



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

May 15, 2012

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**Health Equity Forum Planned
Dozens scheduled to attend event to address disparity in Health Care**

GRAND RAPIDS - Access to health care is one of the biggest concerns for the people of Kent County. We often find one common factor between the elderly man who hasn't had a medical examination in a decade, the woman who had a premature baby, and the child who suffers from regular asthma attacks. Racial and socioeconomic disparities are often barriers to care. Several recent studies show that racially-centered disparities exist today, with certain groups of people receiving less intensive and lower quality care.

Thursday, May 17, from 9 a.m. until noon, community stakeholders will gather to discuss these disparities during a Health Equity Forum to be held at the Kent ISD Conference Center, 1633 East Beltline, in Grand Rapids. The event will bring together the Healthy Kent 2020 Infant Health Implementation Team, Working Together for a Healthy Tomorrow Coalition, as well as others that work in health and human service agencies, public health, community mobilization and related fields.

The training will:

- Provide an overview of health equity and allow participants to view their approach to public health/health care through a health equity lens.
- Presentation on health and socioeconomic disparity including information relative to the social determinants of health.
- Unveiling of Kent County's Health Equity video featuring interviews from professionals and community members about their lived experience of health in Kent County.
- Group activity to list local action steps and strategies to achieve health equity.

The event will include keynote speakers Dr. Renée Canady, Health Officer for Ingham County, and Doak Bloss, Health Equity and Social Justice Coordinator for the Ingham County Health Department. Brian Hartl, Epidemiology Supervisor at the Kent County Health Department, will present data on health disparities in Kent County. All three speakers, as well as numerous attendees, will be available for interviews before and immediately following the event. Please see the attached flyer for more information.

****PLEASE NOTE: Public registration for this event is now closed.****

KCHD has been in the business of providing health services to Kent County since 1931. The Health Department is home to nearly 260 employees including public health nurses, sanitarians, health educators, technicians, public health administrators, and specialized staff at the Kent County Animal Shelter. The Health Department operates one main clinic and four satellite clinics located in Wyoming, Kentwood, Rockford, and Grand Rapids. To learn more about KCHD services, visit www.accesskent.com/health.