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UIC Provides Medical Examinations for Workers and Volunteers at World Trade Center Disaster

The University of Illinois at Chicago's Occupational Health Service Institute is now providing free, confidential medical screening to individuals who worked or volunteered in the rescue, recovery and clean-up efforts following the World Trade Center attacks in New York. UIC is the only center in Illinois providing the examinations through the federally funded World Trade Center Worker and Volunteer Medical Screening Program.

Individuals who assisted in NY following the disaster – including firefighters, police and other volunteers from IL - - were exposed to a wide range of environmental hazards and stressful conditions, and many have already developed health problems from their exposures. Some people may not currently experience any symptoms, but the long-term health effects are unknown.

World Trade Center workers and volunteers are encouraged to call the toll free Program hotline at 1-888-702-0630 to learn more and determine whether they are eligible for the free medical screening.

“It's important for individuals to receive an examination to assure that any persistent health problems arising out of exposures at the WTC site are properly treated,” said Dr. Peter Orris, director of the Occupational Health Services Institute at UIC. “In addition, analysis of the data from the group as a whole will serve to identify any health problems that may develop as a result of the hazardous exposures at the World Trade Center site.”

The World Trade Center Worker and Volunteer Medical Screening Program is directed by the Mount Sinai Center for Occupational and Environmental Medicine, in partnership with the National Institutes for Occupational Safety and Health of the U.S. Public Health Service's Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Federal funds support the screening of 9,000 workers and volunteers in the entire project. The funding includes screening for up to 1,000 workers and volunteers outside of the New York metropolitan area. These national screenings are being conducted by members of the Association of Occupational and Environmental Clinics. UIC will serve as the site for screenings in Illinois, southeast Wisconsin, northern Indiana and southwest Michigan.

The Occupational Health Service Institute at UIC also provides medical evaluations for patients who believe they have been made ill by the workplace or community environment. The institute's faculty also serves as medical advisors for major corporations and trade unions in the region.

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