

Care for the Homeless

Taking the Next Step



Our Mission

Care for the Homeless responds to the devastating effects of homelessness in New York City both by ensuring a wide array of high-quality support services to homeless children, women, and men, and by helping to improve the policies and programs affecting them. Care for the Homeless places at the core of our work the ultimate goal of eliminating homelessness within our city and country.

Our Commitment

Care for the Homeless is committed to responding to and ending homelessness through:

A full range of medical and social services for homeless individuals and families provided without regard to ability to pay

Health education and outreach

Policy initiatives work to ensure that homeless individuals and at-risk adults and children receive health care, emergency and transitional housing, and other benefits that will help prevent future homelessness

Our History

Care for the Homeless was established in 1985 as part of the national Health Care for the Homeless Program demonstration project, under the auspices of The United Hospital Fund. We were incorporated as an independent nonprofit agency in 1993. In 2004 CFH and the Jerome Avenue Care for the Homeless Housing Development Fund Corporation signed a long-term contract with the New York City Department of Homeless Services to build and operate Susan's Place, a 180-bed transitional residence with an onsite medical and dental clinic for single homeless women. Construction on Susan's Place will be completed in 2008.

Letter from the Leadership

Care for the Homeless takes on homelessness where it lives: on the street and in the community. Every year, we enable thousands of New Yorkers—men, women, and children—to obtain the health care and social services they need to reclaim their autonomy and find stable, healthy homes.

We are determined to do more.

CFH is in its third decade of providing comprehensive, high-quality primary health care and support services to those who are without that most fundamental of human needs: shelter. In collaboration with our medical partners, Montefiore Medical Center/Family Health Center, the Institute for Family Health, the Bedford Stuyvesant Family Health Center and New York Hospital Queens, we reach out to homeless individuals and families in single room and family shelters, soup kitchens, and food pantries as well as on the streets.

Life on the streets puts a premium on simple things: a hot shower, a soft chair, eggs for breakfast. It blocks your access to basic human comforts and makes you old at age 45. Homelessness wastes the potential of tens of thousands of adults, and threatens the stability of their children. It is a devastating scourge that cannot be ignored—and can be effectively addressed.

Thousands of our fellow citizens are on the edge of a precipice. They could be living stable lives and contributing to society, but they are not. Experience has shown us that with patience, purpose, and proximity we



CFH Board President Harry M. Rosen and Executive Director Bobby Watts at our Comedy Cares Gala 2007 CFH Board President Harry M. Rosen and Executive Director Bobby Watts at our Comedy Cares Gala 2007

can help these people change course. We've found that our hands-on approach to health care is not only the most effective means of helping them stabilize their life; at times, it's the only way.

Many of our clients are unwilling to seek the medical care they need—every day we witness their distrust of a health care system that is often beyond their grasp. To be without a home is often to be without hope. Homelessness places physical and mental health, educational advancement, even personal safety at risk. Care for the Homeless intercedes to deliver crucial health care assistance when and where our clients need it—on the street and at 30 soup kitchens, drop-in centers, family shelters, and single adult shelters throughout the City.

This report summarizes what Care for the Homeless is doing to deliver high quality medical care including some services

that are not covered by government funding. Through our achievements, including significant progress in providing prescription medications to our homeless clients, we continue to build capacity toward a future where we are ready and able to provide compassionate support and health care services to more homeless citizens.

On behalf of the Board, our staff, and our clients, I thank each individual and organization whose generous support has brought us this far. I invite all to join Care for the Homeless in our commitment towards providing for the homeless and towards our ultimate goal: the elimination of homelessness one day in our city and in our country.

Harry M. Rosen, Ph.D. Bobby Watts

Board President

Executive Director

Front Cover: CFH client Juryl with her daughter, Javia

CFH in Action

David's Story

David was 65 years old when his daughter threw him out. He had left his long-time residence in Brooklyn to live with her and her grandmother in Queens. He'd been there for more than two years when a sudden rift occurred. They insisted he leave, just as a painful case of gout incapacitated him. He left for the hospital without so much as a pair of shoes for his swollen feet. He had nowhere to go upon his release.

After a failed attempt of living with a friend and a series of temporary shelters, David found his way to the Valley Lodge transitional shelter for seniors. It was there that he met CFH nurse practitioner Debbian Fletcher-Blake (now Director of Clinical Programs at CFH). The routine screening she recommended and carried out revealed that David had evidence of early stage prostate cancer. A prostate biopsy confirmed the diagnosis, and an aggressive regimen of radiation was

prescribed. Through weekly visits with Debbian, combined with the assistance of his case worker (working collaboratively with David's oncologist), David was able to adhere to his treatment protocol. His cancer has been in remission for three years. He has found permanent housing, and remains active as a member of the CFH Client Advisory Board and a volunteer at Valley Lodge.

"It goes to show you that something that seems disastrous can turn out to be positive and great. If I hadn't ended up at Valley Lodge I'd be walking around with cancer; it's because I was homeless that my life was saved. There are people out there who have a spirit to help others. I'm a guy who got lucky and ran into these people and recognized who they were."

—David, age 68, former CFH client





Juryl and her daughter Javia on the grounds of their temporary Bronx residence

Juryl's Story

In April 2006, Juryl and her five children were told they had to leave their rental apartment in the Bronx. Despite the uncertainty of her situation, Juryl chose not to fight the order to vacate. She focused on the future, believing that there was something better waiting for her family. Her search began at the Jackson Avenue Family Shelter, where a three-room unit enabled her to keep the family together. But the stress of her new circumstances—along with the crippling onset of an undiagnosed medical condition—left her bedridden. She needed help.

Her CFH caseworker, Patrick Carroll, met Juryl at Jackson Avenue, and has been working to steer her back to sound physical and mental health. A diagnosis of rheumatoid arthritis at the CFH Montefiore onsite medical clinic has enabled her to begin to address her physical

symptoms. With counseling and medication, she's come out of her depression and is taking the action she needs to find permanent housing. She is well on her way to self-sufficiency.

"I was too proud to ask for help, but I realized I had to get me right. Depression takes a toll; it takes over the whole body. Patrick helped me get a grip on reality, and see that it's okay to be overwhelmed and how to deal with it. Hard times can make you or break you. You pick one. You can either lay down and accept defeat, or you can say "the situation I'm in right now is not who I am," and move on. I've enjoyed the experience I've had these past two years; it's something that I'll never forget. But I'm ready to go home."

—Juryl, current CHF client

Loretta's Story

Homelessness was swift and sudden. Loretta never saw it coming. It set her on a journey that has brought her new life, new passion, and a new career. It started when she lost her apartment, and then almost immediately after, her job. Determined to find a home for herself and her young daughter, she entered the shelter system.

She found a place in a family shelter, and before long she found herself taking on the role of advocate for other women and families there. She sought training through a series of workshops sponsored by Women in Need, then signed on for the organization's peer education program. Things took off from there. A part time job, then an apartment

of her own, and now a full time position with Care for the Homeless, including a recent promotion to Senior Health Educator are all evidence of the way Loretta has turned her life around.

“When a client talks about how hard life has been, I let them know in a heartbeat I've been there, I lived it, and I know you can get your life back on track—you can't tell me it can't be done. I have a real passion for what I do, and I'm blessed to work with people who share that passion.”

—Loretta, Senior Health Educator,
Care for the Homeless



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Facing Page: CFH client Julio having lunch at Broadway Presbyterian Church soup kitchen

Following Page: CFH Manhattan Team Medical Director Dr. Nicole Neritin in consultation with a client at George Daly House





“Care for the Homeless understands that the needs of homeless New Yorkers go far beyond a hot meal and a warm bed.”

Frank Oswald, CFH Donor

“Care for the Homeless has done terrific and innovative work. There’s no other place in the City where clients on the street can get better medical care.”

Scott Autwater, Assistant Executive Director, Citizens Advice Bureau

“We would be very impoverished as an organization if not for Care for the Homeless and their partnership.”

Rev. Milind Sojwal, Pastor, All Angels Church



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