



## PRESS RELEASE

**For immediate release**  
April 5, 2006

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### **Unity Health Care – DC Department of Corrections Partnership: An Opportunity to Improve Healthcare in the City**

(Washington, DC) Unity Health Care, Inc., the District's largest Federally Qualified Health Center and a provider of quality healthcare for the medically underserved residents of the District joined Mayor Anthony Williams during his announcement of this initiative earlier today. "While negotiations with the District continue in this regard, there should be no question that providing this service is directly related to our mission of offering a citywide network of quality health and human services to the medically underserved regardless of race, ethnic background or ability to pay," said Vincent A. Keane, CEO of Unity Health Care.

Under the new community-oriented corrections health model, inmates will be treated not as an isolated population, but instead as members of the overall community who are temporarily displaced. Unity Health Care already provides care to District residents regardless of their ability to pay. Unity Health Care services are provided in more than 30 sites throughout the District including eleven large community health centers, ten homeless shelters, three specialized health centers, several satellite clinics, and two mobile units across the city. Under the partnership, Unity Health Care will also provide care to inmates in a jail-based health center. In addition, Unity Health Care will, through HealthRight, Inc. (a local HMO) arrange for specialty care and hospitalization of inmates, thus enhancing their continuity of care.

"The challenges to taking on this responsibility are many," added Keane, "but Unity Health Care has never shied away from a challenge when it comes to adhering to its mission. It was that challenge that moved us in 1985 to add community health centers to our homeless programs, and in 2001 to add the former Public Benefit Corporation (PBC) clinics to our network. We have stepped-up to every challenge in our 20 year history guided solely by our mission, the dedication of our staff, and the well being of our patients."

The request made to Unity Health Care by the District is based on a model that has been proven effective in other states and that is being piloted under the auspices of one of America's largest national foundations, The Robert Wood Johnson Foundation (RWJF). "RWJF's interest in, and support of health programs is unquestionable. Unity feels honor to participate in this national project," said Keane.

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**Unity Health Care** provides healthcare to uninsured, underinsured, and homeless men, women and children in the District of Columbia. Founded in 1985, it is the fourth largest community health center network in the country, offering a full range of health services regardless of patients' ability to pay. Unity operates some 30 neighborhood facilities, including 11 community-based health centers, 10 medical sites in homeless shelters, and specialized health centers. Unity's Mobile outreach vans travel throughout the city, providing care to homeless persons and "hard to reach" drug abusers. In 2005, Unity provided care to more than 64,000 people who accessed services more than 291,000 times. A Federally Qualified Health Center, Unity is a 501(c) (3) organization funded in part by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services Health Resources and Services Administration, by Federal, local and private grants and by individual contributions.