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## **ACHIEVE Makes Recommendations for a Healthier New London Survey Allows Residents to Give Input**

NEW LONDON — Community leaders from ACHIEVE New London reported their recommendations for a healthier New London to the City Council Public Welfare Committee on November 30. The recommendations to reduce and prevent chronic disease among New London residents, follows a six month review of existing policies, systems and environmental conditions that may be impacting the city's health.

“We know that a long, healthy life depends more on where we live than our access to health care or our family history. For that reason, we must focus not only on personal behavior but on the community itself,” said Director of Health Baker Salisbury. “We have been given an opportunity to start where prevention begins, where we live, work, play and learn.”

The ACHIEVE New London Team includes leaders that represent varying sectors of the community. This summer the ACHIEVE Team met to collect and review local city and census profile data, health status reports, strategic school profiles and conduct interviews with key leaders and groups. The ACHIEVE Team conducted three tours of New London to assess current strengths and challenges. The team then created an inventory of current assets and challenges that exist in New London that influence policies and environmental conditions that impact health. The ACHIEVE Team joined 42 other grantees at the Action Institute in Washington D.C. to learn what makes some communities healthier than others, which lead to a strategic plan for New London.

The four goals included in the strategic plan adopted by ACHIEVE New London for the year 2010 are to improve nutrition among New London residents, increase physical activity, prevent and reduce tobacco use and improve chronic disease management. To support selected strategies, ACHIEVE New London will be conducting a citywide survey of residents during the month of December.

“The Healthy Residents Survey has been created to gain valuable information from the individuals who are impacted the most, the citizens of New London,” said Community Relations Supervisor Cindy Barry. “Everyone we have spoken to is really excited to participate and share their vision for a healthier New London.”

Residents can access the survey, offered in English and Spanish, online at Ledge Light Health District's website [www.ledgelighthd.org](http://www.ledgelighthd.org), in the New London Times newspaper, delivered the weekends of December 12 and 19 and at the following New London locations, where surveys and drop boxes will be available:

- Kente Cultural Center: 219 Bank Street, New London
- Gemma Moran Food Center: 374 Broad Street, New London
- Centro de la Comunidad: 109 Blinman Street, New London
- New London Main Street: 165 State Street, New London
- New London Senior Center: 120 Broad Street, New London
- TVCCA: 81 Huntington Street, New London
- Community Health Center: 1 Shaw's Cove, New London
- New London City Hall: 2<sup>nd</sup> Floor, New London
- New London Public Library: 63 Huntington Street, New London
- Homeward Bound Treasures: 35 Golden Street, New London

The ACHIEVE New London Team is currently establishing four workgroups focused on nutrition, physical activity, chronic disease management and tobacco. Workgroups will meet independent of the ACHIEVE Team to begin implementing select strategies and will refine strategies when the resident survey is completed. ACHIEVE is currently recruiting interested residents and subject experts to join their workgroups. For more information please contact Cindy Barry at Ledge Light Health District by calling 860-448-4882 ext. 302.

Ledge Light Health District launched the ACHIEVE New London initiative after receiving federal funding from the National Association of County and City Health Officials for the purpose of making lasting changes in New London, that will improve access to healthy food, increase physical activity, reduce and prevent tobacco use and improve management of chronic health conditions.

The mission of ACHIEVE New London is to work with community leaders in schools, worksites, healthcare, community organizations and neighborhoods to implement policy and environmental strategies which facilitate improved nutritional status, increased physical activity, improved chronic disease management, and the cessation and abstinence of tobacco use.

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**Ledge Light Health District** provides professionally managed comprehensive public health services designed to improve the quality of life and health and safety of its residents. The District service area consists of East Lyme, Groton, Ledyard, New London and Waterford, with a service population of over 120,000.