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## **Healthy Tri-County Releases Region's First Health Improvement Plan**

**NORTH CHARLESTON, S.C.** – Healthy Tri-County, a regional initiative powered by MUSC Health, Roper St. Francis Healthcare and Trident United Way, released *Our Health, Our Future: Tri-County Health Improvement Plan 2018-2023* at the second annual Tri-County Health Symposium today at Trident Technical College.

The TCHIP is the first health improvement plan developed specifically for Berkeley, Charleston and Dorchester counties. More than 80 volunteers from 60 organizations participated in development of the Tri-County Health Improvement Plan, clocking a total of 2,300 hours over a 12-month period.

"I'm thrilled to share our health improvement plan at the symposium today," Trident United Way Director of Health Kellye McKenzie said. "We've structured the symposium in a manner that ensures participants will be able to fully engage with the content of the report and learn from the various practitioners who either helped craft the document or are featured as a regional spotlight for their innovative health improvement efforts."

Volunteers came from a variety of professional backgrounds with representatives from nonprofits, government agencies and businesses. South Carolina Department of Health and Environmental Control served Healthy Tri-County as a technical assistance provider during the development of the plan and will continue to support organizations in that role through implementation.

"The Tri-County Health Improvement Plan represents incredible unity and serves as a living witness of local organizations coming together to improve the health and wellness of our community," Roper St. Francis Healthcare Vice President of Mission Mark Dickson said. "The plan examines our community's health through the lens of social determinants that include poverty, the education environment, crime and safety concerns, all with the mission of providing a promising future."

Healthy Tri-County's health improvement plan prioritizes five topics that ranked as most important by more than 1,500 community members that participated in the 2016 Community Health Needs Assessment. The assessment was a collaborative effort of Roper St. Francis Healthcare, MUSC Health and Trident United Way and ultimately led to the creation of Healthy Tri-County in January 2017. Prioritized topics include access to health care, behavioral health, clinical preventative services, maternal, infant & child health as well as obesity, nutrition and physical activity. Social determinants of health and health equity serve as foundational topics that apply across the prioritized health topics.

"By identifying the major issues plaguing the overall health and wellness of our Tri-County area, we're collectively getting to a place where we can begin to make scalable, effective and positive changes in the health disparities and challenges that our neighbors, friends and families are dealing with every day," MUSC Health Chief Diversity Officer & Executive Director of Community Health Innovation Anton Gunn said.

With the Tri-County Health Improvement Plan completed, Healthy Tri-County will now shift its focus to aiding organizations and individuals with its implementation. Healthy Tri-County is also looking forward to the 2019 Community Health Needs Assessment and has established a diabetes coalition to increase the awareness of prediabetes and diabetes and utilize the Diabetes Prevention Program to prevent new incidents of type 2 diabetes and prediabetes.

The 28-page Tri-County Health Improvement Plan is available online at [healthytricity.com/tri-county-health-improvement-plan](https://healthytricity.com/tri-county-health-improvement-plan). An eight-page Community Action Guide has also been developed to help community-based organizations, government agencies and individuals take action. To learn more, visit [healthytricity.com](https://healthytricity.com)

*Healthy Tri-County is a multi-sector regional initiative to improve health outcomes in Berkeley, Charleston and Dorchester counties in South Carolina.*