



HEALTHY BITS

Healthy Bits – A Newsletter Published by Community Health of South Florida, Inc.

CHI Vaccinates Underserved and Hard-to-Reach Populations Through Strategic Outreach



Tasha Robinson receives the COVID-19 vaccination at a CHI outreach event in Naranja.

Tasha Robinson sat in the observation area of the COVID-19 vaccination site, set up by Community Health of South Florida, Inc. (CHI) at Naranja Park. Although her mouth was covered by her mask, she smiled excitedly with her eyes. Just minutes prior, Tasha had received the shot outside CHI's mobile medical van.

"I feel so much better. I feel safe and relieved," said Robinson.

Two years ago, she had a stroke and is still recovering from the effects. As she sat in her wheelchair, she shared her renewed outlook of hope and optimism, thanks to the COVID-19 vaccination.

"I don't want to get sick anymore," she said. "I just want to do my best to stay healthy."

CHI has administered the free vaccine to more than 4,700 people in Miami-Dade and Monroe counties. What makes the non-profit healthcare company's approach unique is twofold. First, CHI has been reaching out to underserved patients and community members without health insurance and few resources. Second, the federally qualified health center has utilized its outreach team and mobile medical van to go into public housing complexes, community parks, and even homeless encampments to vaccinate.

"We have always believed that health care should be accessible to everyone, regardless of income, race or class," said Brodes H. Hartley, Jr. CEO of

CHI. "Our vaccination efforts have worked to ensure the most vulnerable populations are reached along with everyone else. It's what we do. We have been putting patient care first for 50 years."

Among those vaccinated by CHI, 46 percent were Hispanic and 25 percent were Black. Minorities have been disproportionately impacted by COVID-19, and CHI has pushed to ensure those populations do not get left behind.

Beverly Drinkwater also received her vaccination at the same event as Robinson.

"It means giving me, hopefully, peace of mind," said Drinkwater. "Until we all get vaccinated this is not going to go away. I really don't want my grandchildren for the rest of their lives growing up with this over their heads and having to wear masks."

CHI has been at the forefront of the pandemic response. It was the first to offer drive-through COVID-19 testing in Miami-Dade and Monroe counties, and it continues to lead the way with its vaccination efforts.

Those looking to get vaccinated can request to be put on the list by visiting the CHI website, chisouthfl.org or calling (305) 252-4820.

A MESSAGE FROM THE CEO



Hope has arrived, and we are finally headed in the right direction. As we are able to vaccinate more and more people, I truly believe that we will get through this difficult time in the near future.

The pandemic has pushed our team at CHI to reexamine our services and healthcare delivery on a daily basis. I continue to be amazed and so proud of the work that Community Health of South Florida, Inc. is doing. I also continue to hear wonderful compliments from community leaders and patients who have been the recipient of our COVID-19 vaccination and testing efforts.

I am encouraged by the community support for our programs and services.

Many have purchased bricks to line the entryway of the new Children's Crisis Center. Our staff has also raised more than \$62,000 in donations, a testament to their own commitment to the cause!

Meanwhile, our construction on the new Key West Health Center is going smoothly. We expect to open our doors at CHI's southernmost health center by this summer. In addition, we continue to make progress on the construction of the new

Key Largo Health Center and newly renovated Coconut Grove Health Center. This is all part of our goal to make health care more accessible to everyone in Miami-Dade and Monroe counties.

This May, we also have several important dates to celebrate, such as National Nurses Week. Never before has their contribution been so critical!

Please take the time to thank our nurses for their hard work, love, and devotion to our patients. It's also Mother's Day and Women's Health Month. We will be hosting a special webinar focused on women's body image, nutrition, and more. Follow us on our social media accounts for more information.

Regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Brodes H. Hartley, Jr." The signature is written in a cursive style.

Brodes H. Hartley, Jr.

Let us help you enroll in KidCare or Medicaid Health Insurance

1 on 1 assistance is free

CALL TODAY (786) 272-2100



CHI School Nurses Bring Inspiration to the South Florida Community

Nurse Syndia Jean-Baptist sobbed when she received her ACTION Hero Award alongside fellow school-based nurses, Norma Carrasco and Bethany Simmons-Little, at Community Health of South Florida, Inc by the CEO, Brodes H. Hartley, Jr.

The emotional wounds were still raw. Just two weeks prior, Jean-Baptist found herself performing CPR on her former high school teacher at Homestead Middle School on February 26th.

"When I arrived, I noticed he was slumped over in a chair with agonal breathing and gasping sounds," said Jean-Baptist. "I quickly gave directive to call 911."

The teacher did not have a pulse and was placed on the floor where Nurse Jean-Baptist began chest compressions until fire rescue arrived. Very quickly, paramedics began further measures to save the teacher who was having a massive heart attack.

"I just knew I had to give my everything to save his life," she said.

Once he was breathing on his own again, the teacher was transferred to Jackson South Hospital. He survived for 9 days, just enough time for him to see his family again. Unfortunately, he later passed away after another heart attack.

"It's still very hard for me to process all of this," said Jean-Baptist. "I am happy to know that I did all I could to give him another chance."

Nurse Bethany Simmons-Little also experienced a similar case on February 18th when she saved a female teacher at Leisure City K-8 School.

Simmons-Little was called into a classroom where she found the teacher unresponsive with her eyes opened and no pulse.

"It is very hard to find yourself in a situation like that," said Simmons-Little. "The school was counting on me to save this woman's life."

She rapidly began chest compressions as a police officer utilized the Automated External Defibrillator (AED).

"When paramedics arrived, they determined she had a massive heart attack," said Simmons-Little. "I almost thought I lost her."

The teacher was admitted to the ICU at Jackson South Hospital and is slowly recovering. After a successful surgery, she remains stable and alert.

"I am so thankful that I can be of help for those at Leisure City

K-8 School to keep our next generations well and healthy," said Simmons-Little.

Nurse Norma Carrasco also had to act quickly when she was called to the courtyard of Braddock Holmes High School. She found a student, who appeared gray in color, choking on a piece of chicken.

"The school staff had already attempted to dislodge the chicken from the student's airway before I got there," said Carrasco. "My first thought was to apply the Heimlich maneuver to help him."

Carrasco's quick thinking saved the boy's life.

"I am very happy to say that he is doing very well, and there was no need to call 911," said Carrasco.



School-based nurses (left to right) Norma Carrasco, Syndia Jean-Baptist, and Bethany Simmons-Little stand together as they receive their ACTION Hero Awards.

CHI Team Member Appointed to National Homeless Council Board

The National Health Care for the Homeless Council (NHCHC) appointed a Community Health of South Florida, Inc. (CHI) team member to its national board. Eunice Hines, Director of Migrant Health and Outreach Services, said she is excited to serve in this capacity.

Hines has been with CHI since 2007, ensuring the migrant and homeless community receives adequate health and social services.

"As part of the NHCHC board, I will work to improve homeless health care through training assistance, sharing best practices, and uplifting the voices of people experiencing homelessness."

Hines has facilitated numerous efforts at CHI to assist the homeless community in South Florida.

Hines oversees CHI's Mobile Medical Van and outreach team designated to provide greater access to care in the community. The van visits local homeless camps every week to provide primary care, pediatrics, behavioral health services, and other resources.

"The mobile medical van has reached people experiencing homelessness who have not been to the doctor in years," said Hines. "Some were diagnosed and treated for chronic illnesses."

Despite the trying times, CHI was also able to offer COVID-19 testing in homeless encampments within the community and is expecting to do the same with the vaccine distribution.

"We are always looking for different ways to help our community," said Hines. "We even provided care packs filled with personal supplies."



Eunice Hines – Director of Migrant Health & Outreach Services

CHI at Your Fingertips

With the simple press of a button, you can:

- Request an appointment at the CHI health center of your choice
- Enter your patient portal anytime, anywhere
- Access our pharmacy app PocketRx and request a prescription refill
- See your doctor via our telehealth services
- Receive alerts and information about CHI, COVID-19, and other health-related news
- Make a payment, fast and easy
- Donate to our CHI Foundation
- Connect with us on social media and much more!

To download the CHI App, scan here or search 'CHI' on the App Store or Google Play



Connect with us online



(305) 252-4820 | www.chisouthfl.org