



# Illinois Public Health Association

*The voice of public health in Illinois.*

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

December 8, 2023

## **IPHA Receives Grant from Exact Sciences to Support Colorectal Cancer Screenings**

**Springfield, IL, December 8, 2023** – The Illinois Public Health Association (IPHA) today announced it received grant funding from Exact Sciences, a leading provider of cancer screening and diagnostic tests, to improve colorectal cancer (CRC) screening rates and make healthcare more accessible for those in Sangamon and Macon counties.

IPHA's *Engaging Community Health Workers to Address Colon Cancer* program brings together non-clinical and clinical partners utilizing trusted partners and messengers to advance CRC uptake strategies among the most vulnerable populations in the community. These partners will focus on outreach and navigation for vulnerable populations in two counties in Illinois. These two counties, Sangamon and Macon, have the lowest CRC screening uptake rates both pre- and post-COVID. IPHA will partner with organizations such as the American Cancer Society, the Illinois Primary Health Care Association (IPHCA), and the Regional Cancer Committee along with community-based organizations serving at-risk populations.

"IPHA is very pleased to have received this grant," said Tom Hughes, Executive Director. "The patient population we expect to reach are those who face numerous challenges and often go unscreened for CRC,<sup>1</sup> so we anticipate this grant can help us reduce barriers and improve screening rates within these communities."

The grant was made possible through Exact Sciences' Funding Opportunities for CRC Screening Uptake Strategies (FOCUS) Program, which provides funding to community organizations, health foundations, public health organizations, and advocacy groups working to increase access to CRC screening. Exact Sciences developed Cologuard<sup>®</sup>, the first and only FDA-approved, noninvasive, multi-target, stool-based DNA screening test that people can use at home.

"Exact Sciences is honored to support organizations that are working to expand access and availability of screening options for often-overlooked communities," said Paul Limburg, Chief Medical Officer, Screening, at Exact Sciences. "Although colorectal cancer is one of the most preventable cancers,<sup>2</sup> more than 50,000 people die from this disease each year in the U.S. alone.<sup>1</sup>

### **About Illinois Public Health Association**

The Illinois Public Health Association (IPHA) is the oldest and largest public health association in the State of Illinois. As one of the largest affiliates of the American Public Health Association, IPHA is widely recognized as a leader in the field of public health advocacy, health education, and promotion. With a mission to lead in the enhancement and support of the public health system and the practice of public health, focused on health equity and improved health throughout Illinois,

IPHA strives for excellence through a variety of programming and advocacy efforts. More information about IPHA is available at [www.ipha.com](http://www.ipha.com)

### **About Exact Sciences Corp.**

A leading provider of cancer screening and diagnostic tests, Exact Sciences gives patients and healthcare professionals the clarity needed to take life-changing action earlier. Building on the success of the Cologuard® and Oncotype® tests, Exact Sciences is investing in its pipeline to develop innovative solutions for use before, during, and after a cancer diagnosis. For more information, visit [ExactSciences.com](http://ExactSciences.com), follow Exact Sciences on X (formerly known as Twitter) [@ExactSciences](https://twitter.com/ExactSciences), or find Exact Sciences on [LinkedIn](https://www.linkedin.com/company/exact-sciences) and [Facebook](https://www.facebook.com/exact-sciences).

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### **About the FOCUS Program**

Launched in June 2022, Exact Sciences' Funding Opportunities for CRC Screening Uptake Strategies (FOCUS) Program provides grant funding to community organizations, health foundations, public health organizations, and CRC advocacy groups to expand access to colorectal cancer screening and create affordable pathways to follow-up diagnostic care. FOCUS reflects Exact Sciences' ongoing commitment to meet people where they are and offer solutions to overcome barriers to care, regardless of a patient's race, ethnicity, gender identity, socioeconomic status, or geographic location. Submissions are reviewed via Exact Sciences' corporate grants process, which is fully independent from sales and marketing activities. Funding decisions are based solely on the strength of the application and alignment with FOCUS Program objectives, without regard to any actual or potential commercial relationships with potential grantees. Learn more about [the FOCUS Program](#).

### **References:**

1. American Cancer Society. Colorectal Cancer Facts & Figures 2023-2025. Atlanta: American Cancer Society; 2023.
2. Itzkowitz SH. Incremental advances in excremental cancer detection tests. J Natl Cancer Inst. 2009;101(18):1225-1227. doi:10.1093/jnci/djp273

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