

For Immediate Release

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HCC Appoints Meagan Weirich as Community Health Manager

(November 19, 2012 Lexington, MO) – The Health Care Collaborative (HCC) of Rural Missouri will soon welcome its second Community Health Manager, Meagan Weirich. In this capacity, Weirich will support HCC’s Telehealth Outreach Diabetes and Depression program as well as the Lafayette County Live Healthy Live Well initiative. Both programs target pervasive risk factors in West Central Missouri that stem from diabetes, depression, obesity and tobacco use among other health conditions. Weirich, who began with HCC about a year ago as an intern, will also serve on the Social Services Committee among other duties.

“Meagan has a wonderful way of making people around her feel good,” said HCC Executive Director Toniann Richard. “She understands the importance of being a team player, as well as when to take the lead to get the job done. These qualities are invaluable and will prove very beneficial to HCC. We are very pleased to have her on board.”

Weirich will graduate this December from the University of Central Missouri with a Bachelors of Science in Health Studies with an emphasis on Community Health. The program prepares students for careers in disease prevention and healthy lifestyle promotion. “I was excited to learn that there are more avenues to improve health outcomes than becoming a nurse or a doctor,” Weirich said.

Her grandmother, a nurse, was one of the factors that motivated Weirich to pursue a career in health care. Improving the health care outcomes of those around her was another. “I would love to make huge strides in diabetes management and treatment possibilities,” she said. “I have many family members living with diabetes, so it really hits home for me.”

In her new role, Weirich said she looks forward to tackling some of the challenges facing rural health care, citing one hurdle that she is eager to help conquer. “The biggest challenge I have noticed is access to care,” she said. “Public transportation in rural areas is hard to come by. Any improvements made will be welcomed. I am hopeful that in the near future we can find a way to overcome this barrier.”

Weirich, who grew up on a dairy farm in Gray Summit, MO, is a 2008 graduate of Pacific High School in Pacific, MO. She will begin her new role with HCC this January. For more information, contact Toniann Richard at 660.259.2440. To learn more about HCC, visit HCCNetwork.org.

About the HCC

The Health Care Collaborative of Rural Missouri partners with area agencies, businesses and other non-profits to advocate for the health and well being of rural Missourians.

Among HCC’s current programs are:

- **Health information technology** initiatives to equip health care providers with the resources needed to offer telemedicine and telehealth services that increase patient access to quality health care;

- **Telehealth Outreach Diabetes and Depression (TODD)** program designed to use both traditional health care and telemedicine to create healthy outcomes for individuals suffering with diabetes and/or depression;
- **Social Innovation for Missouri (SIM)** that addresses tobacco cessation and obesity prevention; among other programs; and
- **Rural Missouri Health Co-op**—with a workplace wellness component—aimed at creating a healthier workforce and reducing insurance premiums.

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