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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

August 10, 2018

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**MAYOR EMANUEL ANNOUNCES FIVE TIMES MORE RESIDENTS RECEIVE HIV CARE,
COMPARED TO 2015**

Department of Public Health Launches Acute HIV Hotline 312-74-ACUTE to report diagnosis

Mayor Rahm Emanuel and the Chicago Department of Public Health (CDPH) today announced that so far this year, the city has served 1,814 people living with HIV in Chicago as the city continues to expand HIV primary care support. Now in the third year of the HIV primary care expansion partnership between CDPH, the University of Illinois at Chicago (UIC) and Howard Brown Health, the program is on track to serve five times as many individuals than were served in prior years. This milestone is thanks to this expanded partnership following Mayor Emanuel's call for greater collaboration between CDPH and community providers to serve more residents living with HIV.

"This partnership continues to demonstrate that we're making real progress in our effort to ensure that individuals living with HIV are able to live their best lives," Mayor Emanuel said. "We are treating more Chicagoans living with HIV than ever before."

Last year, Mayor Emanuel and CDPH announced that new HIV diagnoses in Chicago hit a new record low after 15 years of declines. CDPH's 2017 HIV/STI Surveillance Report showed a 55 percent decrease in residents newly diagnosed with HIV in 2016 compared to 2011. According to the 2017 HIV/STI Surveillance Report, 80 percent of Chicago residents newly diagnosed with HIV were linked to medical care in 2016, within one month of diagnosis. Within 12 months of diagnosis in 2016, 92 percent of individuals had been linked to medical care, placing Chicago well ahead of national rates.

"Chicago is working together to end the HIV epidemic," said CDPH Commissioner Dr. Julie Morita. "More people are living and thriving with HIV in Chicago than ever before and we will continue to invest available resources to provide quality care and ultimately bring this epidemic to an end. Together, we are making sure more people living with HIV have access to the care they need to live long, healthy lives."

Following a competitive bidding process in March 2016, UIC and Howard Brown Health assumed

management of HIV Primary Care clinics in Englewood and Uptown, respectively. Since then, both organizations have increased services, outreach and education, while spending less taxpayer resources.

“We’ve seen an increase in the number of people seeking services at our Uptown location. We know that by minimizing barriers to receiving care, including transportation, we’re better able to reach people where they live,” said Dr. Robert Barish, vice chancellor for health affairs at the University of Illinois at Chicago.

Further, CDPH has launched an acute HIV hotline, 312-74-ACUTE (312-742-2883), recognizing the short timeframe and highly infectious nature of the acute HIV infection phase, this will ensure services are provided to acutely infected HIV individuals in a timely and efficient manner. By quickly ensuring acutely infected individuals obtain needed services, the individual is on a quicker path to viral suppression. The diagnosing provider can call the secure CDPH hotline to meet the 24-hour reporting period. The hotline is answered by a HIV Surveillance Epidemiologist during the business hours of 7:30 a.m. – 5:00 p.m. After hours, the provider can leave a voicemail and CDPH will then follow up with the provider directly.

Acute HIV infection is the earliest stage of an HIV infection and a time when the amount of virus in the body is very high. At this time, a person who has been recently infected may, but not always, have a skin rash, fever, or flu-like symptoms. When people have an acute HIV infection, there is a high likelihood of transmission to others because of the high viral load in their body.

“Primary care ensures a better quality of life for people living with HIV and Howard Brown Health is proud to serve those who need it the most in Englewood,” said David Ernesto Munar, President and CEO of Howard Brown Health. “We are especially proud to exceed our service goals and look forward to continuing this work to ensure the residents of Englewood receive quality care in their community.”

Primary care includes general check-ups but also helps patients monitor their medication to reduce their viral load and ultimately reach viral suppression significantly reducing the risk of transmission. Treatment among individuals living with HIV is a key strategy in CDPH’s prevention model along with Pre-Exposure Prophylaxis (PrEP), a daily pill that helps prevent HIV. In addition to HIV primary care services, each clinic offers early intervention services to ensure patients are quickly linked and retained in care, mental health and medical case management services.

Over the last decade, Chicago has seen a steady overall decline in new HIV diagnoses however, in 2015 Englewood and Uptown had some of the highest HIV diagnoses rates and Uptown also has one of the highest rates of people living with HIV. CDPH maintains HIV primary care services in these areas to ensure that residents can access the quality care they need to keep themselves healthy and

continues to use data to strategically increase accessibility to resources and care and promote health equity citywide.

These efforts build on Mayor Emanuel's commitment to the Getting to Zero framework that will work to effectively eliminate all new diagnosis of HIV in the city in the next decade. In addition, last year Chicago also adopted the Undetectable=Untransmittable philosophy, championing the fact that people living with HIV on effective treatment do not sexually transmit HIV. Chicago also joined the International Association of Providers of AIDS Care (IAPAC), the Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS (UNAIDS), and the United Nations Human Settlements Programme (UN-Habitat) to sign onto the Fast Track Cities to initiative which engages mayors and other key stakeholders to accelerate their city's local AIDS responses.

For more information on the Primary Care clinics and CDPH's HIV prevention, treatment and surveillance initiatives please visit www.cityofchicago.org/health.

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