Communications Toolkit

Overview of Toolkit

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This toolkit has been prepared for your use in crafting a news release and social media posts for your organization's announcement of its participation in the Healthiest Cities and Counties Challenge. The contents of this toolkit can be used as a resource to creatively plan announcing your involvement in the Challenge and will highlight features that exist on Twitter, Facebook and Instagram that can be used to curate unique social media content. This toolkit also provides sample newsletter, social media, and announcement teaser blurbs, in addition to a sample news release for your local community. These sample posts can be copied entirely or can be edited to match the voice of your community's project. Good luck in getting the word out!

Twitter Checklist:

☐ Build an audience by following accounts related to your project and following accounts that are already following you.

☐ Use images/pictures/GIFs to increase visibility and interest.

☐ Use the hashtag #Communities4Health in order to be promoted simultaneously with others discussing the Challenge. This will also make it easier for the public to find your tweets.

☐ Link the www.healthiestcities.org website to your tweets to make the Challenge website accessible for those who want to learn more.

☐ Use the "@" button to tag your community partners so that other users can be linked directly to their pages as well.

☐ Like, retweet, and comment on other tweets that are related and/or promote the Challenge to increase the total outreach of all projects. Interaction is key!

☐ Respond to people's questions in a timely manner.

☐ Take notice of those following your community partners and give them a follow to increase your audience.

Facebook Checklist:

☐ Create a Facebook event page to advertise the launch of your project and to create notable dates/reminders. You can also use this feature to "invite" your community partners to your events.

☐ Use the #Communities4Health hashtag to take advantage of the algorithm that links together other posts that use that hashtag.

☐ Link the www.healthiestcities.org website to all of your posts so that viewers can be directed to the site for more information regarding the Challenge.

☐ Tag using the "@" and send friend requests to all community partners in your posts, so that the public can view their page and see their involvement.

☐ Use the Facebook ad feature in order to target and reach specific audiences.

☐ Continuously use images/graphics/logos in your posts that promote the Challenge and provide a visual.

☐ Take note of who has already interacted with your community partners and connect with them.

Instagram Checklist:

☐ Follow other accounts that are either community partners or organizations involved in funding, managing, or participating in the Challenge.

☐ Instagram is all about visuals, so it's key that your posts include images/photos/videos/graphics that effectively communicate the overarching message of your post.

☐ Continuously use the hashtag #Communities4Health in your posts to help grow your outreach and direct users to your posts when they search that hashtag.

☐ Link the www.healthiestcities.org website to all of your posts so that users can have access to the Challenge website and additional information.

☐ Use the "tag" feature in your posts to link your followers to groups and organizations you are partnering with.

☐ Like and comment on other posts relating to and/or promoting the Challenge, as this will increase the outreach and audience size of these posts.

☐ Use the "story" feature to repost and tag content from other accounts on your profile. The "story" feature allows you to post your own or someone else's content for a total of 24 hours, so this may be an ideal way to quickly release information.

Sample Newsletter Blurbs

1. [Lead Partner] is proud to partner with [list partners] in the new Healthiest Cities and Counties Challenge, an initiative of the Aetna Foundation in collaboration with the American Public Health Association and National Association of Counties (NACo). Visit the Healthiest Cities & Counties Challenge site to learn more about our plans to improve health equity in [city/county].

2. [Lead Partner] is proud to announce its participation in the new Healthiest Cities and Counties Challenge, an initiative of the Aetna Foundation, in collaboration with the American Public Health Association and National Association of Counties (NACo). Linked with [Lead Partner] and [Other Partners], community residents will work to advance health equity in [city/county] through improved access to food that promotes health and access to health services. Learn more about our project on the Challenge website.

Sample Social Media Posts

Twitter

@LeadPartner and @OtherPartners received a $100,000 Healthiest Cities and Counties Challenge grant award to advance health equity in [community] thanks to support from @Aetna, @PublicHealth, and @NACoTweets. To learn more about the Challenge and project teams, visit www.healthiestcities.org. #Communities4Health

Tweet

Twitter (cont'd.)

@LeadPartner and @OtherPartners are to work alongside community residents to advance health equity in [community] through the Healthiest Cities and Counties Challenge. The $100k award funded by @Aetna comes with support from the @PublicHealth and @NACoTweets. To learn more about the Challenge and the project team, visit www.healthiestcities.org. #Communities4Health.

Tweet

Facebook

Create Post ✕

@LeadPartner and @OtherPartners will use a $100,000 grant award through the Healthiest Cities and Counties Challenge to improve access to foods that promote health and reliable health services in [community]. Our team was selected from a pool of 100 applicants in 12 eligible states to participate in the Challenge. Thanks to @AmericanPublicHealthAssociation, @Aetna, and @NACoTweets for supporting our project. To learn more about the Challenge and what the project team will be doing to advance health equity in [community], visit www.healthiestcities.org.

📹 Create Room   🖼 Photo/Video   👥 Tag Friends   •••

✓ 🔲 News Feed   🌐 Public ▾

○ Your Story   👥 Friends ▾

Post

Facebook (cont'd)

Create Post ✕

Out of a pool of 100+ applicants, @BlankLeadPartner, and @OtherPartners were recently awarded $100k as part of the Healthiest Cities and Counties Challenge. With support from the @Aetna, @AmericanPublicHealthAssociation, and @NACoDC, we will work to advance health equity in [community] by improving access to foods and health services. To learn more about the Challenge projects, visit www.healthiestcities.org. #Communities4Health

Create Room | Photo/Video | Tag Friends | ...

✓ News Feed — Public ▾

○ Your Story — Friends ▾

Post

Instagram

Caption OK

The Healthiest Cities and Counties Challenge, supported by @AmericanPublicHealth, @Aetna, and @NACo, tips off with @LeadPartner and @OtherPartners being selected as one of the 20 teams awarded a $100,000 grant to advance health equity in their city or county. The [city/county]-based team plans to empower community residents to lead in improving access to health services and food that promotes health. To learn more about the Challenge, our project, and the 20 selected teams, visit www.healthiestcities.org. #Communities4Health

Instagram (cont'd)

Caption   OK

Selected out of 100+ applicants, @LeadPartner and @OtherPartners were awarded a $100k as part of the Healthiest Cities and Counties Challenge, supported by @AmericanPublicHealth, @Aetna, and @NACo. Learn more about the Challenge, the project teams, and their plans to advance health equity: www.healthiestcities.org

TIP: Either include the HCCC logo, or an image relating to your specific project cohort/team

Announcement Teasers

"A big announcement is coming soon from @LeadPartner and @OtherPartners regarding a future community partnership challenge, stay tuned! #Communities4Health"

"@Leadpartner and @OtherPartners have an exciting announcement coming on July 15th about their participation in a challenge to advance health equity in [city/county], stay tuned! #Communities4Health"

"3 more days left until our big announcement! Exciting news pertaining to how our community is advancing health equity is coming your way soon. Follow #Communities4Health"

News Release Template

Date: July 15, 2020

[Organization name] and partners awarded $100,000 Aetna Foundation grant to advance health equity in [name of city/county]

Washington, D.C., July 15, 2020 — [Organization name] today announced it has been selected to receive a grant as part of the Healthiest Cities & Counties Challenge, a program funded by the Aetna Foundation, together with the American Public Health Association (APHA) and the National Association of Counties (NACo), supporting communities that are changing the way they work together across sectors to reduce disparities in chronic disease outcomes.

"Access to health care and healthy food, as well as other social determinants of health, can significantly impact rates of chronic disease and other health outcomes, with average life spans varying by up to 20-30 years in communities that are just a few miles apart," said Eileen Howard Boone, President of the Aetna Foundation. "We are proud to partner with APHA and NACo to support the work of [ORGANIZATION NAME] to drive change and address these social determinants of health – work that is now more important than ever, given the COVID-19 pandemic."

[Organization name] is leading one of the 20 teams chosen to participate in the Challenge. The team will receive $100,000 to take action to change the [food access/health care] systems in [name of city/county] and engage community residents as leaders in their work. In addition to the funding, [lead partner] and their partners will participate in one-on-one technical assistance provided by [APHA/NACo] and a supportive peer-learning network led by Healthy Places by Design over the course of the two years.

The project team that will lead the initiative in [name of city/county] includes:

- Partner 1
- Partner 2
- Partner 3
- Etc.

The team will take steps to advance health equity in [name of target neighborhood/city/county] where individuals are disproportionately impacted by health disparities compared to other [neighborhoods/cities/counties] in the [city/county/state]. Proposed strategies for the project in [name of city/county] include [list strategies].

"There is no one-size-fits-all approach to achieving health equity," APHA Executive Director Georges C. Benjamin, MD explains. "Successful, lasting change comes from cross-sector partnerships and engaging affected individuals and communities, which is why this challenge is so powerful. Together, communities in the Healthiest Cities & Counties Challenge will be able to achieve enduring transformations to public health."

NACo President Mary Ann Borgeson adds, "Counties play an essential role in protecting, promoting and improving health in our communities across the country. The Healthiest Cities & Counties Challenge recognizes the positive impact of cross-sector partnerships and offers opportunities for counties to develop innovative approaches to meet residents' health needs."

News Release Template (cont'd)

The Healthiest Cities & Counties Challenge will award a total of $2 million to teams of organizations that will work together to change the food access and health care systems in their communities and engage community residents as leaders in their work.

An expert review panel selected the team following a rigorous review process which looked at a variety of factors including: level of innovation of their proposed approaches, intended impacts on systems and policy change and alignment of diverse partners around common priorities. Check out the full list of grantee organizations and their community partners.

The Aetna Foundation, which first launched the Healthiest Cities & Counties Challenge in partnership with APHA and NACo in 2016, is an independent, charitable and philanthropic affiliate of CVS Health.

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CONTACT:

[Organization name], MEDIA CONTACT

Extra Promotional Tips:

☐ Send messages to and tag any organization related to your project and establish communication with them. Ask them to share your content and inform them that your organization will be willing to do the same for them. This will get organizations beyond community partners and related to your cause invested in and interacting with your work.

☐ Post content that highlights people involved in your project/event; visual testimonials get more people engaged.

☐ Create a promotion schedule. Space out your posts, make sure they are consistent and that the content isn't repetitive.

☐ Conduct a social media countdown a few days before the launch of your project.

☐ If the social media platform you are using has a live feature option, use it! Conducting a live video announcement will enable you to talk about your project in greater detail and answer your follower's questions.

☐ Link to your project page from the HCCC website in your news release.