

**FOR RELEASE OCTOBER 17, 2018**

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**HEALTH PEOPLE REPORT: NEW YORK CITY DIABETES-RELATED FOOT AMPUTATIONS INCREASED 55%  
IN EIGHT YEARS**

**NEWS CONFERENCE AND RALLY TO DEMAND CITY DECLARE DIABETES AN EMERGENCY OCTOBER 17**

**“I’ve Been Left in a Lifetime of Pain,” says Double Amputee**

**NEW YORK, October 15, 2018** -- A startling report from Health People: Community Preventive Health Institute, to be released at a press conference at the City Hall steps on Wednesday, October 17<sup>th</sup>, reveals that New York City diabetes-related foot amputations have soared 55% in eight years. This includes a 59% increase in diabetes-related amputations in the Bronx, 44% in Brooklyn, 62% in Manhattan, 57% in Queens and 54% in Staten Island.

At the 11:00 am press conference and rally, Health People, rally co-sponsor New Creation Community Health Empowerment, and a range of community and clinical organizations will urge the New York City Department of Health and Mental Hygiene to declare diabetes an emergency.

“Diabetes, which has increased overall by 50% since 2011 to reach 987,000 cases in the city, is causing more death, harm and disability than virtually anything else we think of as emergencies---from Zika to hurricanes and even opioids,” said Chris Norwood, Executive Director of Health People. “The soaring amputation rate is especially disturbing; it underscores that communities are being literally crippled by a highly preventable complication of a highly preventable disease.”

Even though diabetes is the most widespread disease in the city, the Department of Health and Mental Hygiene, with a \$1.6 billion budget, spends less than \$3 million on direct diabetes prevention.

“Why don’t we have prevention?” asks Anthony “Malik” Wright, a double amputee who will speak at the rally. “All those years my diabetes was getting worse, no doctors sent me to an education program, yet they know the horrors that are possible---the amputations, the blindness.”

“There’s so much the city could do,” said Rev. John Williams, President of New Creation Community Health Empowerment, the rally co-sponsor. “But they have refused to even fund well-proven education---like the CDC-approved National Diabetes Prevention Program which alone reduces

the risk that people with pre-diabetes will ever develop diabetes by almost 60%. Even with the staggering amputation rate the city won't support targeted patient foot-care education that could clearly reduce that."

"As a primary care physician, I have seen self-management education work so well to bring down complications," said Robert Morrow, MD, Associate Professor in the Department of Family Medicine at the Albert Einstein College of Medicine. "But clinicians can't offer such education to patients regularly because it isn't funded. This is a real crisis of public health where the city must start to take the lead in funding effective self-care and preventive education in the communities with the worst diabetes rates."

Community and clinical groups joining in the demand that the New York City declare diabetes an emergency include:

- AIRnyc
- Harlem Independent Living Center
- Harvest Home Farmer's Market
- Mary Mitchell Family and Youth Center
- Morris Heights Health Center
- Vision Urbana Inc.

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### **About Health People**

Health People is a groundbreaking peer education, prevention and support organization in the South Bronx whose mission is to train and empower residents of communities overwhelmed by chronic disease and AIDS to become leaders and educators in effectively preventing ill health, hospitalization and unnecessary death.

Established in 1990 as a women's AIDS prevention and support program, Health People has grown, using its peer-education model, to provide a full range of HIV/AIDS services for men, women and families. It also has conducted community asthma programs, New York's first diabetes peer-educators program, and a community smoking cessation program. Health People's Junior Peer program, Kids-Helping-Kids includes teens who are mentors for younger children with sick or missing parents.

For more information, please visit [www.healthpeople.org](http://www.healthpeople.org).

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YouTube: <http://www.youtube.com/user/HealthPeopleKids/featured>