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Christiana Care Health System Partners with the Sunday Breakfast Mission to Help Homeless get back on their Feet

(WILMINGTON, Del. – Nov. 25, 2015) Christiana Care Health System's Department of Orthopaedic Surgery is providing new shoes, socks and foot exams for free to nearly 100 people — many of them homeless — on Tuesday, Dec. 1, from 4 p.m. to 6 p.m., at the Sunday Breakfast Mission, a homeless shelter in Wilmington. The event is part of a campaign by a national organization known as Our Hearts to Your Soles, whose mission is to provide indigent people with shoes and free foot examinations.

Soles4Souls and Red Wing Shoes will donate a total of 100 pairs of new shoes through the organization, and Independence Prosthetics-Orthotics, Inc. will donate nearly two dozen pairs of specialty shoes for people with advanced diabetic foot needs. In addition, the nonprofit Dignity U Wear will donate 200 pairs of socks to homeless people during the event.

Paul Kupcha, M.D., section chief of Foot and Ankle Surgery at Christiana Care and an orthopaedic surgeon, is the local coordinator for the event. Dr. Kupcha said that foot health provides a clue to a person's overall health. Joint stiffness, for example, can indicate arthritis; tingling and numbness can be connected to diabetes; swelling can indicate high blood pressure or diseases of the heart and kidneys.

Brian Galinat, M.D., MBA, chair of Christiana Care's Department of Orthopaedic Surgery and Christiana Care orthopaedic surgeon Robert Steele, M.D., also will provide free exams to homeless people during the event. Delaware Orthopaedic Specialists will set up the event and staff it with volunteers.

"By providing our neighbors who are homeless with shoes, we help them get more physical activity and help protect them from frostbite," said Dr. Kupcha, who has volunteered with Our Hearts to Your Soles for eight years. "We also examine the feet of each individual and care for them if they suffer from chronic foot-related problems."

Hypertension, respiratory illness and foot problems are the three most common health issues that the homeless face, says Rev. Tom Laymon, executive director of the Sunday Breakfast Mission.

"People who are homeless largely have to walk everywhere they go which means that their feet are taking a greater beating than the rest of us," Laymon said. "The ability for them to get shoes that fit and see a doctor is incredibly meaningful to them. Like putting new tires on a car, you're retreading them in a lot of ways by giving them shoes and foot care."

About Christiana Care Health System

Christiana Care Health System is one of the country's largest health care systems, ranking as the 22nd leading hospital in the nation and 12th on the East Coast in terms of admissions. The health system includes The Medical Group of Christiana Care, a network of primary care physicians, medical and surgical specialists as well as home health care, preventive medicine, rehabilitation services and patient/family advisors for core health care services. A not-for-profit teaching hospital affiliated with Sidney Kimmel Medical College at Thomas Jefferson University, Christiana Care is recognized as a regional center for excellence in cardiology, cancer and women's health services. Christiana Care has an extensive range of outpatient services, and through Christiana Care Quality Partners, Christiana Care works closely with its medical staff to achieve better health, better access to care and lower cost. Christiana Care is home to Delaware's only Level I trauma center, the highest capability center and the only one of its kind between Philadelphia and Baltimore. Christiana Care features a Level III neonatal intensive care unit, the only delivering hospital in Delaware that offers this highest level of care to the most critically ill newborns. Christiana Care includes two hospitals with 1,100 patient beds.

For more information about Christiana Care, visit www.christianacare.org/whoweare.

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