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AFFORDABLE CARE ACT FUNDING GRANTED TO COMMUNITY HEALTH CENTER, INC. FOR IMPROVEMENT AND EXPANSION OF SCHOOL-BASED HEALTH CENTERS

Centers in Middletown and New Britain to receive essential upgrades

Middletown, CT (December 28, 2012) – Recently, Health and Human Services (HHS) Secretary Kathleen Sebelius announced awards of more than \$80 million to 197 school-based health center programs across the country, made possible by the Affordable Care Act. Community Health Center, Inc. (CHC) has been awarded \$451,370 of that funding to be used towards the upgrade of the school-based health centers located in Middletown's Macdonough Elementary School and New Britain's Smalley Academy.

In a press release issued by HHS Secretary Sebelius was quoted as saying "These new investments will help school-based health centers establish new sites or upgrade their current facilities to keep our children healthy."

CHC will be utilizing the funds to make much needed renovations at the two schools. Macdonough Elementary School in Middletown is the first school-based health center opened by CHC 20 years ago. Currently, services are offered in different sections of the school. A new space has been defined by the school's principal that can accommodate all services in one area. CHC will renovate this portion of the building to reflect CHC's current model of care seen in its main sites. The space will include fully integrated primary care (medical, behavioral health and dental), as well as dedicated work space (or pods) where providers can interact with each other easily and share knowledge.

The health center at Smalley Academy in New Britain currently requires the students and providers to have to enter the school's hallway to move between the reception area and the medical exam room. Renovations will be made to improve this layout and contain the health center behind one main door, allowing for the integrated model of care that CHC is committed to providing in all its locations.

CHC's school-based health centers are committed to providing care within the schools with minimal interruption from the school day with the ultimate goals of reducing absences, improving performance, and preventing chronic diseases in students. These goals are obtained through comprehensive primary care, including immunizations, complete physical examinations, medication management, and intervention for acute chronic illnesses, long-term chronic care, as well as group and individual behavioral health care. Students without health insurance receive free services and are provided assistance in determining their eligibility for a public health insurance program, such as HUSKY.

"Having access to care allows students to adopt life-long healthy habits, experience improved health outcomes and possibly even improve their school performance. Our centers offer convenience to both parents and children, eliminating missed work and school days due to a child's medical appointment," explained Jane Hylan, Director of School Health Services at CHC.

Today, CHC operates a range of health services in schools from full scope (medicine, dentistry, mental health) to single service, such as behavioral health, to a widely acclaimed mobile dental program in over a hundred schools across Connecticut. With this philosophy in mind, CHC, Inc. now provides health services in over 100 schools across Connecticut. Our mobile dental program is nationally recognized for its efficient, effective outreach, enrollment, and clinical services.

“CHC is proud to be the largest provider of school-based health services in the State. These centers are a critical part of our work, because they allow us to reach more uninsured and underserved children and adolescents and ensure access to the highest quality of care during their formative years,” said Mark Masselli, president and CEO of Community Health Center, Inc. “We have been working with local school boards for 20 years now to develop school health services consistent with their mission.”

The Affordable Care Act provides \$200 million in funding from fiscal years 2010 – 2013 for the School-Based Health Center Capital Program (SBHCCP). Today’s grants are the third in the series of awards that is made available to school-based health centers under the Affordable Care Act.

About Community Health Center, Inc.

Since 1972, Community Health Center, Inc. has been one of the leading healthcare providers in the state of Connecticut, building a world-class primary health care system committed to caring for uninsured and underserved populations. CHC is focused on improving health outcomes for its more than 130,000 patients as well as building healthy communities. Recognized as both a Level 3 Patient-Centered Medical Home by the National Committee for Quality Assurance and a Primary Care Medical Home by The Joint Commission, CHC delivers service in more than 200 locations statewide, offering primary care in medical, dental and behavioral health services. For more information, visit www.chc1.com.

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