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-PRESS RELEASE-

CITY OF BRIDGEPORT TO KICK OFF ANNUAL 'KNOW YOUR NUMBERS' CAMPAIGN TUESDAY TO RAISE AWARENESS OF HEART DISEASE AND DIABETES

**THIRD ANNUAL 'KNOW YOUR NUMBERS' CAMPAIGN EDUCATES RESIDENTS OF
HEALTHY BLOOD PRESSURE, CHOLESTEROL AND BLOOD SUGAR LEVELS**

BRIDGEPORT, CT – The City of Bridgeport and City Council members will kick off the third annual 'Know Your Numbers' campaign to raise awareness of heart disease and diabetes on **Tuesday, January 17, 2017 with a screening for members of the Bridgeport City Council prior to their regular meeting. This Screening will take place starting at 5:30 p.m. at Bridgeport City Council chambers, 45 Lyon Terrace.** The 'Know Your Numbers' campaign will take place during Heart Month in February, , in cooperation with the Get Healthy CT grass roots public health campaign and the health departments of Bridgeport, Stratford, Fairfield, Trumbull and Monroe. The campaign is designed to benefit area residents with health information and education, especially in underserved communities. Its goal is to teach individuals to monitor their numbers for blood pressure, cholesterol and blood sugar levels and what these mean to their overall health, and how to identify unknown cases of cardiovascular disease and diabetes through reading the numbers. Get Healthy CT will also encourage those with existing disease to learn how to manage their condition.

“The City Council is looking forward to participating in the 'Know Your Numbers' campaign because we recognize how important it is for the people of Bridgeport to take their health seriously,” said Bridgeport City Council President Tom McCarthy (D-133). “My hope is this campaign will educate the community with some preventative steps to living healthier lives.”

Bridgeport Health Director Maritza Bond said, “Knowing your numbers is critical to living healthy and preventing costly and devastating diseases such as heart disease and diabetes. Through this campaign, Bridgeport residents have the opportunity to learn for themselves what is normal when it comes to cholesterol, blood sugar and blood pressure. In some cases, you cannot wait six months for a check up to know where you stand with your levels heart disease and diabetes are time sensitive health problems that can have life-long affects and even death when not immediately addressed.”

Get Healthy CT volunteers will provide free health screenings at churches, schools, provider sites and other locations throughout Bridgeport and other area towns. Screenings will include body mass index (BMI), blood pressure and blood sugar checks. Participants are given a card with their numbers for blood pressure, blood glucose, hemoglobin A1c, cholesterol, body mass index, and waist circumference.

The Know Your Numbers campaign includes public education about risk factors for heart disease and diabetes and how to get screened. Residents will be encouraged to see their regular primary care doctor for screenings. For underserved individuals unable to obtain screenings from a personal physician, a schedule of free screenings is being offered with follow-up to primary care physicians or clinics. In addition, the campaign will be promoted via social media and at GetHealthyCT.org.

In addition to the ‘Know Your Numbers’ campaign kickoff, A dozen more screenings are planned through February at food pantries and soup kitchens in Bridgeport. Know Your Numbers volunteer efforts in 2016 led to screening a total of 376 participants at 20 different sites. During these events, individuals were identified with having dangerously high blood pressure and blood sugar readings; some completely unaware. Our work to date has helped implement healthier food offerings at local pantries and soup kitchens, as well as provide resources to help screened participants manage their health, and potentially reduce Emergency Department admissions.

Get Healthy CT is a community coalition that that includes Bridgeport Hospital, St. Vincent’s Medical Center, local town health departments and social service agencies. It works to provide information about being healthy and local resources to support healthy eating and physical activity through its website (www.GetHealthyCT.org) and Facebook page. Printed information packets are available in some area libraries, community centers, regional health departments and other locations.