San Juan, PR, March 23, 2023 – The end of federal emergency declarations for the COVID-19 pandemic on May 11 and the repeated public health crises Puerto Rico faces require sustained educational efforts for people to integrate prevention into their daily lives. In this context, the non-profit organization Ciencia Puerto Rico (CienciaPR) launched its public service campaign "La Prevención es la Clave" (Prevention is the Key).
"La Prevención es la Clave" is part of the “Aquí Nos Cuidamos” (which translates to “here, we take care of each other”) Collection, an easy-to-use and disseminate multimedia toolkit whose purpose is to promote the well-being of Puerto Rico's marginalized communities and their ability to protect themselves and manage future emergencies, with science and solidarity. Like the four previous Aquí Nos Cuidamos campaigns, "La Prevención es la Clave" includes practical guides, audios, videos in Spanish and sign language, images and infographics. The campaign includes topics such as the prevention of respiratory diseases through the use of face masks and the prevention of infectious diseases through vaccination. It also incorporates the promotion of healthy environments through good water management, disinfection, cleaning, and personal hygiene, and self-care.

"Since 2020, the Aquí Nos Cuidamos community project has carried out multiple education and communication efforts and multi-sector partnerships. We have collaborated with different communities to provide them with scientific, reliable and practical information to increase their ability to take care of themselves from respiratory diseases, such as COVID-19, encourage vaccination, promote their physical and mental health," explained Dr. Mónica Feliú Mójer, Director of Communications at CienciaPR and leader of the project. "At this inflection point of the pandemic, it is necessary to promote tools that help people safeguard their health in different contexts. The risk of outbreaks and public health emergencies is always present and due to the political, social, and natural realities of the archipelago, it is necessary for people to be equipped with practical information. That is why, through 'La Prevención es la Clave' we will continue to strengthen Puerto Rico's health through education and awareness of the importance of incorporating prevention methods in everyday life," said Feliú Mójer.

"La Prevención es la Clave" has the support of a multi-sectoral alliance that will collaborate to expand its reach. The alliance comprises the World Health Organization and the Pan American Health Organization, the Puerto Rico Department of Health, the Puerto Rico Community Engagement Alliance (CEAL), the Puerto Rico Public Health Trust, and VOCES PR: Puerto Rico Vaccination Coalition, among other entities.

In addition, through a proclamation, Puerto Rico Governor Pedro R. Pierluisi declared March 23, 2023, as "El Día de la Prevención es la Clave de Ciencia Puerto Rico" (Prevention is the Key Day), to reaffirm the importance of "raising public awareness of the importance of preventive measures to promote health," the document reads.

"We have dedicated ourselves to promoting and supporting the participation of communities in prevention and health promotion efforts by building and sharing messages that resonate with them. And we have done so using a community lens and in solidarity with the needs of different populations," emphasized Edmy Ayala Rosado, CienciaPR's Science Communication specialist and coordinator of Aquí Nos Cuidamos. "'La Prevención es la Clave', our fifth campaign, promotes prevention methods that we can integrate into our daily lives, individually and as a community. And, both the proclamation that makes "Prevention is the Key Day" official, and the powerful multi-sectoral alliance that integrates multiple organizations, are firm steps toward a community-based scaffolding that will allow us to continue to protect ourselves as a country."

"What has been achieved through the Aquí Nos Cuidamos Collection is a beautiful reminder of what we are capable of achieving by uniting community, will, equity, science and heart," added
the science communicator.

Dr. Raúl G. Castellanos Bran, representative of the World Health Organization and the Pan American Health Organization in Puerto Rico, said that "Prevention is the Key" is "an important contribution to holistically address the state of the collective health situation in Puerto Rico, when we are closer to the end of the Covid-19 pandemic, focused on science to protect against other possible epidemics."

As with previous campaigns, the materials of "La Prevención es la Clave" have been developed by experts in science, public health and communication, with input from community leaders and organizations, the Deaf community, non-profit entities and government agencies. The content is closely related to Puerto Rican reality and culture, and is based on the latest scientific data.

A free community resource

Dr. Feliú Mójer urged the public to download and use all the content of "La Prevención es la Clave" and Aquí Nos Cuidamos and to share it on social networks using the hashtags #LaPrevenciónEsLaClave and #AquiNosCuidamosPR. For her part, Ayala Rosado, who is also a freelance journalist, called on the media to join this effort to disseminate campaign materials as public service announcements for the benefit of Puerto Rico’s communities.

As part of the efforts related to the campaign, CienciaPR will be conducting a workshop for members of the press and other communicators on Saturday, March 25 at the Banco Popular Foundation on risk communication, managing misinformation, and integrating prevention messages into media coverage. Likewise, during the next few months the organization will be offering educational workshops for community leaders to facilitate the use of the campaign.

All "Prevention is the Key" content is available for free download at aquinoscuidamos.org. For more information, visit www.aquinoscuidamos.org [3] or www.cienciapr.org. [4] Also, you can follow CienciaPR on Facebook and Twitter as @CienciaPR and on Instagram as @ciencia.pr.

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