



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Media Contacts:

Katie Thiede
Executive Director, ICAN!
kthiede@alliancechicago.org
312-259-3120

4 ILLINOIS HEALTH PROVIDERS JOIN STATEWIDE ICAN! NETWORK TO EXPAND HIGH-QUALITY CONTRACEPTIVE CARE FOR THOUSANDS MORE PATIENTS

Community health networks in Chicago, Springfield, and Southern Illinois will become Quality Hubs for contraceptive care

(CHICAGO) April 12, 2022 – Four community health networks serving more than 50,000 patients of reproductive age have joined an innovative Illinois network to improve the quality and coverage of contraceptive care across the state. Illinois Contraceptive Access Now (ICAN!)—a statewide initiative to advance reproductive health equity—announced today that Friend Health Center and Howard Brown Health in Chicago, SIU Center for Family Medicine in Springfield, and SIHF Healthcare in Southern Illinois have become part of ICAN!’s network of Quality Hubs, expanding the network to a total of seven Federally Qualified Health Centers (FQHCs). The four new partners join the Erie Family Health Centers, Near North Health, and PCC Community Wellness in the Chicagoland region as members of the ICAN! network.

Today’s expansion signals ICAN!’s commitment to reaching the highest need communities across Illinois and to transforming the way contraceptive care is delivered in preventive and primary care settings. By partnering with leading community health providers like SIHF Healthcare, ICAN! will build the capacity of local health centers to provide same day access to the full range of FDA-approved birth control methods at low or no cost to patients in their communities.

“I am thrilled that SIHF Healthcare has joined forces with ICAN! to expand access to high quality, compassionate, and timely contraceptive care as part of our ongoing commitment to improving maternal and reproductive health outcomes in our region,” says Brandy Holthaus, a Nurse Practitioner with SIHF Healthcare.

Despite Illinois’ laudable efforts to increase access to reproductive health care through policies that have expanded Medicaid coverage and protects minors’ rights, inequitable access to basic contraceptive care persists. Nearly one-third of contraceptive users lack coverage for contraceptive services and supplies. An estimated 800,000 women live in counties without health centers offering the full range of contraceptive methods. Of the nearly 400,000 women of reproductive age who access care at Illinois community health centers, just 1 in 5 receives contraceptive counseling.

As Kai Tao, a Certified Nurse Midwife and ICAN!’s Principal of Impact & Innovation explains, “Screening for contraceptive needs and desires in primary care should become routine for every person of reproductive age; no longer siloed and stigmatized.”

In 2022, through its growing Quality Hub network, ICAN! will train approximately 400 providers to deliver person-centered contraceptive care, connect 40,000 patients accessing contraceptive care where they receive ongoing care, and support 10,000 patients in gaining coverage for family planning and related services. By 2025, ICAN! aims to have

developed 20 Quality Hubs in urban and rural communities statewide that have the ability, demand, and capacity to meet patient need for high-quality contraceptive care.

Dr. Monica Moore, Medical Director of Obstetrics and Gynecology at Howard Brown Health says, “As the Midwest’s largest provider of affirming healthcare services for the LGBTQ+ community, we look forward to partnering with ICAN! to expand access to person-centered contraceptive care as part of our growing effort to meet the reproductive health needs of patients—including gender-diverse individuals—in our city’s most under resourced communities.”

ICAN! Executive Director Katie Thiede explains the urgency behind ICAN!’s expansion: “At a time when the future of reproductive health and rights hangs in the balance, it is more important than ever for Illinois to become a place where every person can decide if, when, and under what circumstances to be pregnant and parent.”

ICAN! is a five-year initiative to help close the contraceptive coverage gap in Illinois by: building the capacity of community health networks to serve as contraceptive care Quality Hubs; empowering, engaging and educating patients; and advancing policies that expand access to high quality contraceptive care for individuals with few resources.

For more information, please visit www.ican4all.org, or contact ican4all@alliancechicago.org.

-###-