



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

November 4, 2018

**SOMOS COMMUNITY CARE & PLANTPURE COMMUNITIES LAUNCH
NUTRITION PILOT TO EMPOWER LOCAL RESIDENTS TO TAKE
CONTROL OF THEIR HEALTH**

*Dozens of Upper-Manhattan Medicaid Participants Embark in a Unique
Program Poised to Expand Across New York City*

NEW YORK, NY – November 4, 2018 – SOMOS Community Care and PlantPure Communities today kicked-off the Harlem Oasis 13-week Pilot that is empowering Medicaid participants to take control of their health by providing access to a whole-food, plant-based diet and community support. The Oasis Pilot includes a 10-day Jumpstart that provides participants with prepared meals for lunch and dinner, as well as fresh fruit, grains, and guidance to prepare simple meals for breakfast and snacks. This Jumpstart lays the foundation for the 13-week community support initiative to promote a healthy lifestyle and achieve long-term change. The goal is to help improve and reverse illnesses such as heart disease, diabetes, obesity, high cholesterol, and hypertension.

“Many of our patients are eating the calorie-packed standard American diet that has been scientifically implicated in heart disease and early deaths, but the Oasis Program helps us address the health needs of our communities by empowering patients to regain control of their health and to experience the powerful impacts of a whole food, plant-based diet,” said **Dr. Diego Ponienan, Chief Medical Officer of SOMOS Community Care**. “I am proud to collaborate with PlantPure Communities in their mission to communicate science-based nutrition education and create health conscious communities for generations to come.”

“We are excited to partner with SOMOS Community Care in this transformative pilot program,” said **Nelson Campbell, Founder and Board Chair of PlantPure Communities**. “We believe this kind of proactive grassroots approach, combined with an emphasis on plant-based nutrition, is the key to solving our healthcare crisis.”

The Oasis Jumpstart Pilot kicks-off with 36 patients who are predominately Latino and live in Harlem and Washington Heights. Each participant will have biomarker tests taken before and after the Jumpstart period, so they can see first-hand (via their own blood tests) the power of nutrition

to improve chronic conditions in just 10 days. This hard evidence will help patients realize they can take control of their health and encourage them to make these lifestyle changes permanent.

During the 13-week pilot program, participants will have access to on-going nutrition education, cooking demonstrations, grocery store tours, wellness classes, a Square Foot Gardening workshop, and financial literacy guidance. In addition, the local Pod, a local group that is part of a worldwide network of such groups supported by PlantPure Communities, is providing support and mentorship to the Oasis Program participants, recognizing that they are more likely to sustain dietary changes in the context of a supportive community.

“People across the nation, from all walks of life, are being changed by the knowledge that plants are the best medicine,” said **Lianna Levine Reisner, Pod leader of Plant Powered Manhattan, an independent member organization of the PlantPure Communities Pod Network.** “This Oasis pilot is a critical demonstration of what's possible when we choose a healthy plant-based diet.”

“The Harlem Oasis pilot program provides low-income communities access to nutrition education and a diet that enables them to make healthier food choices,” said **Dr. Juan Tapia-Mendoza.** “I am excited to bring this life-changing program to Upper-Manhattan families and create even more partnerships to help close the health gap and build stronger communities.”

“The whole-food, plant-based diet, comprised of vegetables, fruits, whole grains, legumes, nuts and seeds, is able to maintain and restore health more effectively than all the pills and medical procedures combined,” said **T. Colin Campbell, PhD, Member of the PlantPure Communities Board of Advisors.** “It is one of the best kept medical secrets of all time.”

The kick-off was also attended by Brooklyn Borough President Eric L. Adams who shared his story about becoming healthier and offered encouragement and well wishes to participants.

“Two years ago, when I was diagnosed with type 2 diabetes, I changed my eating habits from a standard American diet to an all plant-based diet,” said **Brooklyn Borough President Eric L. Adams.** “Now, I am committed to helping communities of color make healthier choices and this program accomplishes just that, which is why I am honored to be part of today’s kick-off and cannot wait to hear all of the success stories in a few months.”

###

About SOMOS Community Care:

[SOMOS Community Care](#) is a non-profit, physician-led network of nearly 2,000 health care providers serving over 700,000 Medicaid beneficiaries in New York City. Launched in 2015 by its Chairman Dr. Ramon Tallaj, SOMOS Community Care is the largest and only physician-led performance provider system participating in the New York State Delivery System Reform Incentive Payment Program (DSRIP). The SOMOS network includes providers delivering culturally competent care to patients in some of New York City’s most vulnerable populations, particularly Latino, Asian, African-American and immigrant communities throughout the Bronx, Brooklyn, Manhattan and Queens.

About PlantPure Communities:

The non-profit PlantPure Communities (PPC) created the Oasis Jumpstart Program to bring healthy food and nutritional education to underserved neighborhoods. PPC partners with local leaders to offer short-term Jumpstart Pilots targeted to address the needs of each community, with the goal of achieving long-term change. The cornerstone of PlantPure Communities is the scientific nutrition research conducted by T. Colin Campbell, PhD., as detailed in the book, *The China Study*. Nelson Campbell, the son of Dr. Campbell, is the founder of PlantPure Communities and the director of the 2015 *PlantPure Nation* documentary film.