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Newsletter

Spring 2017

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A Baby and a Sisterhood

Sherrelle Hale has always proudly "done it on her own." Moving into her own apartment and raising her seven-year-old son, Desmond, by herself are some of her proudest accomplishments.



Just when she got pregnant with her second son, she experienced domestic violence from her partner. She craved all the help she could get.

At Community of Hope, she found sisterhood, support, and compassion. Sherrelle already had a doctor she trusted at our Conway Health and Resource Center. Our health center was close to home and, coupled with the personalized care she was receiving from our medical staff, she knew immediately that Community of Hope would be the best medical home for her and her baby.

"I trust the doctors to take good care of me –as I was dealing with other [home] situations."

With no other support system by her side, Sherrelle's visits to Community of Hope became her source of information and encouragement. Our doctors knew just how much she would benefit from being around other moms-to-be. At six-months pregnant, Sherrelle joined our CenteringPregnancy® Group.

(Sherrelle's story continues on page 2)

Save the Date:
October 12, 2017
6:30-9 pm
101 Constitution Ave NW



Help a Family Settle Into A New Home

This spring, make an in-kind donation to help families move into their own homes. Our families particularly need:
Dinnerware, plastic cups and flatware for a family
Brooms and dustpans
Mops and buckets
Dish towels and sponges
Toilet brushes

Visit www.communityofhopedc.org/wishlist for a complete list of items.

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From the Desk of Kelly Sweeney McShane

As you know, 2017 is bringing change to Washington, DC and with it, some uncertainty about new federal policies that will impact Community of Hope's work –particularly around healthcare and affordable housing. Despite the uncertainty, I am confident in our ability to navigate through this and committed to our mission of improving the lives of families who are struggling with poverty or homelessness in our nation's capital. I hope you'll share my excitement and pride in our 2016 outcomes – caring for almost 10,000 patients in our three health centers, winning federal awards for quality in health care, helping to prevent or end homelessness for almost 1,000 families in our housing programs, and leading change in the District.



Our staff and patients are looking forward to returning to our Marie Reed Health Center in Northwest DC at the end of this year. Thanks to funding provided by the District government and the support of you, patients, friends, and neighbors, the center is receiving a complete renovation. During this transition period, our loyal patients are traveling across town to our other two health centers, continuing to receive care from their beloved doctors and nurse practitioners.

I am grateful for the many ways that you support Community of Hope – through financial gifts, supplies for families, and your time. **There is always room for you in helping us achieve our mission – and, indeed, we could not do it without you. Thank you.**

Kelly

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Caring for Families. Improving Lives. Leading Change.

Marie Reed Health Center Refreshed



Our Marie Reed Health Center has been meeting the healthcare needs of our low-income, immigrant, and refugee neighbors since 1980. Last fall the entire complex including elementary school, daycare, pool, and recreation facility, began a renovation.

The new health center includes:

- 9 medical exam rooms
- 5 dental operatories
- 2 behavioral health consult rooms
- New spaces for group care
- More light and temperature control

Most importantly, we will have capacity to serve

40%
more patients each year



A Medical Home is Part of a New Home

Imagine approaching your doctor's office, worried over your child's mysterious rash, only to be told that you won't be seen because you are poor. For Abdissa, a 53-year-old Ethiopian refugee, he was surprised to find healthcare without hassle in the United States.

"It's really terrible in Ethiopia because, without a certain income to pay for treatment, you can't get care," he said.

In Ethiopia, there's no insurance, so costs are paid out of pocket. For a family of seven, even if they have money, they would skip routine appointments.

Abdissa came to the United States four years ago. His wife and five children, ages 6 to 21, joined him in 2015.

When his six-year-old daughter had an allergic reaction that caused a rash, Abdissa knew he could trust the respectful staff at Community of Hope to help. Abdissa and his family have access to health workshops and care coordination through the refugee health program. We serve almost 500 refugees a year, with medical and dental care, health education, and assistance with insurance, vaccinations, and referrals.

"They know what to do, they are well organized," he said. "When we received vaccinations, they walked us through every step."

He was surprised that the doctors do not just perform exams, but are also concerned about your overall wellbeing. He said the personal attention he and his family receive makes them feel at ease. Each family member is grateful to have medical care in their native language.

Knowing his family has a place to meet their health care needs makes the transition from Ethiopia to America a lot easier.



continued from front: A Baby and A Sisterhood



The CenteringPregnancy® Groups help ensure that moms and their babies have the best birth outcome possible. Moms benefit from interactive learning and fun discussion about labor, breastfeeding and newborn care – but that's not all. In addition to the one-on-one check-ups with the midwife, expectant moms use these groups as a means of connecting to other women who might be going through similar experiences.

For Sherrelle, it was a relief to finally have others to relate to and rely on. "Once I opened up, I saw how many of us were going through the same things: pregnancy struggle, domestic violence," she shares. "I knew I wasn't alone."

In those groups, Sherrelle found a supportive community – her sisterhood. The care did not stop there.

Right before Sherrelle gave birth to baby Isaiah, she joined Community of Hope's Healthy Start Program – where new parents receive post-partum care and support to learn about their baby's development right in their own homes.

Through that program, Sherrelle's sisterhood grew to include a case manager, who supported her as she experienced post-partum depression, a new experience from this pregnancy. "She wasn't just a case manager, but a nurse, friend, and guide."

We have been at Sherrelle's side since before Isaiah. Today, Isaiah is an active, happy eight-month-old.

"The Centering Group and these home visits have made all the difference," Sherrelle says, smiling.

We thank the many supporters who have made Centering Pregnancy and our Home Visiting Program possible - March of Dimes, CareFirst Blue Cross BlueShield, Bainum Family Foundation, and the Department of Health.

Hope Happenings

A True Helping Hand

The Washington Post and columnist John Kelly wrapped up three years of telling inspirational stories. The stories of Community of Hope clients clearly resonated with generous readers and resulted in **over \$180,000 in donations**. Thank you, The Washington Post Helping Hand!

Our Gratitude

For the second year, our partners at the Urban Land Institute have helped us care for families and be a good neighbor! From hosting a trivia night benefiting Community of Hope families to spreading cheer at our annual Holiday Market, ULI has been hope!

Dining For A Cause

Thank you to Potter's House and Wonderland Ballroom for donating a portion of sales to Community of Hope for All In Service DC. All In Service launched Inauguration Weekend with dozens of DC restaurants donating a portion of proceeds to nonprofits that keep DC thriving.

