



OFFICE OF THE MAYOR  
CITY OF CHICAGO

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**MAYOR EMANUEL ANNOUNCES CDPH EXPANDING INNOVATIVE HEART SCREENING PROGRAM TO FOUR MORE NEIGHBORHOODS**

*Nearly 11,000 at risk residents screened in first year of program*

Mayor Rahm Emanuel, the Chicago Department of Public Health (CDPH) and its partners, including GE Foundation, announced today they will expand the innovative [Keep Your Heart Healthy](#) program to four new neighborhoods in the coming year. Keep Your Heart Healthy was launched last year to identify Chicago residents most at risk for developing heart disease, to provide them with health screening services and to connect them to appropriate primary care.

In its first full year, close to 11,000 residents were screened, many of whom would not have received care otherwise.

“Keep Your Heart Healthy is a program that provides more residents in neighborhoods throughout Chicago access to the education and health services they need to live the best lives possible,” said Mayor Emanuel. “I encourage the expansion of this program to a larger number of underserved communities, and I applaud the effective cross-sector collaboration that has allowed Keep Your Heart Healthy to become such a success.”

Keep Your Heart Healthy currently has programs in Humboldt Park, North Lawndale, South Chicago, Douglas and Lower West and will expand services to Austin, Garfield Park, Bronzeville and Roseland.

“Cardiovascular disease is the leading cause of death in Chicago, but most disease is preventable with the right lifestyle changes,” said CDPH Acting Commissioner Julie Morita, M.D. “Keep Your Heart Healthy is already making a difference in the lives of thousands of Chicagoans, and with this expansion we expect to make a difference for thousands more.”

The initiative has three main components to reduce risk for heart disease: identify individuals most at risk for developing heart disease; connect individuals to medical care through referrals; and educate and support individuals to make healthy choices including changes in diet, exercise and other areas to reduce their risk for heart disease.

As part of the program, medical students collaborate with community-based organizations to conduct weekly health screenings, which builds community-level capacity by improving the skills of community health workers.



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“We are extremely excited to see the continued success and expansion of Keep Your Heart Healthy to new neighborhoods in Chicago. This program can have a dramatic impact in identifying unmet health needs in underserved communities, and is a terrific example of the power of academic, public health and private sector partnerships to improve the health of our communities,” said Dr. Donald Lloyd-Jones, Senior Associate Dean of Northwestern’s Feinberg School of Medicine, one of the academic partners in Keep Your Heart Healthy.

During 2014, Keep Your Heart Healthy screened and educated 10,692 Chicagoans for heart disease. Of those, 46 percent – or 4,918 individuals – were identified as at risk for developing heart disease and 23 percent, or 1,131 of those individuals, did not have a medical home.

The initial Health Chicago Initiative program was first piloted in 2013, in conjunction with the GE Foundation, focusing on evidence-based interventions for cardiovascular disease risk. The program interventions included community-based health screenings, outreach, referrals to Federally Qualified Health Centers (FQHCs) and follow-up and educational programs. In 2014, CDPH launched the full Keep Your Heart Healthy program in partnership with the GE Foundation, based upon a \$2.2 million grant.

“Through our Developing Health program, the GE Foundation focuses on enabling access to quality care in underserved communities. We applaud the success of the Keep Your Heart Healthy program in Chicago,” said Deb Elam, President of the GE Foundation and Chief Diversity Officer, GE. “With the help of community based organizations this program addresses a key challenge in the community by identifying those at risk, and pairing them with the primary care and health education necessary to reduce the incidence of debilitating cardiovascular disease.”

Additionally through the Developing Health program, a local team of GE Chicago employees partners with designated health centers to offer skill-based volunteer support across a broad range of areas, from process improvements and simplification, to marketing programs and leadership coaching.

Keep Your Heart Healthy has established partnerships with several community organizations. Purple Binder, a Chicago based health information technology startup, will train community health workers and health professional students to use tablets and/or smartphones to connect residents at risk to appropriate community and social services suggested at the screening event. HIGI, a technology partner, will work with CDPH to deploy kiosks at multiple community based organizations so screened residents can receive additional blood pressure readings along with other wellness information. These screenings will result in personalized risk scores and suggestions for follow-up. This data will be shared with CDPH and the community-based organization where the initial screening occurs in the event an intervention is needed before the clinic appointment.

Keep Your Heart Healthy is part of CDPH’s [Healthy Chicago, Healthy Hearts](#) action plan, which represents a new approach to public health interventions by creating partnerships between



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government, academia, community based organizations and the private sector. Healthy Chicago, Healthy Hearts takes a national strategy and localizes it to Chicago. CDPH was awarded the [Heart Healthy Stroke Free Award](#) in 2014 by the National Forum for Heart Disease and Stroke Prevention as a result of Keep Your Heart Healthy and other initiatives outlined in the action plan.

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