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CHC Receives \$379,167 to Expand Treatment for Opioid Abuse
HHS Award will Increase Medication-Assisted Treatment for Opioid Dependence

MIDDLETOWN, Conn., March 11, 2016: With the backdrop of a skyrocketing rise in drug abuse and deadly overdoses in the state, Community Health Center, Inc. (CHC) has received a \$379,167 grant from the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services to expand access to treatment for opioid abuse in cities experiencing dire need: Middletown, Meriden, New Britain and New London.

CHC will increase buprenorphine medication-assisted treatment (BMT) for opioid-dependent patients in the target communities, all of which have seen an alarming increase in opioid-related deaths. Buprenorphine helps people reduce or quit their use of heroin or other opiates, such as pain relievers. It is the first medication to treat opioid dependency that is permitted to be prescribed or dispensed in physician offices, significantly increasing treatment access. CHC will not only engage patients in treatment at the designated sites, but will deliver integrated primary care and behavioral health services for patients struggling with addiction.

Currently, CHC has 14 providers certified to prescribe buprenorphine. To meet the demand for BMT, primary care providers at the designated sites require increased support from behavioral health clinicians. This grant provides for the training of 10 behavioral health providers to support buprenorphine prescribers.

CHC's innovative videoconference-based model of health care delivery, Project ECHO, will be used to help educate, train, guide and support the behavioral health providers in BMT, thereby increasing support for the medical prescribers and expanding patient access to treatment.

"We estimate this funding will positively impact Middletown, Meriden, New London and New Britain by increasing patient access to buprenorphine therapy by more than 20 percent," stated Mark Masselli, President/CEO of Community Health Center, Inc. "The communities we serve will see a difference and lives will be saved."

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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 healthcare 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.