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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

**Neighborhood Health Plan and Harvard Pilgrim Health Care Foundation Host
New Moms Health and Wellness Event in Lawrence**

June 6, 2014 (Lawrence, MA) – More than 1,000 attendees from the greater Lawrence area took part in free health-screenings and educational activities at the *New Moms Health and Wellness event* presented in partnership by [Neighborhood Health Plan](#) (NHP) and [Harvard Pilgrim Health Care Foundation](#).

The event was organized by a community coalition formed by NHP and Harvard Pilgrim Foundation to educate and empower new mothers by creating a friendly and relaxed environment where women could get relevant information about taking care of their health and their child's health, both before and after the baby is born.

Local organizations in the coalition, including Food for the World, YWCA, MSPCC, Lawrence WIC, City of Lawrence, Mayor's Health Task Force, and Greater Lawrence Community Action Council, were instrumental in planning and coordinating the event. Support was provided in part through a training and technical assistance grant award to NHP from Harvard Pilgrim Foundation's Culture InSight program.

"It is essential for women and their children to receive equitable and culturally competent care before, during, and after childbirth," said Dr. Paul Mendis, Chief Medical Officer at NHP. "By partnering with community-based organizations, we can successfully help to address the gap in care and provide new ways for Latina moms in Lawrence to access the support they need."

"One of the most effective ways to improve access to perinatal care is by engaging moms and family-serving community organizations," said Helen Hendricks, R.N., M.S., CPHQ, Director of Quality Management and Improvement at NHP. "By inviting moms and community partners to the table, we were able to learn firsthand about the needs of moms in Lawrence and tailor our interventions for maximum impact. We appreciate their work and continued collaboration."

Added Shani Dowd, Director, Culture Insight, Harvard Pilgrim Health Care Foundation, "We are delighted to provide assistance to organizations like NHP, who are partnering with community-based organizations to help reduce and eliminate health disparities that impact Latina women and their children. Harvard Pilgrim's mission is to improve the health of communities we serve and we are proud to work with community partners to ensure that everyone has the best health and health care possible."

The *New Moms Health and Wellness Event* featured free health screenings, perinatal and wellness workshops, and information on nutrition, doctors' visits, health insurance, and childcare. The coalition also provided free onsite childcare for participants.

In 2012, NHP identified a disparity in the rate of Latina women who have the recommended postpartum checkup 3-6 weeks after delivery and a similar disparity in well-child checkups to ensure infants and children are healthy in their first 15 months of life. NHP received a Culture InSight grant from Harvard Pilgrim Foundation to assess barriers to care among Latina women and their children and design a program to bridge the gap in care.

About Neighborhood Health Plan

Neighborhood Health Plan (NHP) (www.nhp.org) is an NCQA-accredited, not-for-profit health plan that provides coverage to over 300,000 commercial and MassHealth members. For more than 25 years, employers, individuals, and families across Massachusetts have turned to NHP for health care coverage that is both high-quality and affordable. NHP is known for plans that are easy-to-understand and manage. Members have access to a robust network of top doctors, community health centers, and academic and regional hospitals. Founded in 1986 with a commitment to promote health equity for members within the diverse communities we serve, NHP's service and care management programs today continue the tradition of personalized and high-quality care. NHP is a member of Partners HealthCare.

About Harvard Pilgrim Healthcare Foundation

Created in 1980, The Harvard Pilgrim Health Care Foundation supports Harvard Pilgrim's mission to improve the quality and value of health care for the people and communities we serve by providing the tools, training and leadership to help build healthy communities throughout New Hampshire, Massachusetts, Maine, and Connecticut. Since its inception, the Foundation has distributed more than \$130 million in funds. In 2013, the Harvard Pilgrim Foundation awarded more than \$2.8 million in grants to nearly 650 nonprofit organizations within the three states. For more information, please visit www.harvardpilgrim.org/foundation.

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