

Press Release...



FROM THE OFFICE OF STATE REPRESENTATIVE LA SHAWN K. FORD

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Ford Secures \$1 million for Westside Health Authority's West Side "Good Neighbor Campaign"

CHICAGO – Working to make sure that the West Side of Chicago obtains much-needed resources from the Illinois state budget, State Representative La Shawn K. Ford, D-Chicago, has secured \$1 million for community-based activities organized by the West Side-based Good Neighbor Campaign.

Operated through the Westside Health Authority (WHA), the Good Neighbor Campaign provides coordinated non-clinical, in-home wellness visits, case management, and crisis intervention services. The Campaign also makes referrals for wraparound support services to West Side residents including seniors; single-parent households; first-time pregnant women; returning citizens to the community (adults and youth returning from secure confinement); high-risk disengaged youth (youth ages 16-24 that are not employed or enrolled in school); and low income family households. This program seeks to ensure that the health and social needs of these at-risk individuals are being adequately addressed by qualified health and social service providers, and are connected to their communities.

"Westside Health Authority received an increase from last year's appropriation of \$250,000 to \$1,000,000 this year," said Ford. "I will continue to fight to bring resources back to the West Side of Chicago to provide jobs and build stronger families on the West Side. I will work with Westside Health Authority and the Department of Human Services to support building a stronger West Side of Chicago."

In FY 2019, 3,374 referrals for resources through Westside Health Authority and partner organizations have been made. About 23% of were for employment referrals and about 20% were referrals for housing.

Block Interventions and Wellness Checks have been scheduled in conjunction with the 15th District Chicago Police, the Cook County Sheriff's Office, Good Neighbor Campaign-networked churches, and other community partners. These interventions included street canvassing, block and community outreach and engagement, connections among neighbors on blocks, and on-the-spot wellness and case management supports for targeted populations.

"No one in our community should be disconnected from available resources," said Westside Health Authority CEO Morris Reed. "The Good Neighbor Campaign addresses the health and human service needs of those who are isolated and in need. WHA has identified, trained and engaged residents to provide wellness check-ups and service referrals for other neighbors in need. WHA's program is unique in that it not only connects residents to resources but also connects neighbor to neighbor."

In 2020, the Community Wellness Project plans to increase its presence in Zip Codes 60644 and 60651 with 2 mobile crisis vans, increased wellness worker staff, and increased events, activities, and promotions in order to increase health and wellness among the targeted populations.

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