

HARTFORD – Congressman John Larson (CT-01) held a “Wellness Forum” with leading doctors and industry experts this afternoon to focus on the preventive care measures of the Affordable Care Act and to highlight other efforts to increase the use of preventative care throughout the state, which will help control increasing healthcare costs.

“Every year, this country spends billions of healthcare dollars on procedures and treatments that could have been avoided had proper preventive care been available,” Congressman Larson said. “Thanks to the Affordable Care Act, our country’s most vulnerable citizens now have increased access to preventive care. Today’s forum is intended to highlight the importance of preventive care, while helping raise awareness of new and existing programs that can help Connecticut residents.”

Preventive care refers to healthcare aimed at preventing diseases and other conditions, rather than treatments designed to cure symptoms. Many chronic diseases such as heart disease, cancer, and diabetes – which are responsible for 7 of 10 deaths among Americans each year and account for 75 percent of the nation’s health spending – are often preventable. Unfortunately, often insurance does not cover preventive efforts, causing Americans to use these services at about half the recommended rate. Americans need to have both access to preventive care services and the knowledge of how they can make changes in their day to day life to stay healthy and prevent paying billions of dollars in unnecessary healthcare-related expenses.

Under the Affordable Care Act, Connecticut has been awarded over \$8 million from the Prevention and Public Health Fund for efforts related to improving preventive care, and over the next decade many additional programs and funding will enhance and build upon these efforts.

Beneficiaries from the new legislation include the elderly, pregnant women, children and numerous other Americans. Depending on an individual’s age and health plan type, they may have increased access to services such as:

- Blood pressure, diabetes, and cholesterol tests

- Many cancer screenings

- Counseling on such topics as quitting smoking, losing weight, eating better, treating depression, and reducing alcohol use
- Routine vaccines for diseases such as measles, polio, or meningitis
- Flu and pneumonia shots
- Counseling, screening and vaccines for healthy pregnancies

For more information on preventive care services that the Affordable Care Act offers, visit Healthcare.gov.

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