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November 5, 2008

TO: Wendy Dant Chesser      Dr. Loren Hamel  
Bob Dolson                      Michael Mortimore  
Teresa Green                     Marcus Robinson  
   Dave Whitwam

FROM: Dan Hopp

SUBJECT: **Communities of Health Initiative**

I wanted to follow up with each of you on information I previously shared concerning the CIGNA Communities of Health initiative (CoH).

As I mentioned, CoH is based on the principle that the health of individuals in a given community is influenced by a broad set of factors within that community, from education and employment, to food and transport, to neighborhood design and the built environment. The hypothesis is that taking steps to explore, consider and improve the social conditions of the community – in addition to promoting healthy lifestyles and ensuring quality care – will significantly *improve the health* of those who live and work there. (To give you some advance information about CoH, I am enclosing an overview they have prepared; it describes the concept and the implementation steps.)

As each of us knows, and as I have shared with the CoH team, our Twin Cities community has already taken many steps that appear to be consistent with the framework outlined by CoH. The connection between these efforts is especially important to Whirlpool Corporation, which has committed to a Communities of Health pilot as part of its five-year strategic plan.

In an effort to bring the theory and practice together, I am proposing a meeting on the afternoon of December 18, at Whirlpool's Brandywine Creek facility, where the CoH team will present a detailed overview of their work, including their current pilot in Las Vegas, while also learning about activities within our community. Together we can then conduct a dialog to determine the most promising path for launching a Communities of Health pilot with the Whirlpool

employee population – in the workplace and the surrounding community. Naturally, this pilot will impact far more than just the employees and families connected to Whirlpool, reaching out to all residents in a way that is intended to improve the health of the whole community.

Bringing you together with representatives from CoH on December 18<sup>th</sup> is an important first step. It will afford us the opportunity to assess, in light of Communities of Health, past and present work conducted by various community and civic agencies and organizations in the Twin Cities and surrounding areas, including the Healthy Berrien Consortium, the Cornerstone Alliance, the Council for World Class Communities, the Berrien County Health Department and the Lakeland Regional Health System.

Hopefully, you will be able to join us on December 18<sup>th</sup> at 12:15 for lunch, followed by a meeting from 1:00-3:30. We hope this session will pave the way for future work that holds the promise of making the Twin Cities a healthier place to live and work.

Please confirm your availability, suggest others who should attend, and feel free to ask any questions you may have.

Sincerely,

Daniel F. Hopp

DH/llj  
081105 COH  
Enclosure

cc: Chris McSwain (Whirlpool)  
Susan Pavlopoulos (Whirlpool)  
Gary Earl (Cigna)