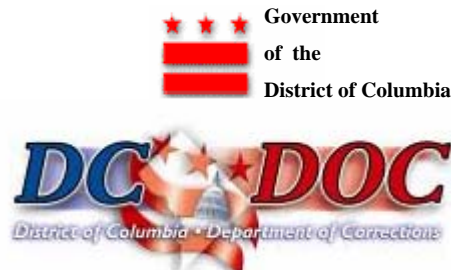


NEWS NEWS RELEASE



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DEPARTMENT OF CORRECTIONS RECEIVES HIGHEST AWARD FOR INMATE MEDICAL PROGRAM BY THE NATIONAL COMMISSION ON CORRECTIONAL HEALTH CARE

(Washington, D.C.)--- On October 20, 2008, the District of Columbia Department of Corrections was bestowed the coveted “*Program of the Year*” award by the National Commission on Correctional Health Care (NCCHC). This event took place before over 2,000 correctional medical professionals from across the country during the organization’s annual conference in Chicago, Illinois.

This prestigious award is presented each year to only one correctional system. The NCCHC selected the department’s discharge planning initiative after assessing thousands of programs that are provided by the nearly 500 prisons, jails, and juvenile detention and confinement facilities that participate in the organization’s nationwide accreditation program. Discharge planning is integral to the department’s community-oriented approach to healthcare, which emphasizes continuity of care from incarceration to post release. Since 2006, Unity Health Care, Inc. has been responsible for implementing this model at the jail.

In accepting this year’s award, Department of Corrections Director, Devon Brown, observed that nearly 15 years ago inmate medical services at the Central Detention Facility (D.C. Jail) were under federal receivership and court oversight. Today, the agency, in strong partnership with Unity Health Care, proudly leads the country in being a standard bearer for the delivery of exemplary correctional medical practices and operational proficiency.

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“The Department of Corrections is in positive transition in every respect,” Director Brown acclaimed. “The changes taking place throughout the agency reflect the elevated standards and insistence upon excellence characteristic of the Fenty Administration. The receipt of the “*Program of the Year*” award is in keeping with our firm determination to have the Department of Corrections regarded as the best within its field. The department’s advances in improving the health and well-being of those in its custody are a fitting example of its undeterred ascension toward fulfillment of this goal,” Brown stated.

The jail’s medical services were accredited earlier this year by the NCCHC as well as the American Correctional Association (ACA), marking the first time in the facility’s 32-year history that these services were certified by both nationally-renowned correctional organizations. In addition, the department consistently received national recognition and applause for its performance in the prevention and treatment of HIV/AIDS. The D.C. Appleseed Center for Law and Justice, in its recently released fourth “report card” grading the City’s progress in addressing this epidemic, gave the Department of Corrections an “A” for the second consecutive year for its automatic HIV testing program. To date, the department has been responsible for approximately one third of all District residents screened for HIV/AIDS.

The automatic HIV testing program, conducted at intake and upon release, has been emulated by several state correctional systems and the federal Bureau of Prisons. Moreover, the Appleseed report credited the department’s implementation of a therapeutic residential substance abuse treatment program (RSAT) for both male and female inmates as significantly contributing to the District improving its grade during this year’s ratings in this category from “C+” to “B.” The department anticipates that its drug treatment program will receive ACA accreditation by the close of this year. With this accomplishment, the Department of Corrections will be accredited by every correctional accrediting organization in the nation. Less than five percent of correctional systems in the country hold such distinction. The District’s program will be presented this December at the World Research Group’s conference focusing upon “Operational Excellence in Correctional Healthcare.”

The National Commission on Correctional Health Care accreditation is recognized as the premier acknowledgement of sound medical practices within penal settings as this body is dedicated exclusively to correctional health care programs. The NCCHC has honored exceptional correctional program initiatives with the “*Program of the Year*” award since 1993. The District of Columbia Department of Corrections is exceedingly pleased to be among those penal systems to have earned this highly esteemed acknowledgement of achievement.

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