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Live Well Restaurants Launched as Newest Initiative Under Live Well Allegheny

PITTSBURGH – Dr. Karen Hacker, Director of the Allegheny County Health Department (ACHD), today attended the Annual Fall Conference & Awards Gala of the Pennsylvania Restaurant & Lodging Association (PRLA) to announce the launch of *Live Well Allegheny* restaurants. Joining Dr. Hacker in the announcement was Vince Sanzotti, President of the Western Chapter of the PRLA, which is partnering with the Health Department on this initiative.

“Live Well Allegheny is all about improving our health and restaurants can play an important role in raising awareness about healthy eating and living a healthy lifestyle,” said Dr. Hacker. *“The Live Well Restaurants* initiative will recognize restaurants that incorporate healthy options in their menus ranging from low fat, low salt items to providing customers with nutritional information. We are excited to have the endorsement of the Western Pennsylvania Restaurant Association in this effort and look forward to seeing any of the members become our first *Live Well Restaurants*.”

To be designated as a *Live Well Restaurant*, the business must first indicate its intent to work along with Allegheny County to accomplish the goals of the *Live Well Allegheny* campaign. At a minimum, restaurants must commit to eliminating trans-fat oils, being smoke free and not selling tobacco products. They must also commit to at least four action steps as detailed on the *Live Well Allegheny* web site. Some examples include providing low calorie salad dressing, nutritional and calorie information and offering healthy alternatives as side dishes.

“The PRLA Western Chapter is pleased to partner with the Allegheny County Health Department on this wellness initiative,” said Sanzotti. “We will be promoting the program to our members in Allegheny County, encouraging them to become designated as a *Live Well Restaurant*, as well as promoting the ‘Live Well’ mentality to our entire PRLA Western Chapter, encompassing nearly all of Southwestern Pennsylvania.”

Demand for healthier options is increasing as more and more customers become aware of the impacts of making healthier choices when they eat out. The initiative is a way to recognize and acknowledge those restaurants that opt to help consumers make healthier choices in Allegheny County. By offering an array of healthier options such as smaller portions, low fat, low salt selections, and smaller soft drink sizes, restaurants can help raise awareness of healthier options. The Live Well brand will help customers identify restaurants that offer these opportunities.

“When we first launched *Live Well Allegheny*, we did so with the thought that the campaign could embrace many different ideas and concepts of living well and that this effort would lead to exciting partnerships and collaboration,” said County Executive Rich Fitzgerald. “I’m thrilled to see the creation of this new program and to have the restaurants in our county have the opportunity to actively engage in helping our residents become healthier and make healthier choices. I commend Dr. Hacker, the

Health Board and the ACHD staff on this initiative and look forward to seeing even more initiatives in our community.”

Live Well Allegheny was launched in January 2014 as a comprehensive, innovative strategy on wellness that embraces a broad concept of living well to include physical health, mental wellness, personal and community safety, prevention and preparedness, and much more. The effort is being led by the Board of Health and Health Department Director Dr. Karen Hacker.

Participants in the *Live Well Allegheny* campaign are tied into the Health Department’s staff. While monetary resources are not part of the initiative, participating restaurants can receive materials, information and collateral items to promote the campaign and their individual efforts to “live well.” For more information on the *Live Well Allegheny* campaign, including how to become a *Live Well Allegheny* restaurant, visit www.LiveWellAllegheny.com.

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