

## OUTREACH AND HEALTH PROGRAM

*"Our passion is to be present, without judgment, with those who are on the margins of our society."  
—Mark Bradley, Director, Outreach and Health Ministry*

**PURPOSE:** Through our presence and a compassionate space, we work to earn the trust of individuals who have become isolated from much of society and build caring relationships. Once we've earned that trust, we are able to empower people to meet their own needs by accessing our services, including nursing care, referrals, self-care supplies, and other concrete resources.

**WHOM WE SERVE:** Most of the people we serve are isolated from mainstream society and have few people to talk with who will accept them as they are, without judgment or condemnation. Those we serve share the circumstances of poverty, loneliness, and the inability to afford and access essential services. The more isolated a person is, the less likely they are to access services.

**PROGRAM:** Six nights a week, 52 weeks a year, The Night Ministry's *Outreach and Health Ministry program* reaches thousands of adults, youth, and children with challenging life situations. We provide our bus visitors a compassionate ear and health care services regardless of race, ethnicity, religion, housing status, sexual orientation, gender or social status.

Our *Health Outreach Bus* follows two regular routes, visiting each route three times per week, including Uptown, West Woodlawn, South Shore, Humboldt Park, Pilsen and Wicker Park. Our *volunteer hospitality crew* serves coffee, cookies, and conversation to make the bus a safe and comfortable setting for people receiving services. *Neighborhood Outreach Professionals* engage bus visitors in conversation, listening to needs and concerns, building relationships, and providing referrals to other social service agencies.

**Health Services:** *Nurse Practitioners* provide health care services and referrals to additional medical care, substance abuse treatment, support groups, mental health treatment, and health care on our Health Outreach Bus and at our Open Door Youth shelter programs.

- *Treatment for injuries or minor illnesses*
- *Screening and monitoring of chronic health problems including:*
  - *High blood pressure*
  - *Asthma*
  - *Diabetes*
- *Rapid HIV testing and prevention counseling*
- *Health care education*
- *Hepatitis A and B vaccinations*
- *Hepatitis C testing*
- *Flu shots*
- *Testing and treatment for chlamydia and gonorrhea*
- *Referrals for further treatment*

*Rapid HIV Testing Workers* provide testing and prevention education from our Health Outreach Bus, HIV testing van, and at other locations around Chicago.