



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

First Year Success: Collaboration for Equitable Health Builds Momentum in Washington, DC

(Nationwide, U.S.) – The Collaboration for Equitable Health is proud to announce a successful first year in Washington, DC, building momentum toward improving community health. The collaboration, a combined effort of the American Heart Association®, the American Cancer Society®, the American Diabetes Association® (ADA), and the University of Michigan School of Public Health, powered by Bank of America, remains committed to driving change in health outcomes in DC.

This nationwide initiative, operating in 11 key U.S. cities, works hand-in-hand with DC communities to tackle long-standing health disparities impacting Black, Hispanic/Latinx, Asian American, and Native American communities. The collaboration’s concerted efforts have already begun to make waves, with the first year’s progress as a testament to the power of unity and collaboration.

Over the past 12 months, the collaboration has built a robust team of dedicated professionals, with 20 new staff members hired across partner organizations, underscoring the commitment to deploying the best expertise to address health disparities. Through numerous community listening and strategy sessions, collaboration partner teams are ensuring the voices of community members are heard and their insights shape collaboration work. This community-driven approach defines the collaboration’s commitment to equitable health solutions.

“With 188 leaders and partners from a range health and community organizations, we are fostering powerful collaborations across 11 cities, particularly in the DC area,” said Larry Di Rita, President, Bank of America, Greater Washington DC. “The combined strength of all the partners is aimed at making meaningful change in health outcomes across diverse communities.”

In Washington, DC, the ADA took action to better understand the challenges faced by local communities by holding two transformative community forums and analyzing ZIP Code-level data. The discussions held with community members revealed the lack of health education and physical activity programs in many schools. A data analysis of DC revealed that in Ward 8,



diabetes prevalence is 13.5%¹, compared to the city average of 7.7%². In response, the ADA has developed a meaningful partnership with Horton's Kids, a community-based organization working to drive positive change in the lives of 600 children and their families living in Department of Housing and Urban Development Section 8 housing complexes in Washington DC's Ward 8. These communities—known as Wellington Park and Stanton Oaks—are two of the most economically disadvantaged communities in Ward 8, where the percentage of residents living below 200% of the federal poverty level range between 47.4 and 50.6%³.

Horton's Kids works to overcome barriers and even the playing field by providing comprehensive academic, social-emotional, health and wellness, and family and community engagement support. In response to the needs expressed by community members during the advocacy community forum, the ADA's partnership with Horton's Kids will center around implementing the ADA's Project Power for adults.

Project Power empowers families to embrace healthier choices to reduce their risk for developing type 2 diabetes or learn to manage and thrive with type 2 diabetes. In partnership with Horton's Kids Health and Wellness Department, the ADA's hope is that adults and caregivers become better educated about diabetes and feel empowered to embrace and promote healthy lifestyle choices within their families and communities so they can live long, healthy lives.

“Far too often, Black and Brown families are impacted by diabetes. This partnership will allow Horton's Kids to have a hand in teaching, supporting, and advocating for families that are far too often dealing with this disease,” said Shandell Richards, chief program officer for Horton's Kids. “Every community session is not just a step forward, but a testament to the momentum we're building towards a healthier, more equitable future.”

¹ PLACES (2022). Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. <https://www.cdc.gov/places>. Accessed April 3, 2023.

² Department of Population Health, NYU Langone Health (2023). City Health Dashboard. <https://www.cityhealthdashboard.com/DC/Washington/metric-detail?metricId=6&dataPeriod=2020>

³ Health Resources and Services Administration [2023]. UDS Mapper (Web Application). <http://www.udsmapper.org>. Accessed April 3, 2023.



Identifying and partnering with more than 90 on-the-ground nonprofits and community health clinics as grant recipients, the collaboration invests directly in disease-specific interventions at a grassroots level. This approach ensures that resources are targeted where they are most needed, supporting the communities at the heart of the collaboration's mission for health equity.

Moving into its second year, the Collaboration for Equitable Health remains dedicated to its commitment to fostering healthier futures in DC and across the U.S.

For more information about the Collaboration for Equitable Health, visit collaborationforequitablehealth.org.

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About Collaboration for Equitable Health

The American Heart Association®, the American Cancer Society®, the American Diabetes Association®, and the University of Michigan School of Public Health will specifically focus on the leading causes of death in communities of color—**heart disease, cancer, stroke, and diabetes**—and improving health outcomes more broadly. This four-year initiative, launched in 11 cities, is tailored to meet the needs of each community based on collected data.