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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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Black Men's Health Clinic and Central Health
Tackling 15-Year Life Expectancy Gap for People Living East of IH 35

MEDIA: "Reimagining Healthcare for Black Men: A Reentry Story by Robert Lilly"
[Click the Link to WATCH](#)

ANNOUNCEMENT:
You are Invited to attend a Lunch and Learn on BMHC's Healthcare Model.
[See the Flyer](#) [JOIN the DISCUSSION](#)
February 19th (tomorrow) at 12:15 p.m.

AUSTIN— In a move to address stark health inequities, the Black Men's Health Clinic® (BMHC) and Central Health announced today a collaboration aimed at closing a devastating health gap that leaves East Austin residents with up to 15 fewer years of life expectancy than people living west of IH 35.

The collaboration marks an important investment in health care delivery for Travis County's underserved communities, particularly addressing troubling statistics that show 42% of Black men report negative experiences in traditional health care settings.

Central Health and the Black Men's Health Clinic signed an agreement to work together to further deploy outreach strategies, including meeting patients "where they live, work, play, and pray."

Today marks the official announcement of this collaboration.

"Health disparities like this don't occur naturally; they're the consequence of undervaluing and underinvesting in the health of people on the east side—usually communities of color," **said Central Health President and CEO Dr. Pat Lee.** "This partnership represents a fundamental reimagining of how we deliver healthcare to our most vulnerable residents."

The initiative builds on BMHC's proven model of culturally competent care, which has successfully broken down traditional barriers to health care access since its 2022 launch. Key innovations include:

- Joint positions for Black primary care and mental health providers
- Removal of scheduling and coordination burdens at no additional cost
- Comprehensive support for both medical and non-medical determinants of health
- Priority access to resources for underserved populations

"BMHC employs unique strategies to reach men where they are," **said Larry Wallace Sr., BMHC Founder and CEO.** "Our tagline is 'Care You Can Trust' because we understand that building trust is fundamental to improving health outcomes in communities that have historically been marginalized."

The partnership comes at a crucial time, as Central Health invests more than \$800 million in creating an equitable safety-net healthcare system across Travis County. Currently, the organization provides care for approximately one in nine Travis County residents—more than 155,000 people with low income.

Dr. Alan Schalscha, Central Health Chief Medical Officer, emphasized the evidence-based approach behind the partnership: "Research shows that people are most likely to accept and adopt behavior changes that improve their baseline health when those changes are proposed by people like them, working in community settings where they live."

The collaboration officially began in late 2024, with both organizations already working to enhance outreach programs and bridge health care gaps.

"We are redefining healthcare for underserved communities," **said Carlton Innis, BMHC's Chairman of the Board.** "This partnership represents more than just medical care—it's about transforming the healthcare landscape so that no one is left behind."

About Central Health

Created by voters in 2004, Central Health is Travis County's hospital district. Central Health provides care and coverage for about 1 in 9 Travis County residents — more than 155,000 people with low income.

Guided by its Healthcare Equity Plan, developed with extensive community input and adopted in 2022, Central Health is investing more than \$800 million to create a high-functioning, comprehensive, and equitable safety-net system in Travis County.

This vision reflects the commitment of the Central Health system, which includes CommUnityCare health centers and Sendero Health Plans, Central Health’s nonprofit insurance company, along with dozens of community partners.

Website: <https://www.centralhealth.net>

ABOUT the BLACK MEN Men’s Health Clinic®

Mission: BMHC exists to lower barriers for successful physical, behavioral, and social determinant care by removing burdens men of color commonly experience, such as scheduling, finances, and coordination between providers (at no additional cost to clients) and elevating them to a priority by providing resources designed to best aid them.

Vision: A no-wrong-door safety-net program addressing disparities through effective strategies focused on decreasing mortality and morbidity rates among men of color via improved quality of life, self-health maintenance, and family lifestyle at no additional cost to clients.

Value Statement: Ensuring the longevity of life by making physical, behavioral, and social care more accessible in underserved and underrepresented communities while transforming and removing stigmas regarding typical healthcare systems into positive life-changing experiences.

Website: <https://blackmenshealthclinic.org/>

The Black Men’s Health Clinic ~ Care You Can Trust

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