

For Immediate Release

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## **YMCA DC ANNOUNCES A PROGRAM THAT WILL HELP PREVENT OR DELAY THE ONSET OF DIABETES**

**Individuals with prediabetes will learn how to adopt and maintain a healthy lifestyle with an evidence-based intervention**

**Washington, D.C., June 29, 2011** – The YMCA of Metropolitan Washington announced today its participation in an innovative program to reduce the burden of diabetes – one of the nation’s costliest chronic diseases. This announcement comes on the heels of a recent Centers for Disease Control and Prevention report that projects that as many as one in three adults in the United States could develop diabetes by the year 2050 if current trends continue.

The YMCA’s Diabetes Prevention Program (YDPP) is a group-based lifestyle intervention designed especially for people at high risk of developing type 2 diabetes, and has been proven to cut high-risk peoples’ chances of developing the disease by more than half. YMCA of the USA, the national resource office for the nation’s 2,700 YMCAs, is working with CDC, UnitedHealth Group and other organizations to expand the program to as many communities as possible nationwide. The program will be available to community members in the metropolitan Washington region beginning week of July 18, 2011.

“Providing support and opportunities that empower people to be healthy and live well is part of the YMCA’s charitable purpose,” said Irmina Ulysse, Director of YDPP. “The lifestyle choices learned through the YMCA’s Diabetes Prevention Program not only reduce risk for type 2 diabetes, but also create lifelong changes in the way that individuals approach health and well being.

According to an obesity report released by the D.C. Department of Health last year, there are more than 22 percent of adults living in D.C. with obesity, and 8.7 percent with obesity. In addition, more than 15 percent of all deaths in 2007 were attributed to lack of physical activity and poor diet. As an organization that is committed to healthy living, the Y is combining their resources with local organizations to combat these alarming statistics.

The YMCA’s Diabetes Prevention Program is based on the landmark Diabetes Prevention Program (DPP) led by the National Institutes of Health (NIH) and supported by CDC, which showed that with lifestyle changes and modest weight reduction, a person with pre-diabetes can prevent or delay the onset of type 2 diabetes by 58 percent.

Researchers at Indiana University School of Medicine were able to replicate the successful results of the national DPP with the YMCA of Greater Indianapolis. Unlike the national DPP research study, which was conducted with individuals one-to-one, the YMCA’s program is conducted in a group setting.

The research by the Indiana University researchers also demonstrated that the YMCA could effectively deliver a group-based lifestyle intervention for about 75 percent less than the cost of the original DPP. This research also highlighted the ability of the Y to take the program to scale nationally.

“We now have proof that lifestyle interventions delivered through community-based organizations such as the Y can save lives and health care dollars,” said Irmina Ulysse.

The goals of the YMCA’s Diabetes Prevention Program are to reduce and maintain individual weight loss by at least 7 percent and to increase physical activity to 150 minutes per week. In a group setting, a trained lifestyle coach helps participants learn skills for healthier lifestyles by healthy eating, increasing physical activity and other behavior modifications over the course of 16 core sessions. After the initial sessions, participants meet monthly for up to a year for added support in maintaining their lifestyle changes.

The YMCA is committed to making the program available to everyone in the community. All adults with a BMI over 24 and who have two additional risk factors or have been diagnosed with pre-diabetes are eligible.

The YMCA’s Diabetes Prevention Program is being offered as part of the Diabetes Prevention and Control Alliance (DPCA) – a subsidiary of UnitedHealth Group. DPCA is offering the program to insurers and employers who wish to make it available to those they insure. The program is also part of the CDC-led National Diabetes Prevention Program.

Call Irmina Ulysse, YDPP Director, at 202-862-9622, ext. 3171 or [Irmina.ulyse@ymcadc.org](mailto:Irmina.ulyse@ymcadc.org) for information about availability and eligibility requirements.

***About the YMCA of Metropolitan Washington***

*The YMCA of Metropolitan Washington (the Y) has been providing vital programs and services for local adults, children and families for nearly 160 years. The organization’s mission is to foster the spiritual, mental, and physical development of individuals, families, and communities according to the ideals of inclusiveness, equality and mutual respect for all. Last year alone, the Y impacted the lives of 265,000 people through its 17 branches and program centers in Washington, D.C., Northern Virginia and suburban Maryland. For more information, visit [www.ymcadc.org](http://www.ymcadc.org).*

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