



American Cancer Society and New England Patriots Award \$100,000 Grant to Codman Square Health Center to Help Reduce Breast Cancer Disparities



Pictured, left to right, are **Dr. Mark Goldberg**, Chairman of the Eastern New England Board of the American Cancer Society; **Sandra Cotterell**, CEO of the Codman Square Health Center; **Kris Kim**, Executive Vice President of the Northeast Region for the American Cancer Society; and **Josh Kraft**, President, New England Patriots Foundation.

The American Cancer Society and the New England Patriots Foundation have awarded a \$100,000 grant to Codman Square Health Center to address disparities in breast cancer mortality by providing access to breast cancer screening, follow-up of abnormal mammograms and timely access to specialty care if needed. The grant funding was made possible through the Society's partnership with the NFL and the league's Crucial Catch campaign. Codman Square Health Center has been a long-standing partner of the Kraft Center for Community Health hosting clinicians in training and community health champions.

The grants are the latest in the Society's Community Health Advocates Implementing Nationwide Grants for Empowerment and Equity (CHANGE) program, which provides funding opportunities as part of the Society's commitment to reduce disparities in cancer mortality. The grants are focused primarily on African American communities but also target other underserved populations. Codman Square Health Center will receive the \$100,000 grant over two years.

Breast cancer mortality has steadily declined over the last four decades, largely due to improvements in early detection and treatment. However, not all women have benefited equally from this progress. A faster drop among white women has widened the mortality gap between white and black women. Despite similar rates of disease and screening rates, breast cancer death rates in 2015 were 39 percent higher for black women than white women in the nation as a whole and up to 60 percent higher in some states. Access to timely follow-up and high-quality treatment are key drivers of these disparities, especially in underserved communities. Differences in stage of cancer diagnosis, tumor characteristics, obesity and other comorbidities are also contributing factors.

"We're so proud to partner with Codman Square Health Center because it is an innovative community health center providing comprehensive, holistic and integrated services in the heart of Boston's Dorchester neighborhood," said Lynn Basilio, Senior Manager, Primary Care Systems, American Cancer Society. "The American Cancer Society is committed to saving lives and addressing the unequal burden for cancer."

"We are excited to continue our partnership with the American Cancer society to help provide access to first-class treatment, especially with something so vital as cancer detection," said Josh Kraft, President, New England Patriots Foundation. "Catching cancer at an early stage, when the most treatment options are available, truly is the biggest 'crucial catch'."

"Cancer remains the leading cause of death for Boston adults. However, our city's health officials estimate 30 to 50 percent of all cancers can be prevented or treated, through prevention and early detection," said Sandra Cotterell, Chief Executive Officer, Codman Square Health Center. "The American Cancer Society agrees screenings can help find cancers earlier when more treatment options are available. Community health centers like ours play a critical role in reaching this goal."

In October 2017, as part of the Crucial Catch campaign, the Society and the Patriots Foundation awarded a \$75,000 grant to Boston's South End Community Health Center to implement cancer prevention and early detection activities aimed at improving cancer outcomes through education, outreach, navigation and access to cancer screenings in the South End. The 18-month campaign is focusing on increasing breast cancer screening rates by 21 percent and colorectal screening rates by 10 percent.

Between 2015 and 2016, the Society also awarded a total of \$100,000 through the Crucial Catch campaign to Hilltown Community Health Center which serves the towns of Huntington, Worthington and Amherst, Mass., and surrounding communities. Over the course of the project, the breast cancer screening rate increased from 44 percent to 57 percent. During that time, 13 patients were diagnosed with breast cancer and treated

effectively, reinforcing the importance and impact of the project and particularly the one-on-one education helping to motivate patients to complete screenings.

Since 2009, the NFL's Crucial Catch campaign has raised more than \$18 million in support of the American Cancer Society. Funding raised since 2012 has supported the Society's CHANGE program and been invested in underserved communities to increase cancer education and awareness and promote life-saving screening tests. To date, health system grantees have reached more than 632,000 individuals with education, patient reminders and navigation to screenings and contributed to 138,000 breast, cervical and colorectal cancer screenings. These new grants will improve timely access to follow up care along with a continued focus on access to high-quality breast cancer screening for underserved women.

###

About Codman Square Health Center

Codman Square Health Center was founded in 1979 by a group of community visionaries seeking to restore their neighborhood on the brink of disaster. Today, with a staff of over 300 employees and an astounding depth and breadth of community programs and partnerships, the Health Center serves as a resource for improving the physical, mental and social well-being of the community. Serving over 22,000 patients each year, our comprehensive, integrated services build upon a Patient-Centered Medical Home model and include primary care, urgent care, dental care, eye care, behavioral health, and nutrition. For more information, visit www.codman.org.

About the American Cancer Society

The American Cancer Society is a global grassroots force of 1.5 million volunteers dedicated to saving lives, celebrating lives, and leading the fight for a world without cancer. From breakthrough research, to free lodging near treatment, a 24/7/365 live helpline, free rides to treatment, and convening powerful activists to create awareness and impact, the Society is attacking cancer from every angle. For more information go to www.cancer.org

About Crucial Catch

The NFL, its clubs, the NFL Players Association and the American Cancer Society are committed to the fight against cancer. Crucial Catch expands the impact of the NFL's work around breast cancer to address multiple types of cancer through prevention, early detection, and timely access to follow-up care as needed. Since 2009, the first year of the NFL's Crucial Catch campaign, the league's work has raised more than \$18 million for the American Cancer Society. Money raised through Crucial Catch supports the American Society's Community Health Advocates implementing Nationwide Grants for Empowerment and Equity (CHANGE) program, which promotes health equity and addresses cancer-related disparities. Visit nfl.com/crucialcatch to learn more and get involved.

About the New England Patriots Foundation

The New England Patriots Charitable Foundation is the nonprofit organization established by Robert Kraft in 1994 to support charitable and philanthropic agencies throughout New England. The Foundation's primary goal is to support programs that aid the youth and families of the New England region by assisting programs that foster cultural diversity, education, family and health. The Foundation has taken special interest in youth programs that encourage education, creativity and development of character. Visit www.patriots.com/community to learn more.