Million Hearts®

# 2012

## Building strong partnerships for progress

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*Disclaimer: Many of the examples and success stories in this document reflect programs conducted by organizations outside of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) and the federal government without funding by HHS, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS), or other federal agencies. These examples are provided for illustrative purposes only and do not constitute an HHS, CDC, CMS, or other federal government activity or endorsement.*

In 2011, the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) launched the Million Hearts® initiative to prevent 1 million heart attacks and strokes by 2017 through public and private commitments to:

- **Empower Americans to make healthy choices,** such as preventing tobacco use and reducing sodium and trans fat consumption. These efforts can reduce the number of people who need medical treatment, including blood pressure or cholesterol medications, to prevent heart attacks and strokes.
- **Improve care for people who need treatment by encouraging health systems and health professionals to focus on the "ABCS"**—**A**spirin when appropriate, **B**lood pressure control, **C**holesterol management, and **S**moking cessation—which address the major risk factors for cardiovascular disease and can help to prevent heart attacks and strokes.

In 2012, more than 12,000 individuals and organizations pledged to support Million Hearts® in reducing heart attacks and strokes. More than 50 public and private organizations made specific, actionable commitments to fight cardiovascular disease.

Million Hearts® partners are building a strong foundation. They are educating the public and health care professionals about the effectiveness of team-based care in improving blood pressure control and encouraging health care practices and systems to report annually on ABCS measures so that everyone can be aware of and improve their performance over time. Some private health care systems are integrating ABCS evaluation and counseling into every adult patient visit.

Across HHS, we are:

- Encouraging Americans to learn about new **affordable coverage options** that will become available beginning in 2014, thanks to the Affordable Care Act.
- Ensuring American adults know they can get many recommended **preventive services,** such as cardiovascular disease screening tests, through Medicare and all-new private health plans for free. The Affordable Care Act made these benefits available in 2011 and 2012 to an estimated 71 million Americans in private health plans. In 2012, an estimated 34 million Americans in traditional Medicare and Medicare Advantage plans received one or more preventive benefits with no out-of-pocket cost.
- Investing in **community prevention** through initiatives such as the Community Transformation Grant program, which helps communities address chronic disease risk factors.
- Supporting **new models of care**, such as accountable care organizations (ACOs) that make it easier for doctors and nurses to work together. More than 250 U.S. health organizations have formed Medicare ACOs.
- Helping doctors and hospitals **adopt electronic health record (EHR) systems** and other health information technology to track patient care efficiently over time and set alerts that signal when patients need support to control their blood pressure, manage their cholesterol, or quit smoking. Approximately 80% of hospitals and critical access hospitals and more than half of physicians and other eligible professionals have demonstrated this type of meaningful use of EHRs and received an incentive payment through the Medicare and Medicaid EHR Incentive Programs.
- Helping more providers meaningfully use EHRs by providing funding to 62 **Regional Extension Centers (RECs)** that help primary care providers with EHR adoption and use. Across the nation, more than 148,000 providers are receiving assistance from RECs.

Thank you for your support of Million Hearts® in 2012. I look forward to sharing additional progress reports as the initiative matures.

**Kathleen Sebelius**
Secretary
U.S. Department of Health and Human Services

In 2012, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) supported the Million Hearts® initiative by focusing on helping Americans reduce and prevent heart disease and stroke by encouraging them to quit tobacco, reduce dietary sodium, and get blood pressure under control.

**Quitting tobacco.** CDC's Tips From Former Smokers campaign—the first nationwide, federally funded anti-tobacco campaign—encourages people to quit tobacco by highlighting the human suffering caused by cigarette smoking. The hard-hitting ads show people living with the real, painful consequences of smoking. During the 2012 campaign, calls to 1-800-QUIT-NOW more than doubled, and visits to **Smokefree.gov** were more than five times higher than the same 12-week period in 2011.

**Reducing sodium.** Through the Sodium Reduction in Communities Program, CDC works with communities across the country to reduce daily sodium consumption. This support is making a difference:

- The Los Angeles Department of Public Health and the Los Angeles Unified School District served lower-sodium options for breakfast and lunch in 2011–2012. Their preliminary analysis shows that the breakfast menu (not including condiments) met the 10-year recommended sodium targets set by the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA). In addition, the average sodium content of elementary school lunches met the 2-year USDA School Meal sodium targets.
- New York's Schenectady County Public Health Services created a toolkit to help restaurants develop and evaluate action plans for sodium reduction. The County Public Health Services agency found that the toolkit helped participating restaurants lower sodium in an average of 25% of menu items.

**Controlling blood pressure.** Two Million Hearts® Hypertension Control Champions—Kaiser Permanente Colorado and the Ellsworth Medical Clinic in Wisconsin—helped their patients improve blood pressure control by incorporating sustainable changes into their daily practices, such as:

- Focusing on blood pressure control every day, with every patient, at every doctor's visit.
- Maximizing use of EHRs to track patient care over time using prompts and reminders to improve care.
- Using the full skills of every team member to identify and treat patients with high blood pressure, provide patient support and follow-up care, and help patients manage their medicines and follow a blood pressure control plan.

Through the remainder of the initiative, we will work even more intensively with health care providers, health care systems, and the public health community to prevent cardiovascular disease. As the results of our efforts become available, we will take every opportunity to report on our progress in helping people make healthy choices and improving clinical performance in the ABCS.

One year after its launch, I am more convinced than ever that Million Hearts® is the right approach—and that our ambitious goal is achievable!

**Thomas Frieden, MD, MPH**
Director
Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

In 2012, the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) laid a strong foundation on which we will build all of our efforts to support the Million Hearts® initiative. We incorporated Million Hearts® measures and priorities into numerous Medicare programs. We have the teams, partners, and priorities in place to drive performance and ensure great outcomes, and we are working to undertake the policy and systems changes necessary to serve as a catalyst for better heart health for all Americans.

To reflect the Million Hearts® focus on helping Americans prevent and control high blood pressure, we have identified and accelerated programs and policies that focus on hypertension management and control. We are working with CDC to develop a strategic communications plan for high blood pressure awareness and control. We also created a Million Hearts® Minority Health Team, with representatives from across several federal agencies, that has outlined specific, concrete actions to engage organizations in minority communities and help ensure better blood pressure control for residents.

We have embedded the Million Hearts® ABCS into our work with federal and private partners, including the Physician Quality Reporting System and the Medicare and Medicaid EHR Incentive Programs. Additionally, the CMS Center for Medicare and Medicaid Innovation is testing new models of care, such as the Pioneer Accountable Care Organization model and the Comprehensive Primary Care Initiative, which reward high performance on ABCS measures.

Physician Compare, our online search tool for Medicare-enrolled providers, soon will have a refreshed website listing the names of health care professionals who are reporting successfully on Million Hearts® measures. We also are collaborating with our public and private partners to encourage self-management of blood pressure and to increase adherence to blood pressure medication.

This is an exciting and productive time at CMS, but it is only the beginning. We look forward to increasing our efforts to achieve the goal of Million Hearts®—1 million fewer heart attacks and strokes by 2017—and ensure better health and quality of life for countless Americans.

**Marilyn Tavenner, MHA**
Administrator
Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services

Million Hearts® Year One

# A Strong Foundation

Cardiovascular disease, including heart disease and stroke, is the leading cause of death in the United States.

Cardiovascular disease, including heart disease and stroke, is the leading cause of death in the United States. Together, heart disease and stroke kill nearly 800,000 Americans each year—one in every three deaths—and cost the nation approximately $312.6 billion annually. One out of every six U.S. health care dollars is spent on treatment for cardiovascular disease.

The good news? With strong evidence about the risk factors for heart attack and stroke and growing use of tools that work—electronic health records (EHRs), alternative payment models, community-based prevention, clinical preventive services, and skilled health care teams with the right tools—we can end unnecessary loss of life and vitality.

In September 2011, with a renewed commitment to action on heart disease and stroke prevention, the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) and a host of public and private partners launched Million Hearts®, an ambitious initiative to prevent 1 million heart attacks and strokes

The Million Hearts® initiative is launched on September 13, 2011, at George Washington University.

## José's

Million Hearts® Story

Although José has a family history of stroke, he was blindsided at age 46 when he suffered a stroke. Temporarily paralyzed on the left side of his body and confined to a wheelchair, he slowly recovered with the heartfelt support of his wife and children. Now, he and his daughter teach merengue to stroke survivors.

Watch José's story at: http://millionhearts.hhs.gov/resources/videos.html.

by 2017. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) co-lead the initiative, which is aligned with and will help catalyze progress in meeting the heart disease and stroke objectives of *Healthy People 2020*.

## Spreading the Word

In 2012, the Million Hearts® initiative raised awareness among health care professionals, the public, families, and communities about how they can help reach the initiative's goal. More than 12,000 individuals and organizations have pledged their support for reducing heart attacks and strokes, and more than 50 public and private organizations have made specific, actionable commitments to fight cardiovascular disease.

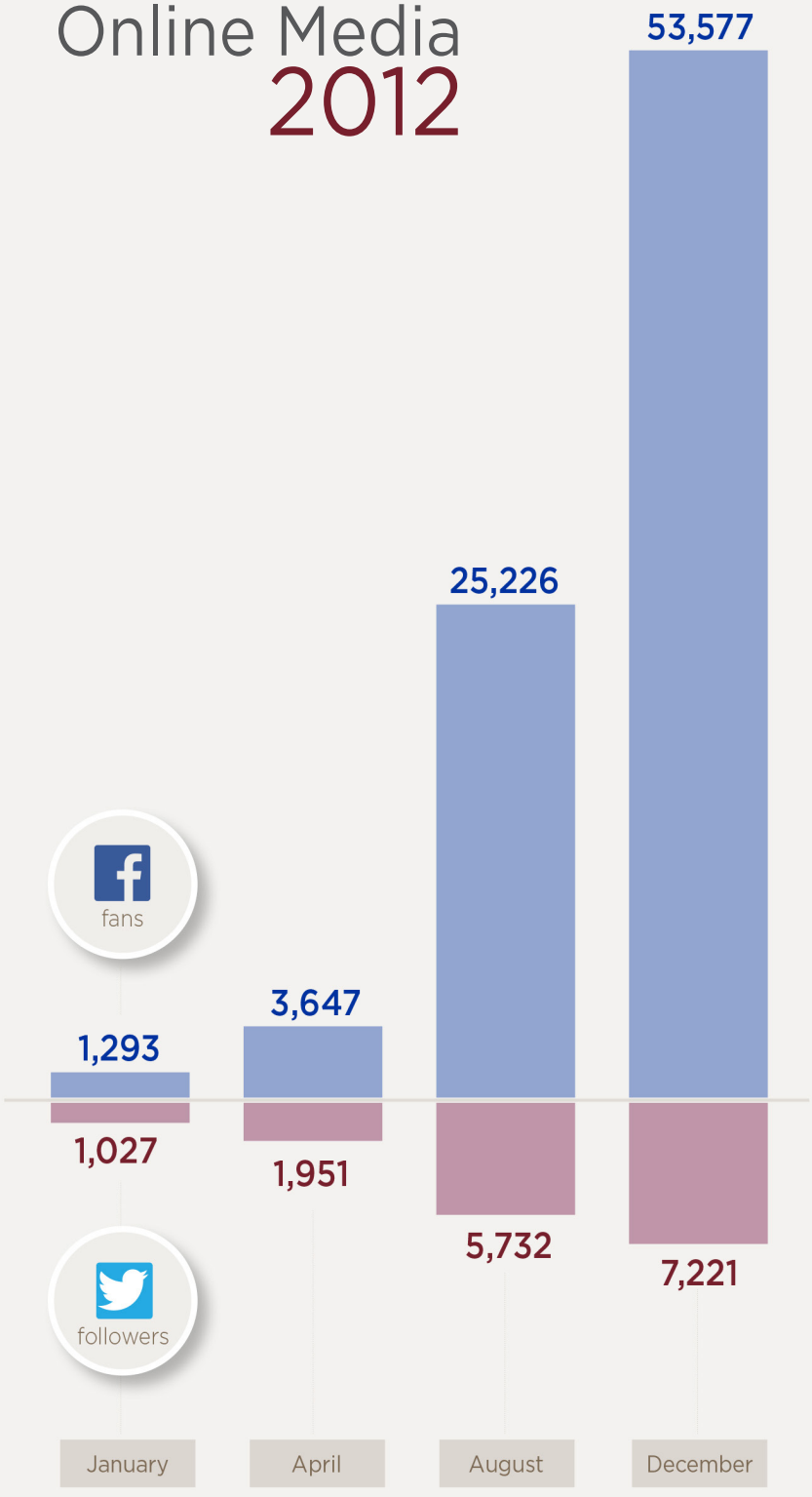
Central to communication about Million Hearts® were messages encouraging everyone to know their ABCS:

**A** **A**spirin when appropriate

**B** **B**lood Pressure Control

**C** **C**holesterol Management

**S** **S**moking Cessation



# *The Heart Truth®* infographic

**500,000**
online views

**2,000**
social media interactions

Traditional and social media outreach, in particular, played a key role in spreading the word about the ABCS and the initiative. For example, in May 2012, *The Heart Truth®*, a national campaign sponsored by the National Heart, Lung, and Blood Institute (NHLBI) at the National Institutes of Health (NIH), released easy-to-understand information about the ABCS in support of Million Hearts®. These graphic representations related to blood pressure, cholesterol, and smoking offered people blood pressure and cholesterol levels to aim for and tips for improving heart health. In just 5 months, the infographics generated more than 2,000 social media interactions online, were viewed more than 500,000 times on NHLBI's website, and were featured on *Self* magazine's website. On Facebook, the information gave users an opportunity to share their success with making changes in their heart-healthy behaviors.

As a result of these targeted social media efforts and other more traditional media outreach, the Million Hearts® website had more than 444,000 visitors in 2012. Between January and May 2012 alone, tailored online outreach attracted 25,000 fans to the Million Hearts® Facebook page and 3,200 followers to the initiative's Twitter feed. By December 2012, Facebook fans had more than doubled to 55,000, and Twitter followers increased to more than 7,000.

Bloggers also have picked up the Million Hearts® message and spread it among their audiences. The National Association of Public Hospitals and Health Systems' *Safety Net Matters* **blog** highlighted the importance of the Million Hearts® initiative having identified and targeted specific goals. And in September 2012, AARP's **blog** featured the launch of *Team Up. Pressure Down.*, the Million Hearts® program that encourages pharmacists to work with patients, physicians, and other members of the health care team to better control blood pressure.

## Partners Make All the Difference

Partners—individuals and organizations from across the public and private sectors—are vital to achieving the goals of Million Hearts®. In 2012, federal agencies, physicians, nurses, pharmacists, private insurers, community health workers, employers, health advocacy groups, and community organizations championed Million Hearts®.

## Gail's
Million Hearts® Story

55-year-old Gail recounts her personal experience with cardiovascular disease (CVD) and shares how she manages her risks for CVD by knowing her family history and making small, simple changes to maintain good heart health.

Watch Gail's story at: http://millionhearts.hhs.gov/resources/videos.html.

One of the initiative's first and most visible partners, the American Heart Association (AHA), continued its strong commitment to fighting heart attacks and strokes in 2012. Its efforts focused on educating the public and fostering collaboration among health care professionals. For example, AHA shared the My Life Check™ health assessment tool and a new heart attack risk calculator for posting on the Million Hearts® website as convenient resources for individuals.

As part of its commitment to Million Hearts®, AHA published journal commentaries highlighting cardiovascular clinical performance measures and emphasizing the need for collaboration between public health and clinical practice; worked with CMS on implementation of blood pressure and cholesterol measures through Medicare Quality Improvement Organizations; and engaged thought leaders and stakeholders in identifying innovative ideas for increasing patient engagement in blood pressure control and improving quality of care for people with hypertension.

Health care systems also have been important partners in the Million Hearts® initiative. MedStar Health—the largest health care system in the Maryland and Washington, DC, regions—is supporting Million Hearts® by encouraging patients and professionals to adopt the ABCS.

Beginning on October 1, 2012, every adult patient seen by MedStar Health primary care providers receives a personal evaluation on the ABCS, counseling on appropriate actions for improvement, educational materials about Million Hearts® and the ABCS, and a personalized report card that documents:

- Whether a daily aspirin is appropriate.
- Latest blood pressure reading, personal blood pressure goal, and a plan to achieve that goal.
- Latest cholesterol results, personal cholesterol goal, and a plan to achieve that goal.
- Current smoking status and, if relevant, information on how to quit and remain tobacco free.

Since the new procedures went live on October 1, 2012, MedStar Health has reported that providers have evaluated ABCS for more than 43,000 patients.

Million Hearts® Year One

# Priorities in Action

Throughout 2012, Million Hearts® prioritized two areas of emphasis: helping Americans make better choices for their health and encouraging health care professionals to incorporate the ABCS of heart health into their work.

## Helping Americans Stay Healthy through Healthier Choices

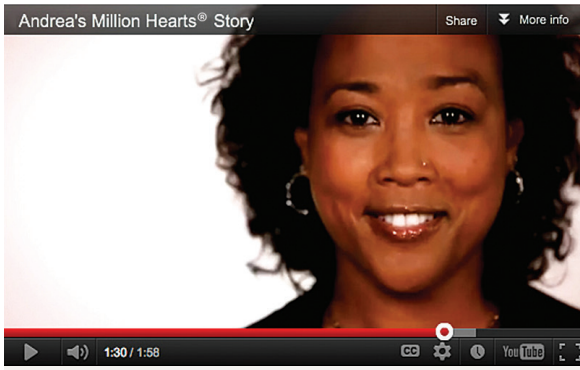
Although individuals don't have control over some risk factors for heart disease and stroke—such as family history—choices about diet, physical activity, smoking, and medication compliance can have a significant impact on cardiovascular health. With that in mind, Million Hearts® and its partners reached out to the American public to encourage more healthful choices.

Farzad Mostashari, Director of the Office of the National Coordinator for Health IT, announces the finalists of the Risk Check Challenge with Dr. Janet Wright, Executive Director of Million Hearts®. The winner was Heart Health Mobile, which provides a quick heart check and connects users with nearby locations for blood pressure and cholesterol tests.

The ABCS took center stage in the initiative's educational activities, with an extra emphasis on blood pressure control. Media outreach, web-based and print resources, community health events, and other activities helped inform the public about risk factors and encourage them in making changes to control these risks.

### Empowering People to Take Action

In its first year, Million Hearts® and its partners produced and disseminated many materials designed to help Americans stay healthy and to support heart-healthy choices. These materials included videos, fact sheets,




### Andrea's
Million Hearts® Story

Andrea once heard her life counted in minutes. She had a heart attack at 35. After surviving, but losing her unborn baby, she is helping to educate other women like her about the signs of heart disease.

Watch Andrea's story at: http://millionhearts.hhs.gov/resources/videos.html.

## Helping Americans Quit

Cigarette smoking is a major risk factor for heart disease and stroke. Nearly one in five Americans smoke. As one element of the ABCS of heart health, smoking cessation was a focal point of Million Hearts® activities in 2012.

HHS supports smoking cessation through a comprehensive strategy that includes communications, education, research, and clinical and community interventions. Communications efforts include mobile, Internet, and social media components. These interventions use text messaging and social media platforms, such as Facebook and Twitter, to form and reach communities of potential quitters. Examples of HHS smoking cessation activities include:

- The Tips From Former Smokers campaign, launched in spring 2012 by CDC's Office on Smoking and Health, encourages Americans to quit tobacco by highlighting the human suffering caused by cigarette smoking. Supported by the Prevention and Public Health Fund established by the Affordable Care Act, the former smokers featured in the campaign told the nation their stories of lost limbs, strokes, cancers, and other challenges due to smoking. For example, Roosevelt had to give up his career and many of his favorite activities after he suffered a heart attack at age 45, following decades of smoking. During the 2012 phase of the campaign, calls to 1-800-QUIT-NOW more than doubled, and visits to Smokefree.gov were more than five times higher than the same 12-week period in 2011.

- Smokefree.gov, Smokefree Teen, SmokefreeWomen, and SmokefreeEspanol are all websites supported by the National Cancer Institute at NIH and offer practical advice and tools for quitting, including a step-by-step guide to help smokers prepare to quit. Smokers who want frequent encouragement can sign up for the SmokefreeTXT cessation program, which delivers a daily dose of texts with motivation and tips.

- The Affordable Care Act ensures that new health plans cover tobacco use screening and tobacco cessation interventions without cost-sharing.

- Medicare has expanded coverage of tobacco cessation counseling to make it available to all Medicare beneficiaries who use tobacco, not just those with tobacco-related diseases as was previously the case.

The federal government as a whole also is committed to tobacco cessation. The National Prevention, Health Promotion, and Public Health Council, created by the Affordable Care Act, is working across the federal government to prioritize opportunities to ensure federal health and prevention efforts are coordinated, aligned, and championed. A shared commitment on behalf of the Council's 17 executive departments and agencies is to increase tobacco-free environments within Council departments and encourage partners to do so voluntarily as appropriate.

The U.S. Departments of Defense and Veterans Affairs support smoking cessation and Million Hearts® through the award-winning Quit Tobacco: Make Everyone Proud website, www.ucanquit2.org, coordinated by the Veterans Health Administration. The site, aimed at younger active-duty and veteran populations, provides online tools to quit tobacco, such as live chat services, personalized quit plans, and other interactive support systems. The website is available through the Department of Defense and TRICARE, the health care program for Service members and their families. TRICARE also provides enrolled veterans with access to personally tailored quit information.

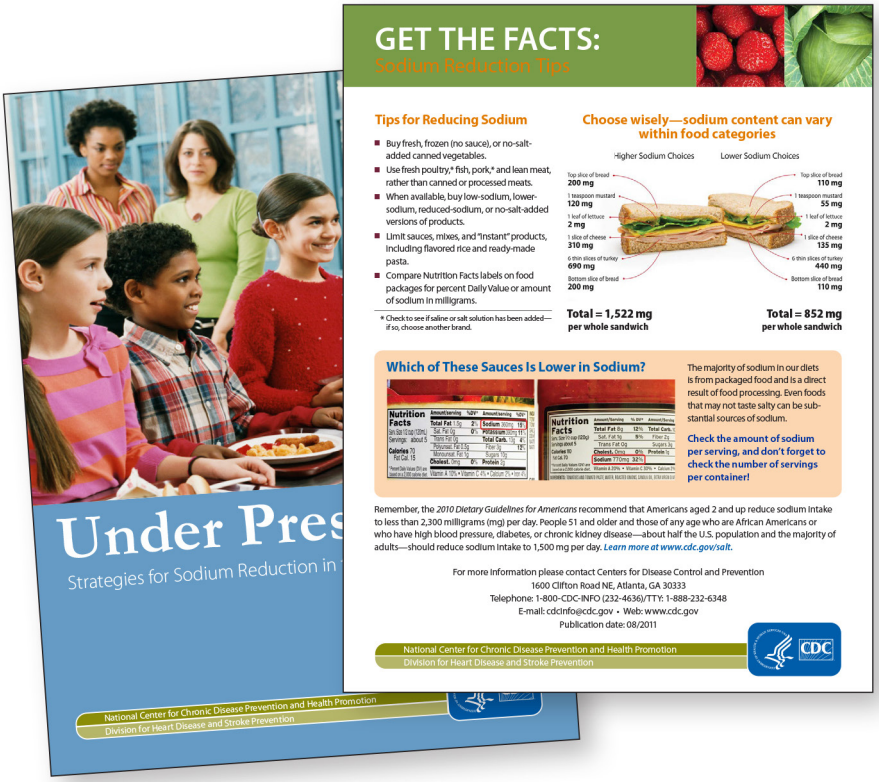
and online tools that spread inspiring personal stories and vital health information.

Many of the Million Hearts® videos, all of which are available on the initiative's website, focus on empowering the individual:

- Animations for the *Team Up. Pressure Down.* program encourage patients and pharmacists to work together to control hypertension with an emphasis on teaching patients the basics of high blood pressure and its treatment options.
- Patient advocates like Gail and Andrea tell their stories of overcoming cardiovascular risk and surviving heart attack in the powerful "Million Hearts® Stories."
- Dr. Janet Wright, Executive Director of Million Hearts® and a cardiologist, encourages Americans to share their stories about heart attack and stroke with others through social media channels.

Individuals also have a variety of fact sheets and guides about cardiovascular health at their fingertips. CDC produced four colorful fact sheets in a new "Get the Facts" series available at www.cdc.gov/salt to help the public understand where the sodium in their diet comes from and how they can make changes to lower their sodium intake and protect their heart health. CDC's "Under Pressure" series identifies strategies for reducing sodium in schools, hospitals, worksites, and institutionalized environments.

Dr. Thomas Frieden, Director of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, speaks during the Million Hearts® Innovations Exchange in April 2012.




CDC's Division for Heart Disease and Stroke Prevention created materials for public health professionals and the public to support Million Hearts®.

## Partner Spotlights

Million Hearts® partners aim to empower Americans to make better choices for their heart health.

In the New York City area, the African Methodist Episcopal Church, in partnership with Our Health Ministry, began a pilot program called "Manage BP with AMECHealth" to improve blood pressure management. This denomination's members are largely African Americans, who are at higher risk for heart disease than the general population. In this 10-church pilot, health ministers held weekly hypertension screenings before and after church services, counseled people with hypertension on exercise and the DASH (Dietary Approaches to Stop Hypertension) eating plan, and directed individuals to physician consultations as needed. Of the 700 active participants in the program, few had previously taken any steps to manage their hypertension, but most reported

Million Hearts®

Working to prevent a million heart attacks and strokes

PROUD SUPPORTER

## Smart for the Heart

### Helps Women Manage Risk

As a Million Hearts® partner, the Sister to Sister Foundation teamed up with Brigham and Women's Hospital in Boston in February 2012 to launch www.SmartfortheHeart.org, a free, online cardiovascular wellness tool that helps individuals, particularly women, identify and manage their risk for heart disease.

Although one in three women will die of heart disease, lifestyle changes can reduce that risk. The Smart for the Heart program gives users a free cardiovascular risk assessment and personal wellness plan to help reduce their risk through lifestyle changes. The program also provides online workshops and patient-friendly health content from Healthwise, delivered via individual follow-up emails from experts.

Data from Smart for the Heart are included in the Pollin Cardiovascular Database at Brigham and Women's Hospital, through which providers and researchers can evaluate risk factors and explore behavioral interventions to reduce cardiovascular risk. Results from this ongoing research have been published by AHA, the *Journal of Women's Health*, the *Journal of the American College of Cardiology*, and the *Health Journal*.

"When you make blood pressure control a priority in your practice and with your patients and their families, you are taking a critical step in helping us reach our goal of 10 million more Americans having their blood pressure under control by 2017."

—HHS Secretary Kathleen Sebelius

Kathleen Sebelius, Secretary of Health and Human Services, on stage with Donald Berwick, Administrator of the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services, and Dr. Reed Tuckson, Executive Vice President and Chief of Medical Affairs at UnitedHealth Group, at the launch of the Million Hearts® initiative.

more healthful eating and a greater sense of preparedness to discuss hypertension with family members, doctors, and friends after the program began. The denomination plans to expand the program throughout its churches in the region and, ultimately, the nation.

The Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) supports efforts to improve the heart health of people with mental or substance use disorders. People with serious mental illness have higher rates of some cardiovascular risk factors, especially smoking rates, than members of the general population. To help address this situation, SAMHSA awarded $500,000 in grants to 12 peer-run recovery organizations for community-based social marketing activities to increase awareness, reduce risk, and improve management of cardiovascular disease in people with behavioral health conditions.

Grantees employed a variety of short-term strategies to meet these goals. For example, Atlanta-based Another Chance developed and implemented a "90-Day Healthy Heart" pledge campaign for people in recovery who have heart disease and no primary care physician. Another Chance partnered with other organizations and providers to carry out an education and awareness campaign.

## Helping Health Care Professionals Focus on the ABCS

Starting in 2011, Million Hearts® encouraged individuals, communities, and public and private health care professionals to help prevent 1 million heart attacks and strokes by 2017. Strategies identified to help achieve this goal in the health care system include aligning measurement strategies to improve the ABCS and simplify provider reporting; better integrating public health

and clinical practice; expanding the use of health information technology; and deploying innovative care models that reward improvement, bridge community and clinical resources, and make full use of health care teams.

**Aligning Measures, Incentives for Efficiency, Impact**

Management consultant Peter Drucker often is credited with saying, "What gets measured gets done." The concept is simple, but finding agreement on what measures should be a priority in today's complex health care world is a challenge.

CDC, CMS, the Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA), and other public Million Hearts® partners have worked together to ensure that the ABCS measures are aligned with other health care quality improvement measures across federal agencies and initiatives, including the National Quality Strategy. This type of measures alignment ensures that health care professionals and systems are able to collect and report required information in streamlined, efficient ways for maximum results. During 2012, the ABCS measures were part of the following systems or programs:

- The CMS Physician Quality Reporting System to promote reporting of quality information by eligible health care professionals.
- The CMS Medicare and Medicaid EHR Incentive Programs for achieving meaningful use of EHRs.

HRSA Now Requires
## Annual Reports on ABCS

As of 2012, HRSA required all community health centers to report on key ABCS measures annually in its Uniform Data Systems to track and improve performance. This reporting includes the Million Hearts® measures on aspirin use and cholesterol-lowering therapy.

Health centers also are required to measure the percentage of patients with high blood pressure who achieve control (defined as less than 140/90 mm Hg except for some medically fragile patients). Smoking status is measured by the percentage of patients 18 years or older who are screened every 2 years for tobacco use status and given appropriate counseling on quitting. The goal for 2017 is to increase by 50% the number of health centers that meet or exceed national goals, including *Healthy People 2020,* in one or more of the ABCS measures. Beginning in 2012, HRSA identified high-achieving health centers to share their best practices with other centers.

In addition to providing key data, HRSA's grantees and training programs provide a valuable on-the-ground perspective for Million Hearts®. High-performing centers share best practices for improving cardiovascular care through webinars and other venues, and training programs translate clinical guidelines into effective practice through shared tools, clinical quality forums, and community partnerships. Finally, HRSA offers technical assistance training and tools, including one for better management of high blood pressure.

Million Hearts® partners participated in health fairs and community events to help spread the word about prevention.

The Ohio State University School of Nursing hosted a number of educational blood pressure screening events and assisted with connecting patients and health care providers.

- The CMS Medicare Accountable Care Organizations (ACOs), including the Medicare Shared Savings Program and the Pioneer ACO model, to promote accountability for a patient population and encourage investment in infrastructure and redesigned care processes for high-quality, efficient service delivery.
- The HRSA Uniform Data Systems used by 1,200 federally qualified health centers.

**Integrating Public Health and Clinical Practice**

In September 2012, CDC published a Vital Signs report, "Getting Blood Pressure Under Control," which includes new data on the burden of high blood pressure among Americans and offers guidance for the public health community and health care systems on how to help patients get their blood pressure under control. The report stresses that, when identified as a priority, blood pressure control is achieved. The best results come from a coordinated team approach that incorporates pharmacists, nurses and nurse practitioners, physician assistants, community health workers, health coaches, and others, in addition to primary care and specialist physicians.

Health care professionals can help their patients avoid a heart attack or stroke by:

- Identifying people with several readings of elevated blood pressure and no definitive diagnosis of hypertension (improved detection).
- Training staff to measure blood pressure accurately, to teach self-monitoring techniques to patients and caregivers, and to reinforce the importance of control at each encounter.
- Adjusting medications and lifestyle interventions in a timely fashion to achieve optimal control (improved control).
- Emphasizing the critical importance of taking medications as prescribed, despite

## Aaron's
Million Hearts® Story

Aaron, who survived a near fatal heart attack at 42, now considers himself to be in the bonus round. He's vigilant about getting his blood pressure checked, taking his medications, and seeing his doctor regularly. He urges others to care for their bodies so they can spend more time with their loved ones, too.

Watch Aaron's story at: http://millionhearts.hhs.gov/resources/videos.html.

the lack of hypertension symptoms, and helping problem-solve with patients who struggle to take medications as directed.

- Measuring performance for the practice or system and setting a goal of achieving excellence.

**Cities, States Take Initiative**

Cities and states have made measureable progress in blood pressure control. For example, in an innovative approach, the New York City Department of Health and Mental Hygiene produced the BigAppleRx card. This free prescription discount card program for city residents and visitors provides discounts for most categories of medicines, including prescription and over-the-counter smoking cessation aids and blood pressure and cholesterol medications. Prices and savings vary by medication but can be more than a 50% discount for some generic drugs and range from about 15% to 25% on brand-name drugs. Patients visit www.BigAppleRx.com to print the card and have the information texted to their smartphone.

The Outpatient Quality Improvement Network (OQUIN), based at the Medical University of South Carolina, is a growing collaborative of clinics statewide that work together to use data and analysis to improve quality of care and health outcomes. Approximately 1.5 million patients in South Carolina and another half million in other southeastern states are included in the OQUIN patient population. By the end of 2012, 51% of patients with hypertension and high cholesterol in OQUIN practices achieved control of blood pressure to less than 140/90 mmHg and of cholesterol levels to goals of the National Cholesterol Education Program/Adult Treatment Panel III guidelines.

**Prevention on a National Scale**

Regional, state, and local efforts already significantly contribute to lowering new cases of heart disease and stroke and to improving prevention. Million Hearts® offers the opportunity to enhance the impact of these

Dr. Janet Wright, Executive Director of Million Hearts®, visits with attendees at the September 2012 Million Hearts® partner meeting co-hosted by the Association of Black Cardiologists, the American College of Cardiology, and the American Heart Association.

efforts by coordinating and aligning goals and metrics.

In coordination with partners, HHS has identified opportunities for partners to promote Million Hearts® goals and use the initiative's metrics: "Opportunities for Engagement in Million Hearts®." The guide focuses on five major goals:

1. Encourage common ABCS metrics for use by all partners.
2. Foster clinical innovations.
3. Enhance health information technology, empowering health care providers and systems to improve cardiovascular care through its use.
4. Expand community initiatives to support healthful behaviors.
5. Identify and share successes.

A nationwide network of partners focused on evidence-based metrics and goals can help prevent heart attacks and strokes and, ultimately, help make the nation healthier.

**Expanding Innovation and Health Information Technology**

One of the guiding principles of Million Hearts® is fostering innovation. To that end, the initiative held an event, supported by the Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality and the American Heart Association, to showcase innovative work on the ABCS titled "Million Hearts®: Scaling and Spreading Innovation—Strategies to Improve Cardiovascular Health." This daylong event on April 19, 2012, at the Kaiser Permanente Center for Total Health in Washington, DC, brought together leaders from across the country to share successes and best practices in blood pressure and cholesterol control, including:

- A study by Aetna on disease management to promote blood pressure control among African Americans. The study found lower blood pressure and more frequent home monitoring of blood pressure among participants who received culturally appropriate disease management, including counseling from nurses on the telephone, compared with those who received a standard disease management program.
- A program at the Family Health Center at San Francisco General Hospital that provides health coaches to patients with diabetes who have limited English skills to evaluate improvement in health self-management and quality of care. The Family Health Center

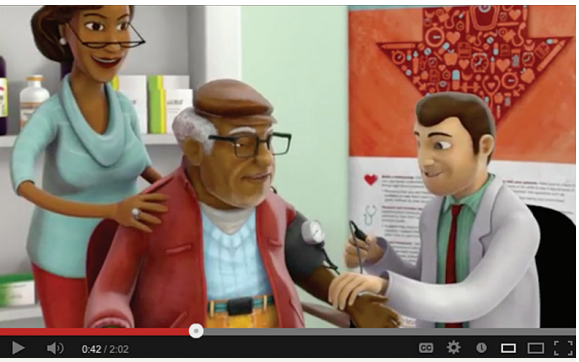
## PCNA Partners with Million Hearts®

to Help Control Blood Pressure

In response to the CDC Vital Signs report, "Getting Blood Pressure Under Control," the Preventive Cardiovascular Nurses Association (PCNA) has released a newly updated "How Do You Measure Up?" interactive and educational booklet. The 14-page document is designed to help patients understand their blood pressure numbers and how they can work with their health care team to achieve optimal blood pressure. The new version also includes a tear-out measuring tool to determine blood pressure cuff size.

reported that the program has so far led to improvements in a variety of metrics, including blood pressure and cholesterol control and reduced health care costs.

- A medication therapy management program created by the American Pharmacists Association Foundation's Asheville Project, a community-based program for patients with high blood pressure and high cholesterol. Over a 6-year period in 12 hospitals and clinics in Asheville, North Carolina, the program demonstrated both health and cost benefits.




## Treating High Blood Pressure

Team Up. Pressure Down.

There are many ways to treat hypertension, from reducing the amount of sodium in your diet to taking medication. Learn how each of these treatments works in your body and how they protect you from a heart attack or stroke.

Watch this video at: http://millionhearts.hhs.gov/resources/videos.html.

On December 4, 2012, CMS held an educational webinar, "Powerful Enough to Make a Difference: Promising Practices for Blood Pressure Control in Clinical Settings." The webinar showcased three practices, large and small, that have improved blood pressure control among patients with hypertension through use of health information technology, team-based care, and processes that make analysis and improvement a daily routine. More than 600 providers participated in the webinar; the slides, audio, and transcript from the event are available on the Million Hearts® website.

Million Hearts® also launched *Team Up. Pressure Down.* in September 2012. The program encourages pharmacists and patients to work together to control blood pressure. Resources for patients and pharmacists include videos, a variety of patient education and pharmacist continuing education materials, a blood pressure journal, a wallet card to track medications, and a work-up tool for pharmacists to evaluate patients' medication adherence. Public and private pharmaceutical partners are encouraging their members to use these resources.

Dr. Carolyn Clancy, Director of the Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality, participates at the Million Hearts® Innovations Exchange.

In coordination with Million Hearts®, the American Medical Group Foundation launched Measure Up/Pressure Down. This 3-year national campaign aims to improve high blood pressure prevention, detection, and control by mobilizing the coordinated care delivery systems of American Medical Group Association members to

Kaiser Permanente of Colorado received one of two 2012 Million Hearts® Hypertension Control Champion Awards. From left to right: Dr. Janet Wright, Executive Director of Million Hearts®; Dr. Donna Lynne, President of Kaiser Permanente Colorado; Dr. Mike Chase, Associate Medical Director of Quality, Kaiser Permanente Colorado; Kathleen Sebelius, Secretary of Health and Human Services; and Dr. Thomas Frieden, Director of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

adopt one or more evidence-based care processes that lead to measurable improvements in blood pressure outcomes. This group of health care systems delivers care to 130 million patients—nearly one in three Americans. The group set a goal for 80% of patients with hypertension to have blood pressure under control by 2016. More than 120 medical groups and health care systems, delivering care to more than 41 million patients, have already joined Measure Up/Pressure Down, including the Mayo Clinic, the Cleveland Clinic, Kaiser Permanente, Geisinger Health System, and Henry Ford Health System.

With the goal of linking primary care with public health through residency program partnerships, CDC is working to forge strong connections between clinical medicine and public health in support of Million Hearts®. Through its Primary Care and Public Health initiative, CDC works with clinical educators to develop public health resources for residency programs. To date, modules for medical residency and other primary care educators have been developed on cholesterol management, hypertension, and sodium reduction.

**Spotlight: Million Hearts® Hypertension Control Champions 2012**

Scaling and spreading the lessons learned by successful health care systems and practices is an important component of Million Hearts®. In 2012, the initiative highlighted two Hypertension Control Champions for

## Dr. Amie Hsia

Medical Director of the MedStar Washington Hospital Center Stroke Center

If Dr. Amie Hsia could say just one thing about stroke, it would be that it is preventable and treatable. In this video, she shares some of the common risk factors for stroke and heart attacks and encourages people to learn whether they are at risk.

Watch Dr. Amie Hsia at: http://millionhearts.hhs.gov/resources/videos.html.

achieving blood pressure control rates exceeding 80% among patients with high blood pressure.

- Since 2008, Kaiser Permanente Colorado has increased its focus on managing blood pressure among its patients. Kaiser Permanente's reported control rate among members rose from 61% in 2008 to 82.6% in 2012.
- Ellsworth Medical Clinic in rural western Wisconsin, led by two primary care doctors and a physician assistant, has improved its blood pressure control rate among patients with cardiovascular disease from 68% to 97%. The clinic reported a 2012 blood pressure control rate of 90% among all patients with high blood pressure.

## Million Hearts®
### Grand Rounds

Million Hearts® hosted a number of online events in 2012 to engage partners and stakeholders. One example is a CDC Public Health Grand Rounds held on February 21, 2012, titled "Preventing 1 Million Heart Attacks and Strokes by 2017: The Million Hearts® Initiative." This event examined interventions for heart disease and stroke prevention and shared the initiative's community activities in cities like San Diego and New York.

The Grand Rounds provided an opportunity to discuss public- and private-sector collaboration in Million Hearts® and explore ways to unite existing prevention efforts with innovative programs that can help Americans live longer, healthier lives. *Morbidity and Mortality Weekly Report* produced a digest of the event, and a Grand Rounds toolkit is available on the Million Hearts® website.

As two examples of many systems and practices partnering with Million Hearts® to improve blood pressure control among their patients, these champions attribute their success to:

- Increased use of electronic health records, allowing them to identify and track clinical outcomes and incorporate built-in prompts and reminders.
- Integrated team-based care that harnesses the skills of team members to identify patients with high blood pressure, provide patient support and follow-up care, and help patients manage their blood pressure and stick to their control plans.
- Reinforcement with patients of the importance of adopting heart-healthy behaviors—eating a low-sodium diet, getting regular physical activity, maintaining a healthy weight, taking medications as prescribed, and not smoking.

Students from the Georgia State University School of Nursing attend CDC's Public Health Grand Rounds on the Million Hearts® initiative.

Million Hearts® Year One

# Looking Ahead

During 2012, more than 50 public and private organizations pledged to implement specific commitments to improve clinical and community prevention and achieve the Million Hearts® goal of preventing 1 million heart attacks and strokes.

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The nation's leading heart health organizations, ranging from voluntary organizations to health care systems, from nursing associations and pharmacy networks to large and small group practices, from academic institutions to state health departments, are working to improve performance on the ABCS and reduce risk for heart attack and stroke.

Many more Million Hearts® supporters—employers, faith communities, schools, civic organizations—are becoming champions to improve health at the community level. Through policies, communications, and commitments, these communities are empowering Americans to make healthy choices, such as avoiding tobacco use and reducing sodium and trans fat consumption. Because of their dedication, we can reduce the number of people who need medical treatment and in turn prevent heart attacks and strokes.

In 2012, we identified examples of a wide range of clinical organizations, large and small, that—through a focus on the ABCS, robust use of health information technology, and working in teams—saw patients improve their heart health. I'm pleased to share in this report the work of innovative partners who are passionate about sharing what works so that effective practices can be adapted and scaled for greater success.

Sustained improvement in the ABCS will require continued development of partnerships and engagement with health systems and practices to adopt and adapt the tools for lowering blood pressure and improving the other elements of the ABCS. Achieving the Million Hearts® goal also requires partnerships with public and community leaders, including employers, schools, and others.

In 2013, we look forward to even greater synergy and collaboration by Million Hearts® clinical and public health partners as measures and incentives are aligned and mature. Together, we can keep 1 million more hearts beating strong for years to come.

**Janet Wright, MD, FACC**
Executive Director
Million Hearts® Initiative

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