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NEWS RELEASE

For Immediate Release

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Telligen Community Initiative funds purchase of outdoor exercise equipment, community education in Tamaroa

Marshall Browning Hospital and the Perry County Health Department have joined forces to create a new population health program in the small, rural village of Tamaroa, IL. Entitled "Building a Healthier Community: Tamaroa," this Telligen Community Initiative (TCI) program's main focus is to serve rural populations and to decrease health disparities, including increased risk of heart disease.

"The state of Illinois reports heart disease at 27%, while the Center for Medicare and Medicaid Services reports that Perry County (including Tamaroa) reports heart disease at very nearly 32%," said Barb Stevenson, Perry County Health Department Administrator. "With this project, we hope to see these numbers go down for the rural citizens of Tamaroa through increased physical activity, knowing their numbers, and education."

The TCI concept plan, derived from a foundational academic/public health partnership partially funded by the Illinois Nurses Foundation (INF), allows critical access hospitals such as Marshall Browning Hospital, to partner with an area public health department – in this case, Perry County Health Department – to create a dyad. This dyad then works together with a McKendree University MSN population health student to create a plan to address a specific health issue for the population it serves.

The current collaboration with Marshall Browning Hospital and Perry County Health Department extends to the Tamaroa Community Center and the Perry County Healthy Communities Coalition and focuses on education, awareness, and implementation of methods to improve health for the community of Tamaroa. The \$22,500 grant includes the \$2,500 purchase of outdoor exercise equipment, to be placed at the Tamaroa Community Center, creation and distribution of health information to the students of Tamaroa Grade School on the benefits of physical activity and adolescent age-appropriate information of knowing your numbers, and creation and distribution of social media and educational flyers to the entire community on outdoor physical activity access. The development of the educational information will be made available through the Perry County Healthy Communities Coalition.

"According to the American Heart Association, there are five key numbers to be aware to decrease your risk of heart disease. The five key numbers are cholesterol, HDL (high density lipoproteins), blood pressure, blood sugar, and BMI (body mass index)," said Pam Logan, Director of Marketing and Patient Relations, Marshall Browning Hospital. "Through this TCI project, we will address 'knowing your numbers' through education and strategies to bring services to Tamaroa and hopefully, increased health to its population."

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McKendree University's MSN population health student will facilitate the meetings among collaborating partners to not only develop and distribute education but to also get this first phase of the project off the ground and running.

"There have been many moving pieces to ensure these population health projects happened for our rural and underserved populations. We needed to find all the right people to comprise our steering task force plus secure key partners in Illinois' public health departments and critical access hospitals. Then we needed all these people to come together and work towards completion of a common goal," said Dr. Janice Albers, DNP, RN, PHNA-BC, CLC, Project Chairman, McKendree University. "We now know this work is just the beginning. . . . McKendree University will not only be offering 12 \$1,000 scholarships to population health students later this year (application deadline in December), we also plan to write another grant to renew and build on the foundational work from this year.

"Our focus remains to empower our students to make a difference in rural and underserved areas by learning through experience in conjunction with public health departments and critical access hospitals," Dr. Albers continued. "By expanding the current plan, we will be helping people achieve a better and healthier way of life."

Securing grant funding through TCI, McKendree University partnered with the Illinois Critical Access Hospital Network (ICAHN), Illinois public health departments serving rural populations, the Illinois Public Health Association (IPHA), the Illinois Nurses Foundation, and the Perry County Health Department.

The TCI Steering Task Force Committee includes Dr. Janice Albers, DNP, RN, PHNA-BC, CLC, Project Chairman, McKendree University; Amy Piontek, PhD, MSN, RN, CHES Project Co-Director, Assistant Professor, McKendree University; Glenda Morris Burnett, PhD, MUPP, Illinois Public Health Nurse Leaders, Assistant Professor, Rush University College of Nursing; Angie Charlet, DBA, MHA, RN, Senior Director Quality and Operations, Illinois Critical Access Hospital Network (ICAHN); Stephanie DeMay, Communication and Media Specialist, ICAHN; Sharon Frederking, MSN, RN, SIPHC, and Washington County Health Department Administrator; Miriam Link-Mullison, MS, IPHA Workforce Development Committee; Richelle A. Rennegarbe, PhD, RN, CENP, Graduate Program Director, DNP Program Director, Professor, McKendree University; Linda B. Roberts, MSN, RN, IDFPRI/Illinois Nursing Workforce Center/INF, Public Health Nurse Leaders (Steering Organization for the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation and Illinois Nurses Foundation funded Illinois Academic/Public Health Partnership); Lesa Schlatman, RN, BSN, MSN Population Health Student, Director of Clinical Transformation, ICAHN; and Kelli Whittington, PhD, RN, CNE, Chair, Division of Nursing, Assistant Professor, McKendree University.

