



MEDIA RELEASE

PHFoundation
400 Quincy Street – PO Box 299
Hancock, Michigan 49930

Contact: Kevin Store; Executive Director
T: 906.523.5920
kstore@phfgive.org

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

07/01/2015

[Hancock, MI] The Portage Health Foundation, a non-profit charitable foundation serving Baraga, Houghton, Keweenaw, and Ontonagon counties, is pleased to announce it is soliciting targeted grant requests throughout the four-county area that encourage healthy adolescent behavior through the adoption of and/or access to community health, wellness, and prevention services.

Through the review of regional assessment reports and interviews with community members, who ranged from educators to healthcare providers and law enforcement officers to private business owners, the PHFoundation recognizes the important need for adolescent services. According to the *Western Upper Peninsula 2012 Regional Health Assessment* and its supplementary *Report to the Community*, in the five-county area (Baraga, Gogebic, Houghton, Keweenaw, and Ontonagon), there is a substantial need to improve the overall health of adolescents. Statistics indicate that one-third to one-half of today's youth will develop diabetes. Additionally, 30-40% of local adolescents are overweight or obese, which are strong predictors of adult obesity and places them at an elevated-lifetime risk for heart disease, diabetes, and certain cancers.¹ The *Report to the Community* highlights that in order to allow individuals to live longer lives that are free of chronic disease, we, as a community, must develop strategies that allow for "access to and utilization of affordable, appropriate and quality health care, as well as adoption of healthy behaviors."² The adoption of healthy behaviors at a young age is particularly important.

Other factors, such as domestic abuse, bullying, poverty, and homelessness, can have detrimental effects on adolescents' emotional and/or physical wellbeing. For example, the *Regional Health Assessment* indicates that 25% of the region's children live in poverty. Due to living at or below the poverty line, many adolescents do not receive preventative healthcare measures such as annual visits. Only 39.7% of western U.P. teens enrolled in Medicaid received annual physicals in 2011. This results in loss opportunities to implement prevention services and identify health and developmental issues in today's youth.³

"We are working to make impactful reinvestments that will benefit our community and the personal health of our families, friends, and neighbors," said Kevin Store, Executive Director of the PHFoundation. "We've allocated a substantial portion of this year's budget to help address the issues that affect our children the most. We are also hopeful this award will be used to facilitate solutions, which address systemic problems impacting child and adolescent health while encouraging creative community partnerships and interagency coordination of services."

¹ Western Upper Peninsula Health Department, *Western Upper Peninsula 2012 Regional Health Assessment*, <http://www.wupdhhd.org/community-health/community-health-assessment-2/>.

² ———, *Western Upper Peninsula 2012 Regional Health Assessment Report to the Community*, <http://www.wupdhhd.org/community-health/community-health-assessment-2/>.

³ *Regional Health Assessment*.

The PHFoundation is now accepting grant requests of all scope and size, or applications that need partial funding, as part of this Request for Proposal (RFP) notification. Grants addressing the following will be considered under this RFP:

Programs and services that promote and/or demonstrate new or expanded resources for the overall health of adolescents. These include, but are not limited to, programs that focus on adolescent obesity, homelessness, bullying, and substance abuse issues and mental, physical, emotional, and dental health.

Interested parties may download an application from the foundation's website (www.phfgive.org); request a grant application packet by contacting 906.523.5920; or by stopping by the PHFoundation offices located at:

**PHFoundation
400 Quincy Street
Hancock, Michigan 49930**

Grant requests will be accepted until Friday, August 14, 2015, and must be received at the PHFoundation Offices no later than 4:00 p.m. EST. Late and incomplete applications will not be considered.

The Portage Health Foundation is a 501(c)3 charitable organization that receives and contributes charitable donations, which support the health needs of the community through enhanced philanthropy and community collaboration throughout Baraga, Houghton, Keweenaw, and Ontonagon counties.