

Press Release

PRIMECARE HEALTH RECEIVES “ENDING THE HIV EPIDEMIC-PRIMARY CARE HIV PREVENTION” GRANT FROM THE DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES

PrimeCare Health, 1 of 6 federally qualified health centers in Illinois, is a recipient of the 2021 “Ending the HIV Epidemic-Primary Care HIV Prevention” grant, allowing the organization to expand programing around HIV prevention and treatment, including pre-exposure prophylaxis (PrEP) related services, outreach, and care coordination.

According to the CDC, “At the end of 2019, an estimated 1,189,700 people aged 13 and older had HIV in the United States, including an estimated 158,500 (13%) people whose infections had not been diagnosed”. While the battle of ending the HIV epidemic has improved from previous years, the numbers of new HIV diagnoses continue to be an issue across the nation, especially in underserved communities.

“As a Federally Qualified Health Center, we have a critical role to play in connecting patients to accessible HIV prevention and treatment services that are free from stigma and discrimination. This new grant will fund patient navigation services, strengthen existing community partnerships and referral sources, offer specialized staff training and education, and develop more effective clinical workflows.” – Lynn Hopkins, CEO

The funding from this grant will allow the organization to provide outreach and HIV testing, increase access to and use of PrEP, and link community members who test positive for HIV to treatment. This will be done in collaboration with community partners. The funding will also support PrimeCare Health’s continued commitment to reducing stigma and removing barriers to care through workforce development initiatives. The organization has completed hiring the primary team, which includes a Project Manager, Behavioral Health Provider and two Patient Navigators.

“PrimeCare Health is honored to have received this funding and have been given the opportunity to impact the lives of so many in the communities we serve.” – Andrea Kuebbeler, Chief Behavioral Health Officer

PrimeCare Health has also received recognition from HRSA for advancing telehealth, patient engagement, interoperability, and collection of social determinants of health to increase access to care and advanced quality of care. Finally, they received a gold medal for their work around cholesterol control from the American Heart Association and a silver medal for blood pressure control from the American Medical Association.

“Unlike the early days of the HIV epidemic, there are many options for prevention, testing and treatment. It is important for individuals to know their status and have community resources to receive education and treatment. This grant is a significant lifeline for at risk communities like those on the northwest side of Chicago. We are poised to provide the highest-level care to those most at risk.” Dr. Jim Christoforidis, CMO