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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**NNPHI launches Phase 2 of *State Forums to Advance Health Systems Transformation***

**March 29, 2016, Washington, DC:** The National Network of Public Health Institutes (NNPHI), with support from the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation, has awarded grants to six member public health institutes to host state-wide forums aimed at advancing collaboration among the public health and health care sectors. This is the second phase of the *State Forums to Advance Health Systems Transformation*, which will build on the first as new grantees replicate or add to the array of approaches to integrate health systems to lower costs and improve population health.

“In Phase 1, NNPHI supported members in Georgia, Ohio, Virginia and Wisconsin to advance strategies to bridge public health and healthcare that address states’ biggest cost drivers and improve population health,” notes Vincent Lafronza, CEO and President of NNPHI. “However, many states have been left behind in the years following the implementation of the Affordable Care Act. In Phase 2, NNPHI will build on the program’s initial success and will also support states where health system transformation has struggled to move forward, such as rural, southern and non-Medicaid expanding states.”

The *State Forums* project will provide the following institutes with up to \$25,000 to improve collaboration between the public health and health care sectors within their respective states. Each institute will also provide matching funds to support sustainability.

- **Hawaii Public Health Institute** will establish a Rural Community Health Ambassador Program to engage rural communities in current state-wide health system transformation efforts.
- **Illinois Public Health Institute** will engage Medicaid and private payer managed care plans and hospital systems to leverage community-based chronic disease prevention and self-management programs.
- **Mississippi Public Health Institute** will replicate the work of the Phase 1 grantee Health Policy Institute of Ohio to create a Mississippi Health Value Dashboard with a focus on behavioral health.
- **Public Health Management Corporation** (Pennsylvania) will replicate the work in Virginia by the Institute of Public Health Innovation to integrate community health workers into the healthcare system to support population health improvement.
- **South Carolina Institute of Medicine and Public Health** will explore ways to support a future healthcare workforce better aligned to promote population health improvements.
- **Tennessee Institute of Public Health**, in collaboration with Healthy Appalachia Institute, will support the development of an Accountable Care Community with a health system that operates in Northeast Tennessee and Southwest Virginia.

Applicants for the initiative underwent a competitive selection process, including a review by a committee comprised of national partner organizations. NNPHI congratulates all applicants for the innovative projects they submitted to support health systems transformations.

Each of the selected applicants will host a state forum and develop practical strategies to align health system stakeholders around the mutual goal of improving population health and the identified priorities outlined above. Forums are expected to be held by February 2017. There will be another solicitation for grantees in 2017.

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**About the National Network of Public Health Institutes (NNPHI)**

NNPHI's mission is to support national public health system initiatives and strengthen PHIs to promote multi-sector activities resulting in measurable improvements of public health structures, systems, and outcomes. Learn more about NNPHI and its member institutes at [www.nnphi.org](http://www.nnphi.org).

**About the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation**

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