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DePaul to partner with Niagara Falls Memorial to provide supported housing to 'Health Home' clients

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Program will support new Golisano Center for Community Health

Living Opportunities of DePaul Inc. has been awarded a renewable \$400,000 annual New York State Department of Health grant to provide supported housing for 40 people who receive care management services from the Niagara Falls Memorial Medical Center "Health Home."

The pilot program is designed to assist individuals who lack safe, affordable housing and have been diagnosed with psychiatric and/or other disabilities.

The goal of the program and partnership is to help individuals retain safe, affordable housing along with adequate supports that will result in increased independence, improved overall health and a reduction in hospitalizations and emergency room visits.

"Finding supportive, stable housing for 'Health Home' patients is critically important to their ability to successfully manage their health," said Memorial Medical Center President and CEO Joseph A. Ruffolo. "It's especially important for patients with intellectual and developmental disabilities, such as those we will provide care to at the Golisano Center for Community Health. This grant will enable us to work with local landlords who meet DePaul's quality standards to place 'Health Home,' including Golisano Center clients, in existing community housing."

The Golisano Center for Community Health, scheduled to open in 2016, will provide comprehensive integrated health care services to adults with special needs and their families, breaking down barriers to care, preventing individuals from falling through the cracks, and helping them live with dignity. It is being supported by a \$3.5 million gift from businessman and philanthropist Tom Golisano and the Golisano Foundation.

"We are pleased to partner with Niagara Falls Memorial Medical Center to provide quality services to a population in need," said Living Opportunities of DePaul Executive Director Christopher Syracuse.

The medical center's "Health Home" staff uses a face-to-face clinical screening process that includes all aspects of a patient's medical and social needs, including his/her living conditions.

"Housing is an acute problem in Niagara Falls and elsewhere in the county, and we know patients in unstable housing situations are prone to over-utilize the emergency room and experience more inpatient admissions," said Memorial Chief Operating Officer Shella K. Kee. "This joint initiative will lead to better health outcomes and reduced costs to the Medicaid system."

Kee said "Health Home" care coordinators will prioritize those who are most in need of housing and refer them to DePaul.

"DePaul will help them find and lease quality apartments and provide supportive assistance in the daily living skills they'll need to live and eventually thrive in the community," she said.

The program will provide individually leased apartments that meet handicap accessibility and building code requirements to participants who will lease their own apartments. DePaul will provide assistance with furnishing, security deposits, rental stipends and staff supports in addition to the "Health Home" care management support provided by Memorial.



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