



Florida Hospital Apopka Launches *Heart of Apopka* Community Wellness Program

At an event on the morning of May 15, Florida Hospital Apopka announced the launch of a new program designed to create healthier lifestyles in the community. The *Heart of Apopka* Community Wellness Program includes a community education campaign and a chronic disease self-management program.

“Apopka has alarming rates of obesity, heart disease, cancer, stroke, and diabetes, making this the perfect community for an initiative like *Heart of Apopka*,” said Verbelee Nielsen-Swanson, administrator of Florida Hospital Apopka. “Our goal is to impact 10,000 individuals in our community and significantly influence the health of Apopka through education and other wellness programs.”

According to Florida Vital Statistics, Apopka has a higher percentage of people dying from heart disease, cancer, stroke, and diabetes than all of Orange County. Also, Apopka has a higher percentage of obesity than all of Orange County, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

In addition to the 10,000 individuals *Heart of Apopka* aims to impact through education, the program also plans to enroll at least 500 people in a chronic disease self-management program to help patients learn how to better control chronic diseases that can lead to more serious health complications.

Also, a select group of 200 higher-risk community members will be invited to enroll in part of the program that will help pay for the costs of diagnostic, dental and medical specialty services for participants who are unable to pay.

Florida Hospital’s Community Health Impact Council (CHIC) gave a grant of nearly \$480,000 to fund the *Heart of Apopka* program. CHIC oversees all of Florida Hospital’s community benefit programming and focuses on health-related efforts that improve patient care, research and education. Other CHIC programs include the Congestive Heart Failure Clinic and Cuídate, which provides chronic disease self-management classes to high-risk people with diabetes, heart disease or lung disease.

For more information, please contact Bob Fleener at 407/303-2311.