

# NEWS RELEASE



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***FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE***

**UNITEDHEALTHCARE COMMUNITY  
 PLAN LAUNCHES HEALTHY EATING  
 INITIATIVE WITH GREATER  
 PHILADELPHIA ACTION, INC. TO HELP  
 PEOPLE LIVE HEALTHIER LIVES**

- *Program Involves One of the Largest Federally Qualified Health Care Clinics the State*
- *Includes the Food Trust Farmer's Markets with Fresh and Affordable Local Produce*
- *Demonstrates Small Steps Toward Choosing Healthy Food and eating healthy*

**PHILADELPHIA, Penn. (Aug XX, 2011) –**

UnitedHealthcare Community & State, the country's largest Medicaid managed care company, and Greater Philadelphia Health Action, Inc. (GPHA) – a non-profit community-based health organization, today announced the launch of the “Small Steps Program,” to combat obesity in Philadelphia.

“Obesity is a public health crisis in Philadelphia,” said Mayor Michael Nutter. “The prevalence of diseases associated with obesity is well above national goals, and socioeconomic and racial disparities are a common factor. Everyone in the Commonwealth deserves access to available information and resources to help us fight obesity in order to live healthier lives.”

According to a 2008 U.S. Department of Public Health report, in Philadelphia, 64 percent of adults and 57 percent of children ages 6 to 11 are overweight or obese. Additionally, nearly 70 percent of children are overweight or considered clinically “obese” in North Philadelphia which means their Body Mass Index (BMI) is above the national standard for weight and height measurements.

Also noted in the report is a connection between a lack of access to affordable, healthy foods as a risk factor for obesity and related poor health outcomes. The need for increased access to healthy foods was also shown to be especially important in low-income, minority neighborhoods in the City of Philadelphia.

“Providing access to quality healthcare and information to those in the community who can't afford it has been the mission of GPHA for more than 40 years,” said Ronald Heigler, CEO and Executive Director of

GPHA. “This program will extend our reach in the community where we are already serving more than 85,000 insured and underinsured patients.”

“Obesity is a major risk factor for heart disease, many forms of cancer, and type 2 diabetes,” said Rodney Armstead, M.D., President of UnitedHealthcare Community & State Northeast Region. “Through this informative, fun and accessible program we are hoping to empower people to have more informed conversations with their physicians and learn about healthy eating habits and how to improve their health overall.”

The “Small Steps Program” and events in Philadelphia are part of a local partnership between UnitedHealthcare, GPHA and The Food Trust, an organization established in 1992 to promote and ensure access to nutritious foods. The program was born out of the desire to provide more opportunities for health care providers to have meaningful discussions with obese patients, and to instigate taking small steps toward positive change during their frequent visits to GPHA facilities. To find out more about the program or events in your area call [1-888-296-GPHA](tel:1-888-296-GPHA)

### **GPHA**

For more than 40 years, GPHA has been a staple of healthcare services in the community serving 80,000 plus patients with a full umbrella of total health care services.

### **About UnitedHealthcare**

UnitedHealthcare is dedicated to helping people nationwide live healthier lives by simplifying the health care experience, meeting consumer health and wellness needs, and sustaining trusted relationships with care providers. The company offers the full spectrum of health benefit programs for individuals, employers and Medicare and Medicaid beneficiaries, and contracts directly with more than 650,000 physicians and care professionals and 5,000 hospitals nationwide. UnitedHealthcare serves more than 38 million people and is one of the businesses of UnitedHealth Group (NYSE: UNH), a diversified Fortune 50 health and well-being company.

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