

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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Bladen County to Benefit from New Grant from the NC Health and Wellness Trust Fund

ZARA Betterment Corporation to Improve Diabetes Education and Management

Raleigh, NC – The NC Health and Wellness Trust Fund (HWTF), through its Health Disparities Initiative, is announcing the award of \$289,896 in grant funding over a 30-month period to ZARA Betterment Corporation to improve the coordination of preventive and chronic care for people with diabetes. HWTF Commission Chair Lt. Governor Bev Perdue presented the grant to ZARA Betterment Corporation in a special ceremony today.

“Regardless of who we are or where we’re from, we all deserve high quality health care,” said Lt. Governor Bev Perdue, HWTF Commission Chair. “Eliminating health disparities is critical to building a healthier Bladen County and a healthier North Carolina.”

The grant funding will support their Health Education Link Program (HELP) outreach program which provides diabetes education and follow-up treatment to African Americans and Hispanics in the region. HELP’s goal is to reduce the death rate from diabetes in these populations.

An estimated 1.4 million people in North Carolina have diabetes or pre-diabetes. Since over a third of NC adults have never had a diabetes blood test, many of those with pre-diabetes are not aware of their condition. The death rate from diabetes among African Americans (175 per 100,000) is over twice that of whites (83 per 100,000), and American Indians also have a much higher death rate (149 per 100,000) than whites.

About the Health Disparities Initiative

The HWTF Commission has allocated over \$12.6 million to address the growing problem of health disparities in North Carolina through its Health Disparities Initiative. This initiative provides grants to community-based organizations who aim to reduce health disparities. For more information, visit.

http://www.healthwellinc.com/hwtfc/htmlfiles/fundprty_healthdisparities.htm.

About the NC Health and Wellness Trust Fund

The NC Health and Wellness Trust Fund makes North Carolina stronger, both physically and economically, by funding programs that promote preventive health. Created by the General Assembly in 2000 to allocate a portion of North Carolina's share of the national tobacco settlement, HWTF has invested \$143 million to support preventive health initiatives and \$102 million to fund prescription drug assistance programs. For more information, please visit www.HealthWellNC.com.

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