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***WINDHAM COUNTY HEALTHCARE CONSORTIUM RELEASES RESULTS OF
THEIR COMMUNITY HEALTH NEEDS ASSESSMENT***

WILLIMANTIC – Leading healthcare providers in Windham County have concluded a comprehensive community health needs assessment to help direct resources to address the area’s most pressing healthcare needs.

The Center for Research and Public Policy (CRPP), an independent research firm, conducted a comprehensive assessment utilizing focus groups and phone surveys of county residents, and State and Federal data to identify and prioritize healthcare needs in Windham County. This historic collaborative process sets the foundation for a county-wide commitment to address identified healthcare needs by the region’s major healthcare providers.

The eight-member consortium of Windham County healthcare providers that developed and funded the *Community Health Needs Assessment* includes: Windham Hospital, Day Kimball Healthcare, Natchaug Hospital, Generations Family Health Center, United Services, VNA East, Northeast District Department of Health and Community Health Resources (CHR). The Jewett City Savings Bank also provided funding for the assessment.

The study identified areas of strength for Windham County as well as areas for future focus by healthcare providers. Major areas of healthcare needs include chronic disease, behavioral health and preventive healthcare. Specifically, the priority areas include:

1. Cardiovascular Disease
2. Diabetes
3. Obesity
4. Colorectal Disease
5. Depression / Suicide Prevention
6. Tobacco Cessation
7. Nutrition
8. Flu Shots
9. Sleep issues

CEO’s of the consortium member organizations shared, in a joint statement, “We are extremely pleased that our eight diverse healthcare organizations serving Windham County had the opportunity to collaborate on the *Community Health Needs Assessment*. The findings will help us focus our resources to ensure the greatest benefit to the people we serve as we develop a blueprint for health and wellness programming in the region. We look forward to continuing the dialogue on how we can work together to address these pressing healthcare needs.”

Each participating healthcare provider is evaluating the assessment’s data in light of their current programs and services. Each will determine strategies to address the issues identified in the study, and may partner with other providers to address key areas of need and shared interest in support of the health and wellness of Windham County residents.

Recently, a federally funded Community Transformation Grant was awarded to the Northeast District Department of Health (NDDH), to build community capacity to reduce chronic disease and associated risk factors. This will facilitate the consortium's future collaborative efforts. The NDDH has developed a strong coalition in Northeastern Connecticut, and looks forward to expanding its partnership with the Windham Consortium to advance this important work throughout Windham County.

Complete results of the Windham County Community Health Needs Assessment may be found on each participating organization's website.

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