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Arab American and Chaldean Council Hopes to Encourage Patient Compliance With Texting Software for Behavioral Health Program

LATHRUP VILLAGE, Mich. – April XX, 2014 –The Arab American and Chaldean Council (ACC), a premier nonprofit human service organization serving southeast Michigan, has been awarded a \$35,000 Health Innovation Grant by the Michigan Department of Community Health (MDCH). The grant is to be used to develop a texting software program to benefit the ACC’s Behavioral Health Program (BHP), a comprehensive community-based, outpatient initiative committed to the prevention and treatment of psychological and social problems.

The goal of Health Innovation Grants is to encourage cutting edge advances in health care, improving the efficiency and effectiveness of the delivery of Michigan’s health services, and to have the potential for replication throughout the state. BHP will use the grant to integrate technology applications with its Electronic Medical Records to increase compliance, through texting, with scheduled appointments and prescribed medications. In addition, the organization will incorporate a patient portal that will empower individuals to be more involved in their care by having access to their health information and being able to leave messages for nurses between visits.

“Text messaging has been found to be an effective way of increasing medication compliance and participation in services,” said Carmen Sarafa, director of behavioral health, Arab American and Chaldean Council. “By having more frequent communication with a nurse, studies have shown individuals are more likely to take their medications as prescribed than those who did not. We are hoping that this initiative will greatly improve patients care.”

The ACC is working with a software developer to create a HIPAA compliant program that will allow BHP staff to text and receive appointment reminders, as well as information related to medication compliance. Currently, the organization utilizes the Electronic Medical Record also utilized by the majority of PIHPs (Pre-Paid Inpatient Health Plan). With the ability to also track canceled appointments, ACC staff will be able to follow-up and re-schedule appointments for more effective appointment compliance and reduce the rate of no shows. By creating a more advanced product that improves access to care, the software company will be able to offer this product to all its vendors.

Those served will be anyone who meets the eligibility for community mental health and lives in Wayne County.

About the Arab American and Chaldean Council (ACC)

The Arab American and Chaldean Council (ACC) is the premier nonprofit human service organization providing services to the Middle Eastern and mainstream communities in Southeast Michigan. Founded in 1979, the ACC provides counseling, health care, social services, employment training, job placement, translation, interpretation and youth services to more than 70,000 clients in metro Detroit. The ACC operates 40 outreach offices in the tri-county area, staffed with bilingual and trilingual professionals to serve the Arab American and Chaldean American populations and offer assistance to the Middle East refugee population. For more information, visit www.myacc.org or call (248) 559-1990.