

Contacts: Claudia Baier

312-214-1521

claudia@vnafoundation.net

Robert DiLeonardi

312-214-1521

rob@vnafoundation.net

HEALTH TEAM FOR THE HOMELESS RECEIVES AWARD FOR MOBILE SERVICES

The VNA Foundation Recognizes Circle Family HealthCare Network's Mobile Health Team with the 2012 Anne M. Davis Mobile Health Award

CHICAGO, Ill. –September 2012 –

Circle Family HealthCare Network's Mobile Health Team has received a special award from Chicago's VNA Foundation for outstanding work addressing the unique healthcare needs of people who stay in homeless shelters or who are otherwise precariously housed. The Anne M. Davis Mobile Health Award, named in honor of a longstanding, highly devoted and extremely valued VNA volunteer and Board member, recognizes a VNA Foundation grantee that *uses mobile health services in a particularly innovative, effective and/or impactful way.*

Individuals without permanent housing face a multitude of healthcare problems as they struggle to survive on the streets and in temporary housing. Infectious diseases such as hepatitis and respiratory infections are rampant, and chronic diseases such as HIV, diabetes, asthma and hypertension commonly go untreated. Providing healthcare to this population requires creative solutions, and after 23 years in practice, Circle Family HealthCare Network's Mobile Health Team has developed many such solutions.

The Mobile Health Team reaches individuals at their time of need by visiting both traditional shelters and residential co-ops on Chicago's west side. The team, composed of doctors, nurses, outreach workers and others, travel together in a van to provide no-cost services on-site at 22 sites, during the day and 4 nights per week. Last year the Mobile Health Team saw nearly 2,000 patients during more than 6,000 primary care visits. The team also helped to establish a recuperative care program at Hand-N-Hand shelter, where homeless people who are too medically fragile to be on the streets are able to stay while healing and receiving supportive services.

Care that cannot be provided by the Mobile Health Team is offered through referrals to a well-tuned network of providers. These include those at Circle Family HealthCare Network, Stroger Hospital of Cook County, Advocate Illinois Masonic Medical Center's Mobile Dentistry Program, Illinois Eye Institute, Goldie's Place and others, all working together to form an integrated healthcare system serving this very needy population.

“One of Mrs. Davis’ particular interests was healthcare for the underserved as provided by mobile health units,” said Rob DiLeonardi, Executive Director of the VNA Foundation of Chicago. “She was always rightfully determined that the VNA’s current work accurately reflect its heritage, and viewed the teams of healthcare providers who deliver service on-site via their mobile health vans and buses as perhaps the closest link to the horse-drawn carriages and traveling nurses used by the original Visiting Nurse Association of Chicago.”

For this reason, it was the decision of the VNA board that the best way to honor Mrs. Davis’s four decades of service was to create the Anne M. Davis Mobile Health Award, a grant to highlight and honor this particular method of healthcare delivery. Although there were many candidates from which to select for this award, Circle Family HealthCare Network’s Mobile Health Team, which has for many years worked to address the health needs of underserved persons, was the unanimous choice for this distinction.

About Circle Family HealthCare Network

From a Christian foundation, Circle Family HealthCare Network has worked to improve the physical, behavioral, and spiritual health status of communities on the West Side of Chicago for the past 35 years. Circle provides an integrated array of health, educational services and community development initiatives that aim to enhance the quality of life of the people it serves. For more information, please contact Michael Hart at 773-379-1000 or mhart@cfhcn.org, or visit www.cfhcn.org.

About the VNA Foundation

Since 1995, the VNA Foundation has operated exclusively as a grant making foundation, giving financial support to nonprofit organizations offering home- and community-based care to the medically underserved. In 2012, the VNA Foundation awarded 59 grants amounting to more than \$2 million. Recipients of the grants include a variety of agencies providing healthcare and health services to the working poor, the homeless, and the disenfranchised. For more information on the VNA Foundation, please visit www.vnafoundation.net.