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Obama Administration releases National Prevention Strategy
First-ever plan brings together public and private partners, will help increase the number of Americans who are healthy at every stage of life

Today, members of the National Prevention, Health Promotion, and Public Health Council, including Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) Secretary Kathleen Sebelius, Surgeon General Regina Benjamin (Chair), as well as Senator Tom Harkin and Domestic Policy Council (DPC) Director Melody Barnes, announced the release of the National Prevention and Health Promotion Strategy, a comprehensive plan that will help increase the number of Americans who are healthy at every stage of life. The National Prevention Strategy recognizes that good health comes not just from receiving quality medical care, but also from clean air and water, safe worksites and healthy foods. The strategy was developed by the National Prevention Council, which is composed of 17 federal agencies who consulted with outside experts and stakeholders.

“This National Prevention Strategy, called for under the Affordable Care Act, will help us transform our health care system away from a focus on sickness and disease to a focus on prevention and wellness,” said Secretary Sebelius. “We know that prevention helps people live long and productive lives and can help combat rising healthcare costs.”

"Helping Americans live more healthful lives is a top priority for the Obama Administration," said DPC Director Melody Barnes. "The National Prevention Strategy is a road map to help us achieve that goal, and will help public and private partners come together to build healthier communities using evidence-based strategies that we know work."

The National Prevention Strategy includes actions that public and private partners can take to help Americans stay healthy and fit and improve our nation's prosperity. The strategy outlines four strategic directions that, together, are fundamental to improving the nation's health. Those four strategic directions are:

- **Building Healthy and Safe Community Environments:** Prevention of disease starts in our communities and at home; not just in the doctor's office.
- **Expanding Quality Preventive Services in Both Clinical and Community Settings:** When people receive preventive care, such as immunizations and cancer screenings, they have better health and lower health care costs.
- **Empowering People to Make Healthy Choices:** When people have access to actionable and easy-to-understand information and resources, they are empowered to make healthier choices.
- **Eliminating Health Disparities:** By eliminating disparities in achieving and maintaining health, we can help improve quality of life for all Americans.

“As a family physician, I understand the importance of stopping disease before it starts,” said Surgeon General Regina Benjamin. “The leadership of this council and the strategy will help us create a healthy and fit nation by making prevention a part of our daily lives.”

The National Prevention Strategy was developed with guidance from the public and is supported by the Advisory Group on Prevention, Health Promotion, and Integrative and Public Health as called for under the Affordable Care Act. Through listening sessions at national and regional meetings, web-based media for input, webinars, and town hall meetings across the country, the advisory group and the public had the opportunity to work with the council members to craft the strategy. The National Prevention Council, the advisory group, and private and public partners will work together to help implement the strategy at the national, state, tribal, and local levels and recognize the importance of actively engaging all sectors of society in improving the health and well-being of our communities.

Already, a number of Obama Administration efforts are underway to help support and achieve the goals outlined in the National Prevention Strategy. Members of the President’s Cabinet are taking action to work together to implement programs to improve Americans’ lives, including the America’s Great Outdoors Initiative, the Neighborhood Revitalization Initiative, and Executive Order 13548 to make the federal government a model employer of persons with disabilities. Through these initiatives and others, the Obama Administration is working to ensure every American has the opportunity to live their healthiest life possible.

To read more about today’s announcement, visit www.HealthCare.gov/news/factsheets/prevention06162011a.html. More information on the National Prevention Strategy and the National Prevention Council can be found at www.HealthCare.gov/center/councils/nphpphc.

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