan and in Ohio. Learn more at www.mednetone.com or www.miteam.org.

About Blue Cross Blue Shield of Michigan

Blue Cross Blue Shield of Michigan, a nonprofit organization, provides and administers health benefits to 4.7 million members residing in Michigan in addition to members of Michigan-headquartered groups who reside outside the state. The company offers a broad variety of plans including: Traditional Blue Cross Blue Shield; Blue Preferred[®]; Community BlueSM and Healthy Blue IncentivesSM PPOs; Blue Care Network HMO; BCN Healthy Blue LivingSM; Flexible BlueSM plans compatible with health savings accounts; Medicare Advantage; Part D Prescription Drug plans, and MyBlueSM products in the under-age-65 individual market. BCBSM also offers dental, vision and hearing plans. Blue Cross Blue Shield of Michigan and Blue Care Network are nonprofit corporations and independent licensees of the Blue Cross and Blue Shield Association. For more company information, visit bcbsm.com.

About Health Alliance Plan

Health Alliance Plan is a nonprofit health plan headquartered in Detroit that serves approximately 500,000 members. A subsidiary of the Henry Ford Health System, the health plan serves individuals and companies of all sizes through the flagship HMO, PPOs, Medicare Advantage, Medicare Supplement and Part D Prescription Drug plans, SOLO plans for individuals, small business solutions and Health Engagement plans. The National Committee for Quality Assurance awarded HAP's commercial HMO and HAP Senior Plus Medicare Advantage HMO Excellent Accreditation. To learn more, visit www.hap.org.