



EHHD
Eastern Highlands Health District

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

EHHD Uses Plan4Health Grant to Create a “Healthy Communities Toolkit”

In 2015, Eastern Highlands Health District (EHHD), in partnership with the Connecticut Chapter of the American Planning Association was awarded funding with the Plan4Health grant program. Plan4Health is funded by the American Planning Association and American Public Health Association. The program is designed to bring together the public health and town planning sectors of the community in order to increase physical activity and access to healthy foods while maintaining our small, rural town character.

The EHHD’s Community Health Action Response Team (CHART) has taken the reins on the Plan4Health project. CHART members identified that local Planning and Zoning Commissioners in small Connecticut towns are key community leaders that can positively impact a town’s walkability, bikeability, playability, and local food options. Director of Health Robert Miller comments that “town characteristics such as the safety and convenience of walking and biking are key factors in determining the physical activity opportunities of residents. Increasing physical activity is critical for preventing chronic diseases such as heart disease, diabetes, and stroke.”

Residents, elected officials, and members of town commissions and advisory groups can help increase healthy decisions in our region that positively impact physical activity and access to healthy food. Through Plan4Health, CHART developed an online toolkit designed to provide public health tips, tools, and resources tailored for land use planning within small towns. The EHHD’s CHART is conducting workshops for local officials on the toolkit during the months of March and April. More information and a link to the toolkit can be found www.ehhd.org/plan4health.