



Florida Hospital Makes Historic Announcement to Address Homelessness in Central Florida

November 11, 2014 – Orlando, FL – Today, Florida Hospital stepped up in a big way announcing the largest one-time private commitment to end chronic homelessness in Central Florida history. The unprecedented event took place in front of Florida Hospital's downtown emergency room, flanked by Orlando Mayor Buddy Dyer, Orange County Mayor Teresa Jacobs and Central Florida Commission on Homelessness CEO Andrae Bailey.

Building on commitments from the City of Orlando and Orange County, Lars Houmann, CEO and President of Florida Hospital, announced Florida Hospital is committing \$6 million over three years to address homelessness in our region. "As individuals, we sometimes look away when we see a homeless person because the sight is painful," said Houmann. "We can no longer do that. Businesses, hospitals and the community must unite around this issue. We all have a moral obligation to take a stand to end chronic homelessness."

During his annual State of the City Address, Orlando Mayor Buddy Dyer announced a bold goal of housing 300 of Downtown Orlando's chronically homeless individuals in three years. The City of Orlando has committed \$4 million over three years to support the "Housing First" model. "Collaboration is the hallmark of our community. With the leadership of businesses like Florida Hospital, I am confident our community can once again partner together to provide permanent housing options for chronically homeless individuals," said Mayor Dyer.

Additionally, the City has engaged the Corporation for Supportive Housing (CSH) to provide technical assistance on this new strategy. CSH uses data and proven methods to strategically identify vulnerable individuals and families who are homeless or at risk of homelessness who will benefit from supportive housing and are also high users of services, especially costly crisis-emergency healthcare.

As the largest government funder of permanent supportive housing, homeless prevention, emergency family care, mental health and related services in the region, Orange County Government seeks to serve our veterans, our chronically homeless adults, and vulnerable families and children in a variety of way. "Building upon the great momentum and recent, renewed awareness that has been created regarding the issue of homelessness, I believe that we can make history by transforming the lives of our homeless children and families, the chronically homeless and our proud veterans," said Orange County Mayor Teresa Jacobs. "Working together we can create permanent solutions for housing the chronically homeless in a compassionate, effective and cost-efficient manner, and for lifting families and children out of homelessness and onto the path of hope, self-sufficiency and success."

Orange County Government will be budgeting more than \$15 million over the next three years for homeless housing, prevention and related family programs, and anticipates increasing that number annually. As part of the scheduled Board of County Commissioners work session for December 16, Mayor Jacobs will lead a discussion regarding the Orange County Plan to Impact Homelessness.

These financial commitments are the kick-off investment of the "Impact Homeless Fund," a new collaborative fund at the Central Florida Foundation. This fund will serve as a new public and private investment-solutions vehicle to help those facing homelessness in Orange, Osceola, and Seminole Counties. "These new resources will be the catalyst for solutions to homelessness across the region," said Andrae Bailey, CEO of the Central Florida Commission on Homelessness. The collaborative fund will have a focus on chronically homeless individuals and families who are homeless in the Central Florida region.

Another early focus on this collaborative funding partnership will be a focus on homeless veterans. "The local VA has had great success in working with homeless veterans in our region, but we need to work with them to improve our coordinated access practices to ensure rapid and full utilization of new housing options for those chronically homeless veterans who remain on streets; especially those who are medically fragile," said John Hillenmeyer, managing chair of the Central Florida Commission on Homelessness. "Housing First strategies like this have worked around the country to transform the lives of thousands of the homeless...and we know they will work here," said Hillenmeyer.

About the Central Florida Commission on Homelessness - The Central Florida Commission on Homelessness serves as a catalyst to mobilize, coordinate and facilitate all entities that deal with homelessness and poverty issues in Orange, Osceola and Seminole Counties. They work with top leaders from each sector of the community & coordinate efforts to reduce homelessness in Central Florida while ensuring that funding is in place to support new systems and solutions.

About the Central Florida Foundation – The Central Florida Foundation serves as the region's community foundation and is home to more than 400 charitable funds. They manage and invest funds, offer personalized service and expert giving advice, connect donors with charitable organizations and empower donors to make informed decisions about their giving. The Central Florida Foundation works with individuals, families, businesses, professional advisors and nonprofit organizations.

About Florida Hospital – Florida Hospital is committed to improving the quality of life for their patients, family, friends and neighbors. That mission guides them in everything they do, not only in Central Florida, but around the globe. Florida Hospital's holistic approach to healing the whole person – mind, body and spirit – is based on the healing ministry of Christ. It has guided their mission for over 100 years. Florida Hospital never turns away a patient because of his or her inability to pay nor do they turn away from their duty to help those who are most in need, whether they are across the street, across town or across the globe.

About the Corporation for Supportive Housing – CSH is the national leader in supportive housing, which harnesses the resources of multiple public agencies and service providers – healthcare, child welfare, mental health, substance abuse, public assistance, housing, and job training – to guide the individual or family toward stability. CSH helps communities provide vulnerable individuals and families a safe and permanent place to call home, as well as the supportive services they need to stay housed.

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