Public Health Landmark Achieved as 80% by 2018 Colorectal Cancer Screening Campaign Reaches 1,000th Pledge

Nationwide Effort Could Prevent 277,000 Colorectal Cancer Cases and 203,000 Deaths by 2030

Atlanta –July 11, 2016 – Public health groups and advocates are celebrating a landmark victory as Fairfield Community Health Center (FCHC) in Lancaster and Baltimore, OH, has become the 1,000th organization to sign the 80% by 2018 pledge. The 80% by 2018 campaign is a nationwide screening effort launched by the American Cancer Society (ACS), the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), and the National Colorectal Cancer Roundtable (NCCRT, an organization co-founded by ACS and CDC) in 2014 with the goal of getting 80% of adults aged 50 and older screened for colorectal cancer by 2018. The pledge represents a commitment made by a community, company, government agency, hospital, health plan, or other partner to increase colorectal cancer screening.

FCHC is a community health center that provides comprehensive primary health care services for the insured, uninsured and/or underinsured residents of Fairfield County, OH, 96% of whom are at or below Federal Poverty Level. FCHC's two clinic sites are located within the west central Appalachia region, an area identified by an ACS report as a colorectal cancer "hot spot" where death rates from colorectal cancer remain higher compared with the rest of the U.S. FCHC is implementing a number of clinic practices that have been shown to increase screening, including proactively reminding patients that they are due for screening and offering screening tests to patients that visit the clinics for their flu shots this fall. The health center joins non-profit and for-profit partner groups in a combined 52 states and territories as a contributing member to this ambitious screening goal.

A 2015 analysis published in *Cancer* reports that reaching an 80% screening rate by 2018 would prevent 277,000 cases and 203,000 colorectal cancer deaths by 2030. Colorectal cancer can not only be detected at an early, treatable stage through regular screening, but it is one of the few cancers that can be prevented entirely through the detection and removal of precancerous polyps. The ACS recommends that anyone at average risk of developing colorectal cancer begin screening at age 50, yet about one in three adults between 50 and 75 years old – about 23 million people – are not getting screened as recommended.

"Every time a partner organization commits to the 80% by 2018 campaign we exponentially increase our impact in fighting this disease," says Dr. Richard Wender, chief cancer control officer for the American Cancer Society. "That's because real work begins the second the ink dries on that pledge. Thanks to the 80% by 2018 campaign, we've seen hospitals implement new screening reminder systems, companies facilitate meaningful employee outreach, and health insurance companies expand coverage to allow screenings without co-pays, just to name a few examples. This campaign is ambitious but the impact is real and we're seeing results."

"Colorectal cancer screening saves lives, yet this disease continues to be the second leading cause of cancer deaths for both men and women," said CDC Director Tom Frieden, M.D., M.P.H. "CDC is delighted to join more than 1,000 organizations committed to the 80% by 2018 pledge. Working together, we can prevent colorectal cancer."

Colorectal cancer is the second leading cause of cancer death in the U.S. among men and women combined and a cause of considerable suffering among nearly 135,000 adults diagnosed with colorectal cancer each year. For more information about the 80% by 2018 campaign, visit http://nccrt.org/80by2018/.