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Milwaukee Coalition to Fight Infant Mortality Receives \$250,000 Grant

MILWAUKEE, Wis. (July 2) – The Wisconsin Partnership Program awarded a new community coalition a grant to develop plans to improve birth outcomes among African-Americans in Milwaukee. In recent years, Milwaukee’s black infant mortality rate has risen higher than the rate in 56 other countries, including Jamaica, Ukraine, Costa Rica, Ecuador and Malaysia.

The Milwaukee Lifecourse Initiative for Healthy Families (LIHF) was awarded the \$250,000 grant from the Oversight and Advisory Committee of the UW School of Medicine and Public Health, part of a \$10 million overall commitment to address infant mortality among African-Americans in Wisconsin.

The group, including more than 60 local organizations, is led by Dr. Pat McManus of the Black Health Coalition of Wisconsin and Dr. Earnestine Willis of the Medical College of Wisconsin. The Planning Council for Health and Human Services, Inc. and the Women’s Fund of Greater Milwaukee are facilitating an action planning process for the Milwaukee LIHF coalition.

“The lifecourse framework that is being used to implement Milwaukee LIHF takes into account the multiple factors (both positive and negative) that determine the health of the

family/community. I am pleased to be able to provide leadership and community wisdom to this important project,” said Dr. McManus.

The Milwaukee planning process is crucial to the community’s well-being, according to Dr. Willis, who said “an appallingly high infant mortality rate in the African American community of Milwaukee is unacceptable. It is crucial that we begin our efforts to collectively explore multifaceted-interventions as soon as possible.”

The award allows the coalition to set a course toward improving access to maternal and child health resources, strengthening African-American families, and creating an action plan specific to Milwaukee. To achieve these goals the coalition will engage a wide variety of stakeholders, including African-American mothers and fathers, the faith community, young people, funders and the general public. Once the plan is in place, the coalition will present that to the Wisconsin Partnership Program for potential implementation awards.

The Planning Council for Health and Human Services, Inc. is dedicated to advancing community health and human services through planning, evaluation and research. The Planning Council engages real people across sectors and systems, uses research and data to inform new solutions and shares “What Works” with the whole community. For more information, visit www.planningcouncil.org .

The Women’s Fund of Greater Milwaukee is a public foundation with a mission to stand for social change through women and girls. The vision of the Women’s Fund is for a just and fair world for everyone. Its intended impact is to fuel women-led solutions to critical community problems by supporting robust organizations that address issues that impact women and girls and engaging women in the power of collective philanthropy. For more information, visit <http://www.womensfund.com/> .

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