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**ANTHEM BLUE CROSS AND BLUE SHIELD AWARDS \$600,000 GRANT
TO CARE FOR THE HOMELESS**

New York, NY – October 30, 2024—Anthem Blue Cross and Blue Shield today announced a \$600,000 grant to Care For the Homeless (CFH) to expand its "Bronx Health Reach Initiative," a program addressing mental health and substance use disorders among the South Bronx homeless population.

The Bronx Health Reach Initiative is a vital street-based outreach program designed to combat mental health and substance use crises, focusing on Medication-Assisted Treatment (MAT) for opioid addiction. In 2023, CFH provided trauma-informed services to over 11,000 homeless individuals in New York City, a 15% increase from the previous year.

“The mental health and substance use disorder crisis affecting the homeless community deserves urgent and sustained support. This grant will enable Care For the Homeless to expand critical services and ensure access to much-needed treatment for vulnerable populations,” said Dr. Mark Levy, President and CEO of Anthem Blue Cross and Blue Shield. “At Anthem, we believe in addressing social determinants of health in a way that drives meaningful and measurable outcomes in the communities we serve.”

Care For the Homeless President & CEO George Nashak added, “Recovery begins with accessible, compassionate care. This grant from Anthem allows us to deepen our impact in the South Bronx, particularly in reaching individuals who are battling both homelessness and substance use disorders. Expanding our immediate street-based initiation of Medication-Assisted Treatment (MAT) to address the opioid crisis allows us to provide timely, life-saving treatment to those who need it most.”

The two-year grant will enhance outreach, staffing, and treatment resources, strengthening CFH's partnerships and increasing community engagement. With the opioid crisis continuing to impact the Bronx, this expansion is crucial for providing sustainable recovery opportunities.

In addition to expanding access to care, the *Bronx Health Reach Initiative* will implement a comprehensive strategy to address the critical gaps in mental health and substance use disorder treatment within the South Bronx's homeless population. A key focus of the program is the immediate street-based initiation of Medication-Assisted Treatment (MAT), particularly with Buprenorphine, a proven treatment for opioid addiction. By engaging individuals directly where they are, the program aims to remove barriers to treatment and foster long-term recovery.

The initiative will utilize a mixed-methods approach, conducting pre- and post-assessments to track progress and impact. Key performance metrics will include treatment engagement, housing stability, and community support. Regular checkpoints, including participant surveys and clinical data reviews, will ensure ongoing program evaluation, allowing for real-time adjustments to enhance effectiveness. CFH projects that over two years, the program will reach 3,300 people, with more than 1,250 individuals expected to participate in the full range of services, including mental health counseling, substance use treatment, and housing support.

By prioritizing timely intervention and fostering strong community partnerships, the program aims to improve treatment adherence and access to care for participants by 40% while improving long-term housing stability and quality of life outcomes. The ultimate goal is to create a sustainable recovery model that addresses the immediate and ongoing needs of the South Bronx's most vulnerable populations.

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 prevent and end homelessness. CFH also currently operates six housing facilities including four transitional shelters for adult men and women and two Safe Havens for street homeless men, all of which have on-site health care services, as well as twenty-three health care delivery sites across all five New York City boroughs. For more information, visit www.careforthehomeless.org.

About Anthem Blue Cross and Blue Shield

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