**THE INSTITUTE FOR FUNCTIONAL MEDICINE AND FUNCTIONAL MEDICINE COACHING ACADEMY, INC., SIGN COLLABORATION AGREEMENT**

**Federal Way, WA** — The Institute for Functional Medicine (IFM) and the Functional Medicine Coaching Academy, Inc., are pleased to announce a collaboration that supports the Functional Medicine Coaching Academy in providing a certification program for health coaches using the Functional Medicine approach.

Functional Medicine Coaching Academy founder and program director, Sandra Scheinbaum, PhD, is an IFM Certified Practitioner and the first clinical psychologist to complete the certification program. Scheinbaum saw a need to develop a Functional Medicine-based educational program for non-physicians desiring to become health coaches.

Calling on her 30-plus years of experience guiding clients towards optimal wellness through positive psychology and relaxation techniques, she developed a curriculum in consultation with IFM. The four areas of the curriculum are Functional Medicine, Functional Nutrition, Positive Psychology Coaching, and Mind-Body Medicine.

Functional Medicine-trained physicians address the root causes of chronic illness as opposed to just managing symptoms, often recommending lifestyle interventions such as eating healthy food, exercising, getting better sleep, and reducing stress. “The reality is that doctors often don’t have the time to guide patients in how to implement these changes, a process typically consisting of finding motivation, setting realistic goals, and planning for overcoming obstacles. That’s where health coaches come in, as they’re uniquely suited to partner with individuals on their journey towards optimal wellness,” says Scheinbaum.

Functional Medicine can change healthcare by improving outcomes and reducing costs within the current system. Demand for the services provided by the Functional Medicine community is exploding.

IFM Chief Executive Officer Laurie Hofmann, MPH, remarks, “Last year, IFM, Mark Hyman, and the Cleveland Clinic entered into a collaboration agreement to open the Center for Functional Medicine on the main campus of the Cleveland Clinic. This innovative clinical model includes physicians and nutritionists paired in a one-to-one ratio, plus a nurse, medical assistant, and health coach – all working within an insurance-reimbursed system.” This is just one example of the expanding influence of and demand for Functional Medicine health coaches.

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About The Institute for Functional Medicine (IFM): IFM is the global leader in Functional Medicine. The mission of IFM is to serve the highest expression of individual health through the widespread adoption of Functional Medicine as the standard of care.

*Functional Medicine* is a personalized, systems-oriented model that empowers patients and practitioners to achieve the highest expression of health by working in collaboration to address the underlying causes of disease. The primary drivers of the chronic disease epidemic are the daily interactions among an individual’s genetics, environment, and lifestyle choices. Functional Medicine addresses these underlying causes of disease and equips healthcare practitioners to help their patients manage this complex, interconnected web. For more information about IFM, please visit www.functionalmedicine.org.

The Functional Medicine Coaching Academy, Inc., offers a 12-month online educational program leading to recognition as a Functional Medicine Certified Health Coach. The program emphasizes the core coaching competencies as set forth by the International Coaching Federation and presents a ground-breaking whole systems approach that integrates the principles of Functional Medicine, functional nutrition, eating psychology, mind-body medicine, and positive psychology.