



Press Release

Central Florida Cares Health System, Inc. Receives Grant
to Develop Mental Health Education Videos for First Responders

For Immediate Release

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Central Florida Cares Health System (CFCHS) was recently awarded a \$25,300 grant from the Shari Costantini Family Fund at Central Florida Foundation (CFF). The grant will help further CFCHS' mission by funding the production of a series of nine (9) educational videos specific to mental health that enhances Critical Intervention Team (CIT) training and continues to support learned objectives and offer resources for First Responders.

The videos will help first-responders to better understand what persons with mental health illnesses experience daily and to recognize the signs and symptoms of a person experiencing mental illness. It is also the intent of this grant to include training in identifying and serving persons with intellectual and developmental delays. One key point in the videos is to help highlight "what a first responder can expect on scene when a person is experiencing mental illness?" The videos will further assist first-responders in how to respond appropriately and safely to challenging behaviors. The training videos will be made available to all First Responder agencies in Central Florida Cares Health System's region including law enforcement, EMS, Fire and Rescue, 911 Dispatch, etc.

This community investment grant is a result of CFF's ongoing mission to assess community needs and support innovative solutions to complex social issues within the Central Florida region. The grant is for one year and is expected to have long-lasting positive impacts years beyond.

This project is unique in its approach and, according to Maria Bledsoe, Chief Executive Officer of CFCHS, "... will help set an industry standard as to how best to relay this critical information to those who need it most and thus make a tremendous positive impact not only on first-responders and those they serve but also our community at-large." As part of this grant, CFCHS will partner with the award-winning creative team at Orlando's HiFive agency for the video production of what will likely become a prototype of how communities provide critical information and continuing education to assist our community's first responders in their line of duty.

CFCHS serves in the critical capacity of Managing Entity (ME) for state and federal funds for mental health and substance use services for Brevard, Orange, Osceola, and Seminole counties. CFCHS' mission is to manage an affordable high-quality behavioral health care system for persons with mental health and/or substance use disorders, with a vision to achieve a comprehensive and seamless behavioral health system promoting recovery and resiliency. Full details on CFCHS' impact and services in our community are available at www.centralfloridacares.org

Central Florida Foundation is the place for people who want to invest in their community. The Foundation serves as the region's community foundation and home to more than 400 charitable funds. The Foundation manages and invests funds, offers personalized service and expert giving advice, connects caring people, businesses, governments and organizations to local initiatives that build and inspire community, and empowers them to make informed decisions that make a difference now and in the future. For more information on CFF, please visit www.cffound.org