Million Hearts Collaboration – May 2015 Messaging Campaign
Theme: May Day, May Day! National Month for High Blood Pressure Education and Stroke Awareness Activities!

May is special! National High Blood Pressure Education Month, National Stroke Awareness month, and American Stroke Month are all promoted in May. And don’t forget Mother’s Day. These important observances provide organizations with multiple opportunities to remind health care professionals, patients and the public that high blood pressure is a major risk factor for stroke. Prevention, detection, and control of high blood pressure is important for both men and women. But, according to the CDC, after age 65, more women than men have high blood pressure. MAY we suggest putting special emphasis on educating the women within your sphere of influence on how to reduce their risk of stroke through prevention, detection and control of high blood pressure!

*If you have any activities that promote the awareness of high blood pressure and stroke, please let us know.

This document is intended to ensure consistent messaging among partners and it includes:

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I. .............................................................................................................................................................................. A
   Alignment with Priorities of the Public Health Action Plan to Prevent Heart Disease and Stroke: Ten-Year Update

• Effective Communication
   Focus – Prevention and public health
   Communicate to legislators, policymakers, and the public at large the nation’s vital stake in sustaining and building upon the prevention and public health the Affordable Care Act, e.g. the National Prevention Council, Prevention and Public Health Fund, and others.

• Strategic Leadership, Partnership & Organization
   Focus – Public health – Healthcare collaboration and integration
   Integrate public health and health care into a public health system effective in supporting community-level prevention policies and programs, e.g. the Million Hearts Initiative.

• Taking Action
   Focus – Cardiovascular health and health equity
Develop, advocate, and implement policies, programs, and practices aimed to improve the nation’s cardiovascular health in terms of the Healthy People 2020 objectives and AHA metrics – addressing tobacco use, overweight/obesity, physical activity, healthy diet (including reduction in sodium and artificial trans-fat intake), blood pressure, cholesterol, and fasting plasma glucose; and ensure that all such actions reach everyone, especially those most vulnerable due to unfavorable social and environmental conditions.

II. .............................................................................................................................................................................. Key Points

May is National High Blood Pressure Education Month.
- This annual celebration was created by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) to raise awareness about the dangers of high blood pressure.
- You can have high blood pressure and not know it. That is why it is called the silent killer. It is also why it is so important to have your blood pressure checked. If you know family or friends who haven’t had their blood pressure checked recently, make it a point to ask them to do it during National High Blood Pressure Education Month in May.

May is American Stroke Month.
- This annual celebration is sponsored by the American Heart Association/American Stroke Association and works to increase stroke awareness and to educate Americans that stroke is largely preventable, treatable and beatable.
- While stroke is the No. 5 cause of death and leading cause of disability in the U.S., many Americans do not think of stroke as a major health concern. We have made a lot of progress, but we still have a ways to go to end stroke and need your help!

May is National Stroke Awareness Month.
- This annual celebration created by the CDC works to raise awareness about stroke.
- Anyone can have a stroke at any age. A person’s chances of having a stroke increase with certain risk factors, including high blood pressure, obesity, high cholesterol, a family history of stroke, age, and ethnicity.
- Risk for having a first stroke is nearly twice as high for blacks as for whites, and blacks are more likely to die after a stroke. Hispanics and American Indians/Alaska Natives also have a greater chance of having a stroke than do non-Hispanic whites or Asians.

III. .............................................................................................................................................................................. Email Newsletter Article

Example 1
May hosts National Stroke Awareness Month, American Stroke Month, National High Blood Pressure Education Month and Mother’s Day. These observances are widely used to draw attention to health disparities that occur in women, high blood pressure, and stroke. Many organizations focus on each of these topics separately, but we think May is a great time to focus on the connection between stroke, high blood pressure, and mothers!
For instance, did you know that:

- Having high blood pressure puts you at risk for heart disease and stroke, which are the leading causes of death of women in the United States.
- About 70 million American adults (29%) have high blood pressure, or hypertension. That’s 1 in every 3 American women and men.
- About 1 in 3 American women and men also have prehypertension, but there is a good chance many don’t know it.
- Only about half (52%) of people with high blood pressure have their condition under control, which puts them at an elevated risk for stroke.

It clear that high blood pressure is a major risk factor for stroke, but, unfortunately, there are often no warning signs or symptoms, and many people do not know they have it. That’s why it is important to check your blood pressure regularly and to do something about it if you have high blood pressure or are at risk for it. Making lifestyle changes and taking proper medication to lower blood pressure can reduce your risk for stroke. But remember, May is home to Mother’s Day; so, make sure you talk to your family about high blood pressure and stroke. Visit the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention’s (CDC) Mother’s Day Info to find ways to encourage your mom and your family to make their health a priority or you can visit.

This May we encourage you to check your and your loved ones’ blood pressure to lower your risk of stroke. We also encourage you to celebrate all the ways you keep yourself healthy and stroke-free this month. After all, May is a month of celebrations!

Example 2
May is home to Mother’s Day. But it is also home to National Stroke Awareness Month, American Stroke Month, and National High Blood Pressure Education Month. We encourage you to meld these observances together this month as women who have high blood pressure are at an elevated risk for stroke.

There are simple steps moms can take to make their health a priority. While being a mother means caring for others, there are a few things moms can do to take care of themselves. Help her make those moves by encouraging her to:

- **Eat healthy.** "Eat your fruits and vegetables" is good advice for families and moms.
- **Move more.** Adding physical activity is one of the most important things a person can do for her health.
- **Sleep well.** Insufficient sleep is associated with a number of chronic diseases and conditions such as diabetes, cardiovascular disease, obesity, and depression.
- **Text away.** Encourage her to sign up for text4baby if she’s pregnant. Text4baby is a free service that provides pregnant women and new moms with free text messages each week, sharing tips on having a healthy pregnancy and raising a healthy baby the first year.
- **Check herself.** Many women experience depression, including pregnant women, postpartum women, and women who are not pregnant. Depression is common. Tell a doctor or nurse about your concerns.
- **For more information about what mothers can do,** visit Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) Mother’s Day Info.
This encouragement doesn’t have to stop with mothers. Nudge the other women in your life to live stroke-free too. If appropriate, you can refer them to the WISEWOMAN program, a CDC program that provides low-income, under-insured or uninsured women ages 40-64 with chronic disease risk factor screening, lifestyle programs, and referral services in an effort to prevent cardiovascular disease. CDC funds 22 WISEWOMAN programs, which operate on the local level in states and tribal organizations.

Moms matter and so do you! We encourage you and your loved ones to work together towards a stroke-free live!

Example 3
May is National Stroke Awareness Month and American Stroke Month. This is an important time to remind people that, when responding to a stroke, every minute counts. The sooner a patient receives medical treatment, the lower the risk for death or disability. If you or someone you know exhibits the signs or symptoms below, call 9-1-1 immediately.

- Numbness or weakness of the face, arm, or leg, especially on one side of the body.
- Confusion, trouble speaking, or difficulty understanding.
- Trouble seeing in one or both eyes.
- Trouble walking, dizziness, or loss of balance and coordination.
- Severe headache with no known cause.

Remember, getting immediate medical attention for stroke is crucial to preventing disability and death, so don’t delay—dial 9-1-1.

But May isn’t just about responding to stroke, it is also a month to prevent stroke episodes. To do this, we encourage you to focus on the ABCS, which are:

- Appropriate **Aspirin** therapy: Ask your doctor if taking aspirin is right for you.
- **Blood** pressure control: Keeping your blood pressure under control reduces your risk of heart attack and stroke. More than half of the world’s stroke deaths are caused by elevated blood pressure levels.
- **Cholesterol** management: Get your cholesterol checked regularly and manage it with diet and physical activity or with medication, if needed.
- **Smoking** cessation: Get help at 1-800-QUIT-NOW.

Other steps should be taken to reduce stroke risk too, like exercising regularly, eating a healthy diet that’s low in sodium, and limiting alcohol intake (fewer than two drinks per day for men, or one drink per day for women). For more information on how you can reduce your risk for stroke, visit Million Hearts®.

IV. ........................................................................................................... Additional Resources for Patients, Providers, and Health Professionals

Million Hearts® Collaboration Partners Featured Resources

American Heart Association
• **Your Path to Healthy Blood Pressure**

• **High Blood Pressure Health Risk Calculator:** Calculate your health risks from high blood pressure and learn how a few simple changes can lower your risk or visit [http://bit.ly/1c4hLSp](http://bit.ly/1c4hLSp).

• **Power To End Stroke:** Power To End Stroke is an education and awareness campaign that embraces and celebrates the culture, energy, creativity and lifestyles of Americans. It unites people to help make an impact on the high incidence of stroke within their communities.

• **American Stroke Association**

V. ........................................................................................................................................................................................................................................

**Social Media Resources**

**Pages and Handles**

• AHA Twitter
• AHA Facebook
• CDC Twitter
• CDC Facebook

• Million Hearts Twitter
• Million Hearts Facebook
• National Forum Twitter
• National Forum Facebook

**Twitter Posts**

DYK: May is National High Blood Pressure Education Month. Learn what you can do to manager your bloodpressure at [http://bit.ly/1qAS08x](http://bit.ly/1qAS08x).

This month is #AmericanStroke onth. Take time today to learn about #stroke warning signs so you can be prepared: [http://bit.ly/1iaoEWG](http://bit.ly/1iaoEWG).

Anyone can have a #stroke at any age. Get prepared during National Stroke Awareness Month. Visit [http://www.cdc.gov/stroke/](http://www.cdc.gov/stroke/).

Having high blood pressure puts you at risk for heart disease and stroke – the no. 1 causes of death in America. Get checked today!

DYK: About 70 million American adults (29%) have high blood pressure, or hypertension. Find out more at [http://bit.ly/1fPsRLv](http://bit.ly/1fPsRLv).

About 1 in 3 American Americans has prehypertension & there is a good chance many don’t know it. Get checked today!

DYK: About 50% of ppl w/high blood pressure don’t have their condition under control, which elevates their risk for #stroke.

**Facebook Posts**

Did you know that hypertension, or high blood pressure, is called the silent killer? It’s called that because high blood pressure is a risk factor for heart attacks and stroke, but a person can’t always
tell if s/he has high blood pressure. Minimize your risk and schedule a blood pressure reading today: http://www.cdc.gov/stroke/.

While stroke is the No. 5 cause of death and leading cause of disability in the U.S., many Americans do not think of stroke as a major health concern. We have made a lot of progress, but we still have a ways to go to end stroke and need your help! Find out what you can do at http://powertoendstroke.org/.

Anyone can have a stroke at any age. A person’s chances of having a stroke increase with certain risk factors, including high blood pressure, obesity, high cholesterol, a family history of stroke, age, and ethnicity. Learn more about stroke and stroke prevention this month at http://www.strokeassociation.org/STROKEORG/.

DYK: Risk for having a first stroke is nearly twice as high for blacks as for whites, and blacks are more likely to die after a stroke. Learn more at http://www.cdc.gov/stroke/.

Only about half (52%) of people with high blood pressure have their condition under control, which puts them at an elevated risk for stroke. Get checked today.