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## **Dover Takes on the Escalating Diabetes Epidemic**

Bayhealth Medical Center and the American Diabetes Association, Delmar Region Partner with TCOYD and NMQF for the Diabetes Nation: America At Risk Listening Tour on Oct. 3

**DOVER, Del., Oct. 3, 2009** – As part of a national campaign to elevate diabetes as a national health priority, Bayhealth Medical Center and the American Diabetes Association, Delmar Region are participating in a listening tour hosted by Taking Control of Your Diabetes (TCOYD) and the National Minority Quality Forum (NMQF). As the numbers of people with uncontrolled diabetes escalate and billions of dollars continue to be spent in the healthcare system, the listening tour will focus on shifting the current dialogue to one that includes diabetes prevention, treatment and management to help elevate diabetes as a public health priority that requires urgent attention and action.

TCOYD and NMQF are hosting a series of town hall meetings across the country to examine what communities are doing to achieve blood sugar control, to improve the uncontrolled diabetes epidemic, and to identify programs that are working and those that are not. The Diabetes Nation: America At Risk listening tour will be at the Sheraton hotel in Dover on Oct. 3, 2009, from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m.

Working to inspire action and greater understanding, the Diabetes Nation: America At Risk listening tour brings this national public health issue to local communities to provide patients, policymakers and healthcare providers with the opportunity to work together towards better health outcomes.

“We are proud to represent Dover in driving conversations about diabetes impact and implications and to close the gap surrounding diabetes disease management,” said Darrin W. Anderson, Sr. Ph.D., C.S.C.S., Executive Director, American Diabetes Association, Delmar Region. “The ADA and Bayhealth Medical Center are committed to finding real solutions for helping improve uncontrolled diabetes and for identifying barriers that prevent patients from achieving blood sugar control.”

Diabetes is a chronic public health problem in the United States. According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, the number of Americans with diabetes more than quadrupled from 5.6 million in 1980<sup>[i]</sup> to 23.6 million people in 2007.<sup>[ii]</sup> Just two years later, the agency released statistics showing that nearly 24 million Americans were affected by diabetes—meaning nearly eight percent of the U.S. population had diabetes.<sup>[iii]</sup>

The ADA estimates the total annual cost of diabetes to be \$174 billion in 2007. Medical expenditures totaled \$116 billion and were comprised of \$27 billion for diabetes care, \$58 billion for chronic diabetes-related complications and \$31 billion for excess general medical costs. <sup>[iv]</sup>

“Diabetes has significant health consequences for individuals and communities, such as those that include African Americans, Latinos and Native Americans,” explained Gary A. Puckrein, Ph.D., president and chief executive officer of NMQF. “Individuals in those communities have much higher rates of diabetes-related complications and death. It’s time to take on the fight and break barriers in diabetes disparities.”

With a shift in dialogue, the listening tour will examine what various audiences are doing to achieve optimal blood sugar control and/or to help improve the epidemic of uncontrolled diabetes, and to identify programs that are working and those that are not. Participants will be able to assess how to incorporate prevention, early treatment and effective disease management as part of defining a new model to better serve those impacted by diabetes.

Convening in December in Washington, D.C., the outcomes of the listening tour will be presented at a National Conference on Diabetes to private and public stakeholders in an effort to control one of the most costly diseases, and come to an understanding that better disease management and awareness may improve quality of life.

“With healthcare reform on the agenda, it’s time, now more than ever, to tackle an escalating public health crisis such as diabetes, which has a monumental financial impact on our healthcare system,” said Steven V. Edelman, M.D., founder and director of TCOYD. “By getting diabetes under control, we can begin to understand how to effectively manage other chronic diseases and work towards a high-quality, cost-effective healthcare system.”

The Diabetes Nation: America At Risk listening tour features a town-hall setting with brief presentations followed by an interactive question and answer session. Participants will be able to share how diabetes impacts their lives and the tour will capture stories and feedback. At the event, participants will have the opportunity to talk with their representatives, local government officials and James Lenhard, M.D., F.A.C.E., F.A.C.P., president of the American Diabetes Association, Delmar Region.

### **About *Diabetes Nation: America At Risk* Listening Tour**

TCOYD and the NMQF are hosting a series of town halls across the country in September and October 2009. These events will convene a diverse group of healthcare providers, public health officials, patients, caregivers, advocates, community leaders and lawmakers. The goal is to examine what various audiences are doing to achieve optimal blood sugar control and/or to improve the epidemic of uncontrolled diabetes, and to identify programs that work and those that do not. The results of the listening tour will be leveraged to help make the case to private and public stakeholders for the need for a National Conference on Diabetes. [Diabetes Nation: America At Risk is funded by sanofi-aventis U.S. LLC.](#)

### **About Taking Control of Your Diabetes (TCOYD)**

Taking Control of Your Diabetes (TCOYD) is a not for profit organization dedicated to informing and empowering people with diabetes to become actively involved in their own healthcare. It does this through live national conferences, local events, publications, online resources and an educational television series. For more information, please visit <http://tcoyd.org/>.

### **About National Minority Quality Forum (NMQF)**

The National Minority Quality Forum (NMQF) is a nonprofit, nonpartisan research and educational organization dedicated to ensuring that high-risk racial and ethnic populations and communities receive optimal healthcare. The NMQF integrates data and expertise in support of initiatives to eliminate health disparities. For more information, please visit [www.nmqf.org/](http://www.nmqf.org/).

### **About Bayhealth Medical Center**

Bayhealth Medical Center, southern Delaware's largest healthcare system is comprised of Kent General and Milford Memorial Hospitals, Middletown Medical Center and numerous satellite facilities. Bayhealth is a technologically advanced not-for-profit healthcare system employing more than 2,900 with a medical staff of 455 physicians.

### **About the American Diabetes Association, Delmar Region**

The American Diabetes Association is leading the fight against the deadly consequences of diabetes and fighting for those affected by diabetes. The Association funds research to prevent, cure and manage diabetes; delivers services to hundreds of communities; provides objective and credible information; and gives voice to those denied their rights because of diabetes. Founded in 1940, our mission is to prevent and cure diabetes and to improve the lives of all people affected by diabetes. For more information please call the American Diabetes Association at 1-800-DIABETES (1-800-342-2383) or visit [www.diabetes.org](http://www.diabetes.org). Information from both these sources is available in English and Spanish.