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**Care For the Homeless Among Six Organizations to Receive NYSHealth Grant Funds**

*New York Non-profit Receives Grant Funds to Implement OpenNotes and Promote Patient Engagement and Empowerment*

**New York, N.Y.** – Care For the Homeless (CFH) is among six organizations to receive New York State Health Foundation (NYSHealth) grant funds to implement OpenNotes. The sum of awards totals more than \$728,000.

OpenNotes is an international initiative that gives patients access to the visit notes written by their providers. While many Americans *do* have access to their notes, people experiencing homelessness face multiple barriers to acquiring and maintaining vital health care records.

Chief among these is a lack of access to usable technology that would allow them to be involved in their own health planning.

CFH will alleviate many of these barriers via a pilot project, launching OpenNotes at homeless shelter sites for families and children. These shelters all have a CFH health center on site.

Kiosks with an affixed tablet will allow patients who are web-enabled to access their patient portal. Patients who are not web enabled will be offered guidance on how to create an account, allowing them to sign-up and access their health records through the patient portal.

CFH anticipates increased patient engagement as a result of deploying OpenNotes. This will lead to increased patient satisfaction, awareness of the health center as a resource, and participation in important health decisions.

The non-profit plans to extend the use of OpenNotes to multiple other CFH health center sites upon completion of this project, making it available to all CFH patients.

“We are honored to be selected to participate in the expansion of Open Notes across New York State and thank the New York State Health Foundation for their support,” said Dr. Regina Olasin, Chief Medical Officer at CFH.

“New Yorkers experiencing homelessness face many obstacles on the path to health and housing stability,” she continued. “Access to their own health records as a tool to improve their health should not be an additional one. We look forward to joining the current award recipients in the important task of empowering New Yorkers in being their own health care advocates.”

CFH also holds the unique distinction of being the only organization among the six to work exclusively with individuals experiencing homelessness.

“Empowered patients require easy and complete access to their own visit notes,” said David Sandman, Ph.D., President and CEO of NYSHHealth. “As the only FQHC system that exclusively serves the homeless in New York City, CFH is leading the way in making OpenNotes accessible to the most vulnerable New Yorker’s. Through these efforts, homeless patients will be able to better participate in and manage their health care.”

CFH delivered health care services to over 7,000 people in 2018 through more than 36,000 individual visits. Implementation of OpenNotes will help them continue that success by empowering patients and promoting consistency of care.

**About Care For the Homeless:**

*Care For the Homeless (CFH) is a 501(c)(3) non-profit and is committed to providing individuals experiencing homelessness with high quality medical, mental, and behavioral health care services. In addition, CFH actively advocates for policies to fight, prevent, and end homelessness. Since 2008, CFH has operated Susan’s Place, a transitional shelter for mentally ill and medically frail women. CFH currently operates 25 health care delivery sites throughout the Bronx, Brooklyn, Manhattan, and Queens, and has plans to open more shelters in the coming year. For more information, visit [www.careforthehomeless.org](http://www.careforthehomeless.org).*

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