



Volunteer Physician Provides Hep C Cure for Uninsured Hepatitis C Patients Receive C Treatment for Free

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Raleigh, NC –Volunteer doctor and Emeritus Professor of Medicine and Infectious Diseases at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, Charles van der Horst provides treatment for patients with Hepatitis C through Urban Ministries of Wake County’s [Open Door Clinic](#). Already some patients have been cured of the virus.

The treatment consists of a 12-week course of a once a day oral medication, donated by Gilead Pharmaceuticals. The medication is valued at \$70,000. Open Door Clinic patients, Wake County residents, who are uninsured and not eligible for insurance, receive this medication at no cost. Nine patients have been tested and found to be cured of the disease, while four others are currently undergoing treatment.

Hepatitis C is the most common form of hepatitis and is associated with liver failure. Hepatitis C affects about 3.5 million people around the world and is one of the leading causes for liver transplant. Many patients with Hepatitis C will go on to develop liver cancer and/or cirrhosis or scarring of the liver.

Providing quality healthcare to more than 1,500 patients, Urban Ministries’ Open Door Clinic provides primary care and specialty chronic disease management to uninsured residents. The program houses one of the few on-site free pharmacies in the county and dispenses some 40,000 prescriptions yearly. The Clinic’s work is supported by many volunteers and generous health care organizations that provide free specialty consults, laboratory tests and radiology studies.

“Working at Open Door Clinic has been a joy for me. Being afforded the opportunity to launch a hepatitis treatment program and see the impact on these patients’ lives is the cherry on top. After 35 years in infectious diseases, it is astonishing to witness the first chronic viral illness that we can cure since antiviral medications were developed. We are now working with the Wake County Health Department to make this treatment available to many others infected with Hepatitis C.”

“I’m very pleased with the doctor offering me the regiment and I’m very grateful that it has cured my hepatitis c”, says Chuck, a patient within the Open Door Clinic.

For more information on Urban Ministries’ programs for the hungry, homeless, and those in need of healthcare, visit www.urbanmin.org.

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About Urban Ministries of Wake County: [Urban Ministries of Wake County](#) is a North Carolina 501(c)(3) non-profit organization that engages our community to serve and advocate on behalf of those affected by poverty by providing food and nutrition, promoting health and wellness, and by laying the foundations of home. Founded in 1981, the agency has been restoring lives and renewing hope for more than 37 years. As conscientious stewards of donors' funds, Urban Ministries applies more than 90 cents of every dollar directly to programs that serve the poor.

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