ERIE FAMILY HEALTH CENTERS RECEIVES EMERGENCY GRANT FROM DIRECT RELIEF TO BOLSTER THE HEALTHCARE SAFETY NET IN CHICAGO AND LAKE COUNTY

CHICAGO, IL – June 24, 2020

Erie Family Health Centers announced an infusion of $187,500 emergency grant funding from the medical aid organization Direct Relief, in partnership with the National Association of Community Health Centers.

Erie Family Health Centers was among 518 federally qualified health centers to receive funding this week through Direct Relief’s $25 million Covid-19 Fund for Community Health, which recognizes the profound effects of the Covid-19 pandemic on the finances, services, staff, and patients of community health centers.

Erie will use the funds to help support increased COVID-19 testing and the distribution of “COVID Care Packages” to patients, which include pulse oximeters, surgical masks and educational materials.

“Access to primary care is what keeps people healthy and out of the hospital, and the frontline work of Erie Family Health Centers and other nonprofit community health centers across the U.S. is more critical than ever with the onset of Covid-19,” said Direct Relief President and CEO Thomas Tighe. “Direct Relief is doing everything possible to bolster the work and support the staffs at the safety-net health facilities on which so many patients and their families rely for excellent care and trust for advice in this public health emergency.”

Nearly 30 million (1 in 12) of the country’s most vulnerable residents -- including 1 in 3 individuals living in poverty, 1 in 5 Medicaid beneficiaries, and 1 in 9 children -- rely on federally qualified health centers like Erie for their health care. That number is expected to rise as more people lose employer-sponsored insurance.

“We are grateful for this critical and immediate support as Community Health Centers work hard to keep communities safe during an unprecedented pandemic,” said Tom Van Coverden, President & CEO of the National Association of Community Health Centers (NACHC). “We are also deeply appreciative of our longstanding partnership with Direct Relief in these uncertain times and their efforts to ensure that health centers confronting multiple challenges in underserved communities have the resources when and where they need them. We know that many donors and contributors have helped to make this fund possible, and we further extend our appreciation to all of them.”

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Erie Family Health Centers is a 63-year-old primary healthcare provider that delivers integrated and affordable medical, dental and behavioral health care for patients of all ages under one roof. Motivated by our belief that high-quality healthcare is a human right, we serve more than 82,000 medical patients and 12,500 dental patients in more than 300,000 patient encounters per year at 13 locations throughout Chicago and surrounding suburbs, regardless of insurance status, immigration status or the ability to pay. We also encourage good health through ongoing patient education, case/care management, and community outreach. Visit us at www.eriefamilyhealth.org.