



Omoiye Kinney
YMCA of Philadelphia & Vicinity
215-963-3710
okinney@philaymca.org

Meagan Sloan
Brownstein Group
267-218-4172
msloan@brownsteingroup.com

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

YMCA of Philadelphia & Vicinity Offering Program to Keep Those with Prediabetes Healthy

The YMCA of Philadelphia & Vicinity, as part of its mission to support healthy living and strong communities, has launched a new program focused on reducing the burden of diabetes in the Greater Philadelphia area and assisting those at high risk to improve their overall health and well-being.

Philadelphia, PA – June 24, 2012 - The YMCA of Philadelphia & Vicinity is taking steps to reduce the burden of diabetes in the Greater Philadelphia area by offering the YMCA's [Diabetes Prevention Program](#) – an innovative program proven to reduce the risk of type 2 diabetes in those at high risk of developing the disease by helping them take steps that will improve their overall health and well-being.

The YMCA's Diabetes Prevention Program provides a supportive environment where participants work together in a small group to learn about healthier eating, and increasing their physical activity in order to reduce their risk for developing diabetes. The evidence-based program is delivered over a 12-month period, with 16 weekly core sessions then monthly maintenance. The goals of the program are to reduce and maintain individual weight loss by at least 7 percent and to increase physical activity to 150 minutes per week. It is classroom based and can be offered in any community setting.

“Providing support and opportunities that empower people to be healthy and live well is part of the YMCA's charitable purpose,” said John Flynn, CEO of The YMCA of Philadelphia & Vicinity. “The lifestyle choices learned through the YMCA's Diabetes Prevention Program not only reduce risk for type 2 diabetes, but also create lifelong changes in the way that individuals approach health and well-being.”



According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), 11.1% of adults living in Philadelphia County are diagnosed with diabetes. The rates are slightly lower in Montgomery and Delaware Counties, 7.3% and 8.9% respectively. “Philadelphia County has one of the highest rates of diabetes in the state – an alarming statistic for residents in the area,” said Flynn. “Through this program, we're hoping to tackle the diabetes epidemic in our surrounding communities and improve the overall health of participants.”

Based on the national Diabetes Prevention Program study led by the National Institutes of Health (NIH) and supported by the CDC, the program reduces the risk of developing type 2 diabetes by 58%. Researchers at Indiana University School of Medicine were able to replicate the successful results of the national DPP with the YMCA of Greater Indianapolis. Unlike the national DPP research study, which was conducted with individuals one-to-one, the YMCA's program is conducted in a group setting.

The research by the Indiana University researchers also demonstrated that the YMCA could effectively deliver a group-based lifestyle intervention for about 75 percent less than the cost of the original DPP. This research also highlighted the ability of the Y to take the program to scale nationally. Just two years ago only two Ys offered this program. Today, more than 50 Ys in 26 states are offering it in their communities.

“We now have proof that lifestyle interventions delivered through community-based organizations such as the Y can save lives and health care dollars,” said Flynn.

The YMCA is committed to making the program available to everyone in the community. All individuals with a BMI over 24 and who have two additional risk factors or have been diagnosed with prediabetes are eligible.

The YMCA’s Diabetes Prevention Program is being offered as part of the Diabetes Prevention and Control Alliance (DPCA) – a subsidiary of UnitedHealth Group. DPCA is offering the program to all insurers and employers who wish to make it available to those they insure.

YMCA of the USA, the national resource office for the nation’s 2,700 YMCAs, is working with CDC, UnitedHealth Group and other organizations to expand the program to as many communities as possible nationwide. The program will be available to communities surrounding the area’s 10 Y branches beginning July 1.

Please contact Aimee Smith, Senior Program Specialist, for information about availability and eligibility requirements: 215-963-3705 or asmith@philaymca.org.

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About the YMCA of Philadelphia & Vicinity

The Y is one of the nation’s leading nonprofits strengthening communities through youth development, healthy living and social responsibility. Throughout the Delaware Valley, the YMCA of Philadelphia & Vicinity serves more than 52,000 members and 140,000 individuals a year- regardless of age, income or background- to nurture the potential of children and teens, improve the nation’s health and well-being, and provide opportunities to give back and support neighbors. Anchored in 10 locations throughout the Delaware Valley, the YMCA of Philadelphia & Vicinity has the long-standing relationships and physical presence not just to promise, but to deliver, lasting personal and social change. For more information, please call 215-963-3700 or visit www.philaymca.org .