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National Conference on Tobacco or Health Brings More Than 1,800 Tobacco Control and Public Health Professionals to Austin, Texas

National Network of Public Health Institutes and partner organizations convene tobacco control professionals from around the United States to discuss strategies to improve public health

AUSTIN, Texas. – On Wednesday, March 22, the National Network of Public Health Institutes (NNPHI), working in coordination with numerous other health organizations, will convene the 2017 National Conference on Tobacco or Health (NCTOH), bringing together over 1,800 tobacco control and public health professionals at the Austin Convention Center in Austin, Texas.

NCTOH is one of the largest, longest-standing gatherings of tobacco control and public health professionals in the United States. Since its establishment in 1982, the conference has provided attendees with a forum to share best practices, effective policies, and emerging trends in their ongoing efforts to improve and sustain the effectiveness and reach of tobacco control programs and activities.

“We welcome conference participants to Texas,” said Janna Zumbrun, Associate Commissioner for Disease Control and Prevention at the Texas Department of State Health Services. “What will be done here in Austin is important public health work that will help prevent future generations from beginning to use tobacco and contribute to their lifelong health.”

During the conference, NCTOH participants will engage in discussions about innovative ideas and strategies to reduce tobacco use and create a healthier future for all Americans. Experts from around the globe, representing an array of perspectives on tobacco control and a wealth of experience in public health, will present on topics ranging from the benefits of smoke-free policies to effective youth prevention tactics.

“It’s an honor to have people from around the world come to Austin to address this important public health issue. Tobacco continues to kill almost 800 Austin and Travis County residents every year—more than AIDS, crack, heroin, cocaine, alcohol, car accidents, fire, murder and suicide—combined,” said Dr. Philip Huang, Medical Director and Health Authority for Austin Public Health. “We have had many successes, but this problem is clearly not solved or old news. There continue to be new products and threats, and almost 38 million youth and adults in the U.S. continue to smoke. We have to remain vigilant in addressing this issue.”

NNPHI, the lead planning partner for this year’s NCTOH, collaborated with a Steering Committee of eight organizations and Program Areas Committees with over 150 content experts in specific aspects of tobacco prevention and control, to plan and implement the conference.

“Tobacco remains the leading cause of preventable death in the United States. This conference provides our nation an essential opportunity for cross-pollination of strategies that save lives,” said Dr. Vincent Lafronza, NNPHI President and CEO. “The return on investment for tobacco control programs is undeniably significant for a nation that spends more than \$300 billion annually on smoking-related illness and loss of productivity. We know from CDC that diseases caused by both smoking and secondhand smoke kill more than 480,000 Americans each year, which is analogous to wiping out a mid-

size city. We can save many lives by investing in interventions we know work and by generating new knowledge that will result in greater public health gains.”

For more information about NCTOH, visit www.nctoh.org. To learn more about NNPHI, visit www.nnphi.org.

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About the National Conference on Tobacco or Health

The National Conference on Tobacco or Health (NCTOH) is one of the largest, longest-standing gatherings of tobacco control and public health professionals in the United States. The goal of the conference is to help improve and sustain the effectiveness and reach of tobacco control programs and activities in the United States. During the event, tobacco control and public health from across the United States gather to learn about best practices and policies to reduce tobacco use—the leading preventable cause of disease and death in the United States.

About the National Network of Public Health Institute

Mobilizing more than 40 public health institutes throughout 32 states along with ten university-based regional training centers and 40 training affiliates – the National Network of Public Health Institutes (NNPHI) is a social, financial and information network, connecting more than 4,500 subject-matter experts with organizational partners across the nation. The network implements public health initiatives throughout all fifty states and is a go-to resource for creating multi-sector innovation that results in measureable improvements in the public’s health.