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CHRIS 180 RECEIVES GRANT TO EXPAND SERVICES

Certified Community Behavioral Health Center will integrate physical and mental healthcare

ATLANTA, GA (Feb. 1, 2022) – [CHRIS 180](#) has been awarded a four-year grant from the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) to develop a Certified Community Behavioral Health Center (CCBHC). CHRIS 180 was one of five recipients in Georgia, and the only private provider named.

CCBHCs were developed in 2014 to increase access to care for underserved and vulnerable populations by coordinating services to better integrate physical care services with substance use and mental health services.

“The federal government has committed to growing this transformative and innovative model of mental health services across the nation, and we are honored to be on the ground floor in Georgia,” said Kathy Colbenson, LMFT, President and Chief Executive Officer of CHRIS 180. “Being designated a CCBHC is important as we seek to expand our mental health services in a sustainable way to help children and adults heal from trauma and change the direction of their lives.”

Georgia ranks nearly last for access to mental healthcare services and professionals, according to 2023 rankings released by [Mental Health America](#). As a CCBHC, CHRIS 180 will target these gaps in service and work in tandem with other providers to ensure needs are met.

CHRIS 180 operates counseling centers in DeKalb, Fulton and Gwinnett Counties and provides school-based mental health services for more than 70 schools around Metro Atlanta. The organization will continue providing behavioral health assessments, psychiatric services, wraparound care, community services, residential services and substance use services.

“We will be focused on helping people navigate the landscape of behavioral healthcare, physical healthcare and social services so they don’t have to piece together the support they need,” shared Dr. Anne Cornell, LPC, Chief Clinical Officer of CHRIS 180. “The main goal is getting people the services they need, when they need them, and before it becomes a crisis. We can also better address the social determinants of health – things like housing and food insecurity – that have become much more visible in recent years.”

With the new funding, CHRIS 180 will directly provide, or contract with partner organizations to provide, nine types of services as outlined by SAMHSA with an emphasis on 24-hour crisis care, evidence-based practices, care coordination with local primary care and hospital partners, and integration with physical health care. The organization will expand its substance abuse

programs and mental health services, in particular targeting veterans, while supporting national and state-level services like the 9-8-8 behavioral health crisis system.

As a recipient of this grant, CHRIS 180 must be certified within one year by the state of Georgia. The organization has already started forging partnerships to begin the process and meet the needs of people where they are with a focus on preventative care and other safety support services. CHRIS 180 is planning to begin outreach to communities in the metro area in March 2023. Admission to services will occur through CHRIS 180 and other health care providers at that time.

About CHRIS 180

Atlanta-based nonprofit CHRIS 180 was founded in 1981 and provides life-changing trauma-informed behavioral health services and wraparound support to children, adults, families and communities that empowers them to change the direction of their lives. Over more than 40 years, the organization has worked with more than 100,000 clients to build resilience and heal from trauma, while becoming a well-respected leader in child welfare and a thought leader in supporting underserved and traumatized communities across Metro Atlanta. For more information, visit CHRIS180.org.