



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:**

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## **Connecticut Choosing Wisely Collaborative Winds Down Operations After Six Years of Promoting Widespread Adoption of Choosing Wisely® Campaign Across Connecticut**

**HARTFORD, Conn. (September 30, 2020)** – The Connecticut Choosing Wisely Collaborative (CCWC), a diverse multi-stakeholder group committed to the widespread adoption of *Choosing Wisely*® in Connecticut, has accomplished its goals and has decided to wind down. The group was formed in 2014 to raise awareness in Connecticut about the *Choosing Wisely*® campaign and to be a catalyst to accelerate the adoption of *Choosing Wisely* in the State. The CCWC has worked to promote *Choosing Wisely* as a vehicle to support efforts across Connecticut to improve health care quality, lower health care costs and advance health equity.

*Choosing Wisely* is an initiative of the [American Board of Internal Medicine \(ABIM\) Foundation](#) that was launched as a campaign in 2012 working with medical specialty societies and national consumer, employer, patient, healthcare, and business organizations. The campaign's focus is to promote conversations between clinicians and patients to help them make safe and effective care decisions. The CCWC, like many formed in states across the country, has worked in partnership with other local organizations to bring the message, the resources, and tools of the campaign to patients, consumer groups, employers, payers, providers, health systems, government officials, and policy makers.

“In the first few years of the Collaborative, members of our group made dozens of presentations to a variety of medical, employer, and community-based groups introducing them to the *Choosing Wisely* campaign. Over time, familiarity with the campaign has grown, in part from our efforts,” said Timothy Elwell, PhD, Qualidigm President and CEO, a founding member organization of the CCWC and one of the group’s co-chairs. “Based on multiple surveys we have conducted on relative awareness, *Choosing Wisely* is recognized as a program that benefits patients and health systems. Our group has focused on helping provider organizations gain access to tools and resources aimed at implementing *Choosing Wisely* across care settings. For example, we have partnered with Federally-Qualified Health Centers (FQHCs), hospitals, and Connecticut university students in health professional schools on a variety of projects,” said Elwell.

The Collaborative has relied on its members to volunteer their time and to make modest membership contributions to cover administrative costs including [website hosting](#), and organizing webinars, conferences, and other activities. “One of CCWC’s key accomplishments has been its focus on how the *Choosing Wisely* campaign can be used as a tool to promote health equity,” said Nancy Yedlin, Vice President of the Donaghue Foundation, also a founding member of the CCWC and the first chair of its leadership Council. “Our work in Connecticut, with great partners, was supported by grants from the Connecticut Health Foundation, one of the founding Collaborative members. We’ve been recognized by the American Board of Internal Medicine Foundation (ABIMF) and others as spurring action on how the

campaign can better serve and support particularly African American, black and Latinx patients, families, and communities who have been underserved by our health care system,” said Yedlin.

Over time, the 15 CCWC member organizations (past and present) which include: Access Health CT, Community Health Center Association of CT (CHCACT), Community Health Network of CT, Connecticut Business Group on Health, Connecticut Health Foundation, Donaghue Foundation, Health Disparities Institute, National Physicians Alliance-CT, Office of the Comptroller of Connecticut, Office of the Healthcare Advocate, Office of Health Strategy, Connecticut Primary Care Coalition, Qualidigm, Universal Health Care Foundation of Connecticut, and UCONN Health, have increasingly incorporated *Choosing Wisely* into their ongoing work. Several health care systems and patient organizations have adopted the principles of *Choosing Wisely* throughout Connecticut.

Recently, the [organization posted a report](#) that summarizes accomplishments over the last six years. While the Collaborative will officially disband by September 30, 2020, it will maintain a static website, which may be accessed at <http://www.choosingwiselyct.org/>. The accomplishments report may be found on the CCWC website.

Additionally, in accordance with its Memorandum of Understanding and Bylaws, upon the completion of this last project deliverable, the organization plans on distributing all remaining assets to a worthy organization. After much deliberation, the members have agreed to donate its remaining funds to Health Resources in Action (HRiA), a Boston-based 501(c)(3) public health institute in support of the National Association of Community Health Workers (NACHW). With the CCWC funding, the [NACHW](#) will be able to implement a project to advance *Choosing Wisely* materials, resources and learnings in Connecticut and nationally among community health worker (CHW) professionals on the front-line supporting communities to achieve health, equity and social justice.

“The CCWC has been a great partner with the national *Choosing Wisely* campaign and through them we have had to opportunity to work with many individuals and organization throughout Connecticut,” said Daniel Wolfson, Executive Vice-President of the ABIM Foundation. “Our organization will continue to serve as a resource to all those in Connecticut who wish to be engaged in the campaign. We encourage people to join the [Choosing Wisely learning network](#) to get access to all the resources we have available.”

Efforts to improve healthcare value and health outcomes for the citizens of Connecticut will continue through other organizations in which CCWC members remain active. Of note are the Moving to Value coalition efforts and Governor Lamont’s Cost Growth Benchmark initiative being led by the Office of Health Strategy that incorporates a focus on reducing low value care using a data-based approach.

“The Collaborative would like to thank all its past and current members and the numerous other groups and individuals who, over the past six plus years, contributed their time and effort to help make *Choosing Wisely* an important piece of our state’s efforts to improve health care quality, lower health care costs, and advance health equity,” said Laura Morris, Director of Consumer Engagement at the State Office of Health Strategy and current CCWC co-chair.

**About the Connecticut Choosing Wisely Collaborative (CCWC):**

The Connecticut Choosing Wisely Collaborative (CCWC) is a diverse multi-stakeholder group that is committed to the widespread adoption of *Choosing Wisely*® in Connecticut. The CCWC aims to support and connect organizations developing or already involved in *Choosing Wisely* in Connecticut. The Collaborative promotes the development of a *Choosing Wisely* learning community that local programs can join and access free resources to contribute to best practices at the local and national levels.

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