



## **NEWS RELEASE**

### **FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

November 16, 2017

#### **Franklin County Public Health Receives \$523K for 3-Year Tobacco Cessation Efforts** ***What a way to celebrate the Great American Smokeout!***

Franklin County Public Health was awarded a \$523,434 a year grant from the Ohio Department of Health Community Cessation Initiative. Partner agencies include: Columbus Metropolitan Housing Authority; Columbus Public Health; Healthcare Collaborative of Greater Columbus; Kirwan Institute for the Study of Race and Ethnicity; Ohio Association of Community Health Centers; and, The Breathing Association.

As the lead agency for the Community Cessation Initiative, FCPH has the responsibility for organizing a county-wide effort to assess existing tobacco cessation assets and services in the community, identify gaps in the delivery of services or outreach of services and adopt evidence-based interventions aimed specifically at disparate populations. The grant will also include strategies to ensure cessation resources for all Franklin County residents.

"Franklin and the counties adjacent to us have the 2<sup>nd</sup> highest adult tobacco use rate in the state at 24.3 percent," says Franklin County Health Commissioner Joe Mazzola. "We know quitting tobacco is difficult and we hope to provide the added resources to assist anyone who has decided to take that step." Helping reduce the number of tobacco users in Franklin County is critical to the public's health."

The long-term objective of the grant is to increase by 15 percent the number of tobacco users that attempt to quit, with specific emphasis on pregnant women, individuals with mental health illness and individuals with low socioeconomic status.

The Franklin County Tobacco Free Collaborative co-chaired by Franklin County Public Health and Columbus Public Health, will serve as the coalition for this initiative by bringing together partners from several local agencies to develop and support tobacco cessation services. This collaborative partnership will ultimately coordinate and promote cessation services, create a referral system to refer patients to interventions and follow up to manage relapses after treatment is completed.

"The Healthcare Collaborative of Greater Columbus is excited to support this work and our partners with technology infrastructure, data collection and best practices to ensure optimal, tobacco free health for more residents in our community," said Healthcare Collaborative of Greater Columbus President and CEO, Carrie Baker.

Columbus Public Health will focus their efforts in the grant on moms and babies. "Smoke harms babies' brain development and makes them more likely to die while sleeping

which contributes to infant mortality," said Dr. Teresa Long Health Commissioner. "We are grateful for this opportunity to help improve the lives of both moms and babies through smoking cessation for pregnant women."

The Breathing Association will bring cessation services, education and support to help those who are trying to quit. "The Breathing Association is pleased to be part of this critical community health initiative," said Joanne Spoth, President & CEO.

"HUD has initiated a smoke-free policy on all of its public housing sites in 2018," shared Bryan Brown, Chief Operating Officer at the Columbus Metropolitan Housing Authority. "We look forward to working with FCPH by hosting a community health educator to help residents in their attempts to become smoke-free."

The federally qualified health centers in the region will intensify tobacco cessation efforts. Their practices are located in medically underserved areas, and provide care for populations with exceptionally high rates of tobacco use and health disparities. "We are happy to join so many partners that this grant brings together in order to achieve a significant collective impact on tobacco that surpasses what any of us could have done alone," said Dr. Ted Wymyslo, Chief Medical Officer, Ohio Association of Community Health Centers.

Franklin County Public Health chose this 3<sup>rd</sup> Thursday of November to announce this grant in order to help strengthen the message of the importance of being tobacco-free by helping to celebrate the American Cancer Society's Great American Smokeout. We also want to recognize their advocacy affiliate, the American Cancer Society Cancer Action Network, for leading the effort that restored the state's tobacco control funding during the last budget cycle. These efforts helped protect the resources needed to implement lifesaving cessation projects like the one being launched today.

*Franklin County Public Health would also like to thank these additional partners for their support in obtaining this Community Cessation Initiative Grant: ADAMH Board of Franklin County; Aetna Foundation; American Lung Association; Celebrate One; Central Ohio Hospital Council; Franklin County Board of Commissioners and the Ohio Public Health Association.*

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Data about tobacco use is available on the  
Franklin County Public Health Network of Care website at:  
[http://franklin.oh.networkofcare.org/indicator\\_maps/Ohio/Scope%20of%20Tobacco%20Use%20in%20Franklin%20County%20Ohio.html](http://franklin.oh.networkofcare.org/indicator_maps/Ohio/Scope%20of%20Tobacco%20Use%20in%20Franklin%20County%20Ohio.html)