



CAMPAIGN AGAINST DIABETES



Public Health Association of New York City

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

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Reversing the Diabetes and Obesity Epidemics in New York City

NEW YORK, NY – October 24, 2007 -- In the last 10 years, the number of New Yorkers that have been diagnosed with diabetes has increased by 250% and the death rate has nearly doubled. In the same time period the city's rates of obesity, a prime contributor to diabetes, have also skyrocketed. If present trends continue, these two epidemics threaten to undermine recent improvements in the city's health, to shorten the life span of New Yorkers, and to overwhelm the city's health care system. Only an aggressive, comprehensive and coordinated campaign to improve diets, encourage more physical activity and better manage diabetes can reverse these epidemics.

In a new report *Reversing the Diabetes and Obesity Epidemics in New York City*, the City University of New York Campaign Against Diabetes and the Public Health Association of New York City urge New York City to take action to confront this public health, economic and moral threat to New York City's future. The report describes the burden diabetes and obesity impose on all New Yorkers and recommends specific policy steps to improve access to healthy food, increase opportunities for physical activity and make preventive and disease management care for diabetes more available.

“Fortunately, much of the scientific knowledge needed to prevent diabetes and to help people make healthier food choices and exercise more is already known,” said Nicholas Freudenberg, Distinguished Professor of Public Health at City University of New York and the President of the Public Health Association of New York City. “Unfortunately, New York City still lacks a comprehensive and coordinated plan to put this knowledge into action so we can reverse the diabetes and obesity epidemics that threaten our city's future.”

Diabetes is currently the only major cause of death that is increasing in New York City and it further magnifies the socioeconomic and racial/ethnic disparities in health that characterize New York City. “By taking more forceful action against diabetes and obesity now,” noted PHANYC Executive Director Amy J. Schwartz, “New York City can improve the health of its children and significantly reduce the burden that poor health imposes on low income, Black and Hispanic, and older New Yorkers.”

The CUNY Campaign Against Diabetes is sponsored by the CUNY Chancellor's Office and the CUNY Urban Health Collaborative, an organization of CUNY health faculty, staff and students. The Campaign seeks to strengthen the capacity of City University to respond effectively to the diabetes and obesity epidemics.

The Public Health Association of New York City is the oldest and largest independent organization of public health professionals in the city and is the local affiliate of the American Public Health Association. Its *Agenda for a Healthy New York* advocates for policies to improve the well-being of New Yorkers and end socioeconomic and racial/ethnic disparities in health. Earlier this year, PHANYC released a report, *Steps to Get New Yorkers Moving: Policy Recommendations to Improve Physical Activity in New York City*. This report and more information on PHANYC is available at www.phanyc.org.

For more information or to schedule an interview on the report, contact:

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