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STATEWIDE INITIATIVE GIVES PENNSYLVANIANS FIGHTING CHANCE TO BEAT DIABETES AND OBESITY

Online Resource Features Real-Life Success Stories from Individuals "Making a Choice"

Harrisburg, PA, August 29, 2017 – Today, Health Promotion Council announced the launch of **makeachoice.org**, a new online resource to help in the fight against diabetes and obesity.

Makeachoice.org is part of a statewide initiative to promote healthy living, physical activity and weight management to prevent and manage prediabetes, Type 2 diabetes and obesity. The initiative will culminate with Wellness Challenge events, featuring Fitness and Transformation Motivator Shaun T, during National Diabetes Awareness Month in November. Registration will be available at makeachoice.org/events.

"In Pennsylvania, more than 3.5 million adults are living with prediabetes, and more than one million have already been diagnosed with diabetes," said Christina Miller, executive director at Health Promotion Council. "If you think you or a loved one is at risk of diabetes, we encourage you to visit makeachoice.org to identify that risk and learn ways to prevent and manage this *preventable* disease."

Makeachoice.org offers:

- **Prediabetes Screening Test** – Take a simple quiz to see if you are at risk of developing diabetes. <https://www.makeachoice.org/prevent-type-2>
- **Healthy Champion Testimonials** – Hear from real Pennsylvanians about their inspirational journeys to lose weight, make healthy choices and live a more active lifestyle. <https://www.makeachoice.org/healthy-champions>
- **Prevention and Management Information** – For those living with prediabetes, information can be found about how to enroll in local Diabetes Prevention Programs (DPP). These DPPs offer lifestyle coaches in group settings to help individuals lose weight through healthy eating and physical activity. For those living with Type 2 diabetes, residents can enroll in locally-run Diabetes Self-Management Education programs (DSME) which teach individuals the skills to modify their behavior and self-manage the disease. <https://www.makeachoice.org/fight-diabetes>
- **Shaun T** – Fitness and Transformation Motivator, Shaun T, has inspired millions of people to get moving and choose a healthier lifestyle. Shaun T challenges Pennsylvanians to *Make a Choice* by inviting them to work out with him at Wellness Challenge events during National Diabetes Awareness Month in November. <https://www.makeachoice.org/events>

- **Quick Tips & Tools** -- From convenient fitness apps to menu samples and BMI calculators, the website offers a variety of useful information to get started on a wellness journey. <https://www.makeachoice.org/live-healthier>
- **Type 1 Information** – The website provides relevant information and guidance on how to manage Type 1 diabetes. <https://www.makeachoice.org/manage-my-t1d>

“My goal is to motivate and inspire others to get moving,” said Fitness and Transformation Motivator Shaun T. “I encourage all Pennsylvanians to make a choice today to live a healthier lifestyle. By doing so, they can prevent the onset of diabetes and obesity. Please join me for a fun and inspiring workout at one of the Wellness Challenge events in November. Register today!”

“It is a priority for the Commonwealth to provide online resources, as well as access to community education programs to help individuals better manage and prevent diabetes,” said Dr. Loren Robinson, deputy secretary for Health Promotion and Disease Prevention for the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania. “I understand it’s not easy to take that first step to lose weight or start an exercise routine, but making even the smallest changes in one’s diet or activity level can prevent prediabetes, Type 2 diabetes and obesity, which can cause serious health problems affecting the heart, blood vessels, eyes and kidneys.”

The Make A Choice initiative is a collaborative effort between Health Promotion Council and Pennsylvania Department of Health designed to help Pennsylvanians identify, prevent and control obesity and diabetes. This statewide initiative connects Pennsylvanians to personal success stories, diabetes education programs and a free online resource – makeachoice.org – to help encourage and inspire Pennsylvanians to prioritize their health and *make a choice* to live a healthier lifestyle starting today.

About Health Promotion Council

Health Promotion Council (HPC) is a nonprofit corporation whose mission is to promote health, and prevent and manage chronic disease, especially among vulnerable populations, through community-based outreach, education, and advocacy. Established in 1981, HPC is an affiliate of Public Health Management Corporation (PHMC), a leading public health institute in our region.

About Pennsylvania Department of Health

The Pennsylvania Department of Health is responsible for planning and coordinating health resources throughout the Commonwealth. Created by the Act of April 27, 1905, P.L. 312, and modified subsequently through the Administrative Code of 1929, the Department’s mission is to promote healthy lifestyles, prevent injury and disease, and to assure the safe delivery of quality health care for all Commonwealth citizens.

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