

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
SEPTEMBER 14, 2009

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RESPIRATORY HEALTH ASSOCIATION®
of Metropolitan Chicago



Cook County Health & Hospitals System

Cook County and Respiratory Health Association Introduce Healthy Lungs Initiative media campaign

Campaign to promote "Not One More Cigarette" in African American & Hispanic communities

Cook County Health and Hospital Systems (CCHHS) and Respiratory Health Association of Metropolitan Chicago, is premiering a new media campaign as the latest outreach of the Healthy Lungs Initiative.

Launched in March 2008, the Healthy Lungs Initiative is a multi-year collaboration between CCHHS and Respiratory Health Association that uses Lung Health Educators to deliver asthma and COPD education as well as tobacco cessation counseling services. Lung Health Educators are deployed in multiple clinic sites throughout Cook County.

The new multimedia campaign targets African-American and Hispanic people who smoke and provides information about how to contact the Illinois Tobacco Quitline for assistance. The campaign includes TV and radio PSAs and billboards, which will run in various locations during the next thirteen weeks.

"The media campaign is a critical component of a multi-layered approach to reduce smoking rates in Cook County. Research shows this type of campaign can be particularly effective among minorities and low-income communities," said Joel Africk, President and CEO of Respiratory Health Association.

In addition to the positive health impacts, this project is also an economic win for the County.

"In Illinois, the economic burden of smoking-related medical costs is more than \$4 billion per year. That's about \$2,000 per smoker," said Cook County Board President Todd Stroger. "If the Healthy Lungs media campaign succeeds in getting as few as 200 people to quit smoking, the campaign will more than pay for itself by reducing smoking-related health care costs of individuals using the County Hospital System for their medical care."

In addition to Cook County Board President Todd Stroger and Respiratory Health Association CEO Joel Africk, others attending the press conference include:

Todd Stroger, Cook County Board President
David Goldberg, MD, Internal Medicine, Stroger Hospital, Steering Committee, Healthy Lungs Initiative
Roberto Maldonado, Alderman 26th Ward, former Cook County Commissioner
Dr. Robert Cohen, MD, Division Chair, Pulmonary & Critical Care Medicine, Stroger Hospital
Patients who have benefited from Healthy Lungs Initiative

The media campaign starts immediately and will be introduced during a news conference on September 15, 2009, 11:00 am in the lobby of Stroger Hospital, 1901 W. Harrison.

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Respiratory Health Association of Metropolitan Chicago (RHAMC) has been a local public health leader since 1906. Today the Association fights lung disease and promotes healthy lungs by supporting research, advocacy, and educational efforts on behalf of individuals and families affected by lung cancer, asthma, COPD (chronic bronchitis and emphysema), and other lung diseases. For more information, visit www.lungchicago.org.

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