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Health on the hail p11

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Health on the hail

UCHC marks debut of mobile health unit

By Sherry Mazzocchi

In the not too distant past, doctors made house calls to people too sick to visit.

Now, doctors can bring an entire team.

Equipped with state-of-the-art imaging and three treatment rooms, a mobile health care vehicle will soon make rounds in the Bronx. This health care on wheels accepts walk-ins, and will visit homeless and domestic violence shelters, senior centers, schools, NYCHA housing complexes and other community centers. Residents can see doctors specializing in cardiology care, diabetes, and other physical and mental health issues.

The Mobile Health Fleet is the latest healthcare offering by Union Community Health Care (UCHC), a Bronx-based nonprofit health center. The mobile unit is part of the center's #DrivingAccessToCare campaign.

"We treat patients regardless of their ability to pay, with fee scaled programs



that are very, very affordable," said Leydis D. De La Cruz, UCHC Director of Mobile Health Services. "We want to make sure that everybody can get health care."

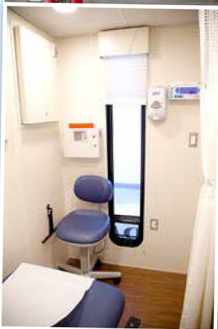
Mobile health care isn't new, said Dr. Douglas York, UCHC Chief Executive

Officer. In remote and underserved parts of the U.S. and other countries, it is often the main source of care. But urban residents also have difficulties. They may not be physically or mentally well enough to travel. Transportation costs can be a barrier. Others

may not be able to leave children or elderly family members. "This is as needed in an urban setting like the Bronx as it is in a rural setting," he said.

See UCHC p12

El centro de salud móvil de 35 pies fue develado.



Salud en movimiento

UCHC celebra debut de unidad móvil de salud

Por Sherry Mazzocchi

En un pasado no muy lejano, los médicos hacían visitas a domicilio a personas demasiado enfermas para salir.

Ahora, los médicos pueden traer todo un equipo.

Equipado con escaneo de vanguardia y tres salas de tratamiento, un vehículo móvil de atención médica pronto realizará recorridos en el Bronx. Esta atención médica sobre ruedas acepta personas sin cita previa, y visitará refugios para personas sin hogar y para víctimas de violencia doméstica, centros para personas mayores, escuelas, complejos de viviendas de NYCHA y otros centros comunitarios. Los residentes pueden ver médicos especializados en atención de cardiología, diabetes y otros problemas de salud física y mental.

Mobile Health Fleet es la última oferta de atención médica de Union Community Health Care (UCHC), un centro de salud sin fines de lucro con sede en el Bronx. La unidad móvil es parte de la campaña #DrivingAccessToCare del centro.

"Tratamos a los pacientes independientemente de su capacidad de pago, con programas de tarifa de acuerdo a la capacidad de pago que

son muy, muy asequibles", dijo Leydis D. de la Cruz, directora de Servicios de Salud Móvil de UCHC. "Queremos asegurarnos de que todos puedan obtener atención médica".

La atención médica móvil no es nueva, dijo el Dr. Douglas York, director ejecutivo de UCHC. En partes remotas y desatendidas de los Estados Unidos y otros países, a menudo es la principal fuente de atención. Pero los residentes urbanos también tienen dificultades para obtener atención médica. Puede que no estén lo suficientemente bien física o mentalmente como para viajar. Los costos de transporte pueden ser una barrera. Otros pueden no tener la capacidad de dejar a niños o a miembros de la familia de edad avanzada. "Esto es tan necesario en un entorno urbano como el Bronx como en un entorno rural", dijo.

UCHC atiende a aproximadamente 40,000 pacientes al año, con aproximadamente 180,000 visitas a sus seis ubicaciones en todo el municipio. La unidad móvil tiene la capacidad de ver entre 2,000 y 5,000 personas cada año, según de la Cruz.

El senador estatal Gustavo Rivera asistió a la ceremonia de corte de cinta de la camioneta el viernes 22 de febrero en el sitio principal de UCHC en la avenida Valentine y la calle 188 este. Su oficina está a la vuelta de la esquina de Grand Concourse. Dijo que durante los últimos ocho años ha sido testigo de primera mano de la dedicación que UCHC tiene hacia los residentes del Bronx.

Vea UCHC p12

UCHC from p11

UCHC serves about 40,000 patients annually, with about 180,000 visits to its six locations throughout the borough. The mobile unit has the capacity to see between 2,000 and 5,000 people every year, according to De La Cruz.

State Senator Gustavo Rivera attended the van's ribbon cutting ceremony on Fri., Feb. 22nd at UCHC's main site on Valentine Avenue and East 188th Street. His Grand Concourse office is around the corner. He said during the past eight years he's witnessed firsthand the dedication UCHC has to Bronx residents.

"Through their actions, they've proven that they care deeply about the community that they serve," said Rivera, who serves also as Chairman of the Senate Health Committee. "This will give them the ability to take that and stretch it further out. I'm very supportive of their efforts and I'm here to celebrate them in their continued growth."

Also in attendance were Assemblymembers Nathalia Fernández and Victor Pichardo.

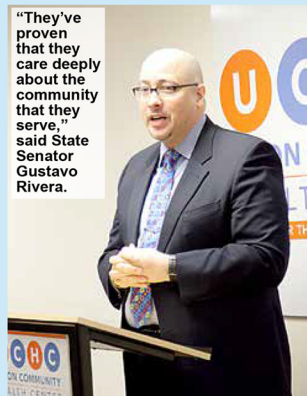
"Union has become a staple in my district as it continues to improve the physical and mental health of my community," said Pichardo. "I am proud to work with community-based organizations such as UCHC to better the wellbeing of my neighbors."

Plans for the mobile unit have been in the works for more than two years. The New York State Health Care Facility Transformation Grant provided \$475,800 in funding; also providing support was the Pharmaceutical Research and Manufacturers of America (PhRMA), which represents biopharmaceutical research companies. "That is something we

The unit has the capacity to see thousands of patients per year.



"They've proven that they care deeply about the community that they serve," said State Senator Gustavo Rivera.



could have never afforded if we had to pay for it ourselves," York said. It took more than nine months to construct the vehicle, which is also equipped with a wheelchair lift.

"We support innovations in expanding access to care," said Laura Perloff, PhRMA Senior Director of Advocacy and Strategic Alliances. "We are proud to support UCHC in their efforts to broaden their reach and respond to the unmet needs in the community."

"This will significantly increase the number of people who have access to care, and keeping them out of the emergency room," said York. "The problem is those patients who are

unwilling or unable to access care, they get really sick. They wind up in the emergency room. We've got to get to them before that happens."

"The inability to access care impacts life expectancy, employment, and family dynamics," he added. "Our goal has simply been to help to eliminate some of the existing barriers."

Depression and anxiety can prevent people from seeking care, said Luz Elenia Correa, UCHC Vice President of Government and Community Affairs. Patients receiving primary care can also receive mental health screenings.

"We are actually able to identify health issues and we are able to provide a lot of education," she said.

De La Cruz has a 14-year track record in mobile health. She said working with community partners is crucial in finding people reluctant or unable to seek help. "I want to work with organizations. Many housing projects already have someone on-site so they can help get residents into care and act as a resource person," she said. "And just parking in the location will generate a level of interest on the patient's side so they don't have to leave their neighborhoods."



"Union se ha convertido en un elemento básico en mi distrito", dijo el asambleísta Víctor Pichardo.



"Tratamos a los pacientes independientemente de su capacidad de pago", dijo Leydis D. de la Cruz, directora de Servicios de Salud Móvil de UCHC.



Funcionarios reunidos para la inauguración.

UCHC de p11

"A través de sus acciones, han demostrado que se preocupan profundamente por la comunidad a la que sirven", dijo Rivera, quien también se desempeña como presidente del Comité de Salud del Senado. "Esto les dará la capacidad de tomar eso y estrarlo más allá. Apoyo mucho sus esfuerzos y estoy aquí para celebrarlos en su continuo crecimiento".

También asistieron los asambleístas Nathalia Fernández y Víctor Pichardo.

"Union se ha convertido en un elemento básico en mi distrito a medida que continúa mejorando la salud física y mental de mi comunidad", dijo Pichardo. "Me enorgullece trabajar con organizaciones comunitarias como UCHC para mejorar el bienestar de mis vecinos".

Los planes para la unidad móvil han estado en proceso durante más de dos años. La subvención para la transformación de instalaciones de atención médica del estado de Nueva York



"Nuestro conductor es clave para esta operación", dijo Cruz, con el conductor Mariano.

proporcionó \$475,800 dólares en fondos; también brindó apoyo el Grupo de Investigación Farmacéutica y Fabricantes de América (PhRMA, por sus siglas en inglés), que representa a las empresas de investigación biofarmacéutica, también brindó apoyo. "Eso es algo que nunca hubiéramos podido pagar si hubiéramos tenido que hacerlo nosotros", dijo York. Tomó más de nueve meses construir el vehículo, que también está equipado con un elevador para sillas de ruedas.

"We are actually able to identify health issues," said UCHC Vice President Luz Elenia Correa, here with Cruz (left).



"We support innovations in expanding access to care," said Laura Perloff, PhRMA Senior Director of Advocacy and Strategic Alliances.

Finding the best location for a mobile health unit is important. "The driver has to get there before anyone else. He has to find parking," she said. "If we are going to a senior center, we don't want our seniors walking three or four blocks to get care in a mobile van. Our driver is key to this operation. There are a lot of logistical issues and challenges that need to be addressed. But it gets done."

The van is equipped with a team of medical professionals—physicians, nurse practitioners, radiologists and med techs.

De La Cruz said the team is dedicated to community health and wants to be part of a

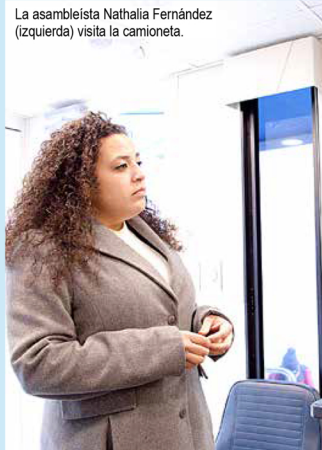
solution. "Most people don't get to rotate in their jobs. In mobile health, you are in a different location almost daily, so you need someone that has a sense of adventure to do that," she said.

Correa added that the 35-foot mobile center is a beautiful vehicle. "I think it will generate a lot of curiosity. If people see it in their neighborhood and understand why we are there and know the providers we have on board, I think people will welcome it," she said. "It will be a benefit to them."

For more information, please visit www.uchcbronx.org.



La asambleísta Nathalia Fernández (izquierda) visita la camioneta.



"Apoyamos las innovaciones en la expansión del acceso a la atención médica", dijo Laura Perloff, directora senior de Defensa y Alianzas Estratégicas de PhRMA. "Estamos orgullosos de apoyar a UCHC en sus esfuerzos para ampliar su alcance y responder a las necesidades no satisfechas de la comunidad".

"Esto aumentará significativamente la cantidad de personas que tienen acceso a la atención y los mantendrá fuera de la sala de emergencias", dijo York. "El problema es que los pacientes

que no desean o no pueden tener acceso a la atención médica se enferman gravemente. Ellos terminan en la sala de emergencias. Tenemos que llegar a ellos antes de que eso suceda".

"La incapacidad de acceso a la atención afecta la esperanza de vida, el empleo y la dinámica familiar", agregó. "Nuestro objetivo simplemente ha sido ayudar a eliminar algunas de las barreras existentes".

La depresión y la ansiedad también pueden evitar que las personas busquen atención, dijo



Luz Elenia Correa, vicepresidenta de Asuntos Comunitarios y de Gobierno de UCHC. Los pacientes que reciben atención primaria también pueden recibir exámenes de salud mental. "De hecho podemos identificar problemas de salud y podemos brindar mucha educación", dijo.

De la Cruz tiene un historial de 14 años en salud móvil. Dijo que trabajar con socios de la comunidad es crucial para encontrar personas renuentes o incapaces de buscar ayuda. "Quiero trabajar con organizaciones. Muchos proyectos

de vivienda ya tienen a alguien en el lugar que ayuda a que los residentes reciban atención y actúa como un experto", dijo. "Y solo estacionar en el lugar generará un nivel de interés del lado del paciente para que no tengan que abandonar sus vecindarios".

Encontrar la mejor ubicación para una unidad de salud móvil también es importante. "El conductor tiene que llegar antes que nadie. Él tiene que encontrar aparcamiento", dijo. "Si vamos a un centro para personas mayores, no queremos que nuestras personas mayores caminen tres o cuatro cuadras para recibir atención en una camioneta móvil. Nuestro conductor es clave para esta operación. Hay muchos problemas y desafíos logísticos que deben abordarse. Pero se hace".

La camioneta está equipada con un equipo de profesionales médicos: médicos, enfermeras, radiólogos y técnicos médicos.

De la Cruz dijo que el equipo está dedicado a la salud de la comunidad y quiere ser parte de una solución. "La mayoría de las personas no pueden rotar en sus trabajos. En la salud móvil, estás en un lugar diferente casi a diario, por lo que necesitas a alguien que tenga un sentido de la aventura para hacer eso", dijo.

Correa agregó que el centro móvil de 35 pies es un hermoso vehículo. "Creo que va a generar mucha curiosidad. Si la gente lo ve en su vecindario y comprende por qué estamos allí y conocemos a los proveedores que tenemos a bordo, creo que la gente lo agradecerá", dijo. "Será un beneficio para ellos".

Para obtener más información, por favor visite www.uchcbronx.org.



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Union Community Health Center unveils mobile health unit

Posted: Feb 22, 2019 7:51 PM EST
Updated: Feb 22, 2019 7:51 PM EST

THE BRONX - [Union Community Health Center](#) officials unveiled their new, state-of-the-art mobile health unit Friday.

Officials say the unit is going to be traveling throughout the Bronx with the goal of serving any and all residents, regardless of their insurance.

They aim to provide health care to what they call "the most vulnerable and isolated communities."

The 35-foot medical van has three examination rooms with digital imaging services and an X-ray machine.

It will be operating seven days a week.



Victor Pichardo
[@Vpichardo86](#)



[@UCHC_Bronx](#) means a lot to my community and I wanted to thank the hardworking staff for the amazing work that they do. Congratulations on the launch of [#UCHCdrivingaccesstocare](#)!

♡ 3 11:31 AM - Feb 22, 2019

[See Victor Pichardo's other Tweets](#)



BRONX*Times*BRONX*Times*

UCHC Celebrates Children's Dental Health Month



Photo by Silvio Pacifico

Doctors Josephine Mensah (l), Staci Brunnel (2nd from l) and Yael Feldman (r) treated patients like Lya and Liam Crawford during the Children's Dental Health Month celebration.

By Robert Wirsing
Bronx Times

In conjunction with the American Dental Association's Give Kids a Smile program, **Union Community Health Center** celebrated Children's Dental Health Month with a fun two-day event on Friday, February 1 and Saturday, February 2 commemorating the importance of pediatric oral health for teething children through adolescence.

Updated 4:03 pm, February 18, 2019

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Free Kids Dental Screenings at Bronx Hospital

📅 January 31, 2019 👤 BronxVoice 📁 Uncategorized

HEALTH – Saturday, February 2, 2019 – [Union Community Health Center \(UCHC\)](#) kicks off National Children's Dental Health Month and the "Give Kids a Smile" program with a two-day fun-filled celebration.

The event offers something for everyone, providing kids with free oral health screenings, giveaways and fun activities, while parents receive important information about their children's oral health and disease prevention, now and in the future.

The event will take place on the following:

- Friday, February 1, 1:00pm – 4:00pm at 260 East 188th St., Bronx, NY 10458
- Saturday, February 2, 10:00am – 2:00pm at 260 East 188th St., Bronx, NY 10458

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), a child's ability to eat, speak, play and learn can be affected by pain and infections caused by tooth decay (cavities). This is one of the most common chronic conditions of childhood in the United States. About 20% of children and 13% of adolescents have at least one untreated decayed tooth. These numbers are twice as high for those from low-income families compared with children from higher-income households. The good news is that tooth decay is preventable.

"Helping children develop good habits to care for their teeth while young is important. Healthy habits lead to good dental health care throughout a person's whole life. By starting to take care of their oral health at an early age, they can avoid many of the problems later in life like tooth decay, gum disease and tooth loss." Explains Dr. Robert Margolin, Dental Site Director at [Union Community Health Center](#), 188th St.

During last year's observance, [UCHC's](#) providers were able to diagnose and treat over 105 children approximately during Give Kids a Smile Day. The organization's goal is to increase these numbers in 2019. Early detection is the key to prevent tooth decay and regular visits to a dentist is an effective approach to preempt cavities and periodontal diseases.

ABOUT [UNION COMMUNITY HEALTH CENTER](#)

Union Community Health Center (UCHC) is a not-for-profit Federally Qualified Health Center providing approximately 180,000 visits each year to approximately 40,000 individual patients from its six locations throughout the Bronx. UCHC's mission is to serve the community with informed, innovative, and outcome-oriented health care services, designed and delivered to improve the health of Bronx residents. No one is denied care because of an inability to pay and UCHC provides services to all regardless of age, race, ethnicity, sexual orientation and religion. To learn more about Union Community Health Center, visit www.uchcbronx.org.

ABOUT GIVE KIDS A SMILE

Give Kids a Smile (GKAS) is the centerpiece to National Children's Dental Health Month (NCDHM) and is recognized nationally every year on the first Friday in February. GKAS launched nationally by the American Dental Association in 2003, more than 5.5 million underserved children have received free oral health services.

This event focuses on providing preventive education and dental services to underserved children with local events executed all across the country – including education, screening, preventive and restorative treatment. Volunteers including approximately 10,000 dentists annually, along with 30,000 other dental team members provide these free services. For more information, please visit: <https://www.adafoundation.org/en/give-kids-a-smile>

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BRONX NEWS

Thursday, January 31, 2019 – Vol. 43, No. 39



Union Health Center kicks off Dental Health Month with event

Union Community Health Center, MetroPlus (sponsor) and UnitedHealthcare (sponsor), to kick off Dental Health event.

In conjunction with the American Dental Association's Give Kids a Smile program, **Union Community Health Center** kicks-off Children's Dental Health Month with a fun two-day event celebrating the importance of pediatric oral health for teething children through adolescence.

Kids are invited to come meet the puppet mascots, Mrs. Flossy and Mr. Bruschems and participate in interactive activities, receive educational information, coloring books, healthy treats and giveaways.

**Friday, February 1,
2019 from 1:00pm to
4:00pm**

**Saturday, February
2, 2019 from 10:00am
to 2:00pm**

**Union Community
Health Center
260 E 188th St,
Bronx, NY 10458 |
(Dental, 1st Floor)**

According to the Cen-

ter for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), tooth decay (cavities) is one of the most common chronic conditions of childhood in the United States. Leaving this condition untreated can cause pain and infections that may lead to problems with the child's basic development.

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Medical press

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🕒 JANUARY 23, 2019

Communications recommendations for sugar-sweetened beverage-free zones

by The City University of New York



Credit: CC0 Public Domain

In the ongoing battle against childhood obesity, institutions are increasingly restricting the sale, and even the consumption, of sugar-sweetened beverages (SSBs) on their premises. The American Medical Association now endorses "SSB-free zones" for hospitals, schools, and health centers. In the current issue of the *American Journal of Public Health*, CUNY SPH Associate Professor Chris Palmedo presents recommendations to organizations seeking to adopt sugar-sweetened beverages from their premises. His recommendations are based on focus group research he conducted with patients and staff at [Union Community Health Center](#) in the Bronx, along with established communication guidelines.

Pediatricians at a community health center in the Bronx, NY created its Healthy Beverage Zone in response to the many young children who were coming in for appointments while drinking soda and sweetened juices. The policy, however, applied to everyone—including adult patients and even staff—to establish healthy role modeling for the community and to reduce the stigma that may be associated with focusing interventions on specific individuals.

"Soda as a public health threat is often compared with tobacco," Dr. Palmedo writes. "Indeed, much of the dialogue in our [focus groups](#) was analogous to discourse around tobacco. Many participants reported being regular soda drinkers, and some had recently 'quit.' Others reported 'trying to quit.' Some expressed difficulty breaking the habit while maintaining social connections."

But one of the key differences, he writes, is that while the risks of soda consumption are clearly established in the literature, they are still relatively unknown among the general public.

"Our focus group participants asked many questions," Palmedo says. "Some were surprised to hear soda is linked to [heart disease](#) and diabetes. Some asked if brown soda is less healthy than clear soda, and others asked if sports and energy drinks are really as good for you as advertised."

As Palmedo writes in the editorial, "Can you imagine a group of people today asking those kinds of questions about tobacco?"

Palmedo says the key takeaway is that education should be a key part of policies that restrict soda consumption in places such as schools and health facilities. While the data show that soda is a significant factor in overweight, obesity, hypertension, diabetes, [fatty liver disease](#) and heart disease, most of this is still not widely known today by the general public.

Health education, positive role modeling, and providing healthy substitutes for SSBs, can all be effective ways to increase acceptance for healthy beverage zones, he concludes.

Provided by [The City University of New York](#)