

HEALTH WATCH

Clinical Center at Mount Sinai

The Mount Sinai Clinical Center Introduces its Director of Social Work Services

Michael De Vidas, DSW, brings decades of social work experience to his position helping the 9/11 responders at the Mount Sinai Clinical Center. Before he became the new Director of Social Work Services here last September, Dr. De Vidas was the director of counseling services for the Narcotic Rehabilitation Services at Mount Sinai Medical Center.

Dr. De Vidas has learned about the challenges facing the hundreds of 9/11 responders who pass through the clinic's door every month. One thing that strikes him is how much the responders' lives were changed by 9/11. The selfless acts of 9/11 responders are a major motivation for Dr. De Vidas in his work.

"Many of our patients' lives were drastically changed by their 9/11



Michael De Vidas, DSW

work," Dr. De Vidas said. "And they are all fighting and coping. We are committed to doing what we can to help them."

Dr. De Vidas manages a staff of 10 social workers, benefits coordinators and administrative staff that sees more than 200 program participants every month. The team advocates on behalf of 9/11 responders for Workers' Compensation and assists them with housing and health insurance problems. They also do continuous research to find new resources available to 9/11 responders and their families. [For full list of services, see box on the left].

"They are such courageous people to do this kind of work, whether they were asbestos removers or EMTs," Dr. De Vidas said. "Their WTC work was dangerous and difficult. The doctors and social workers here listen because a lot of them are talking about their experiences for the first time. It's a safe place for them to do that, and I aim to try as hard as I can to keep it that way, and to help them get back on their feet."

BENEFITS COUNSELING SERVICES FOR WTC RESPONDERS

PARTICIPANTS WHO COME IN for their monitoring exams can see a benefits counselor during their visit. The doctor, nurse, or another clinician may also refer patients if they see a need. Once with a counselor, patients can explain their needs and ask questions. The benefits staff, experienced in educating and advocating for WTC responders, is also thoroughly knowledgeable about other benefits available to their patients. These include Workers' Compensation, health insurance programs, Social Security, union benefits, public benefits, financial assistance and help with housing.

Services are available in English, Spanish and Polish. Other languages available upon request.

Participants can receive assistance with:

- ▶ Workers' Compensation
- ▶ Line of Duty Injury benefits
- ▶ Social Security Disability
- ▶ Crime Victims Board
- ▶ Finding health insurance coverage
- ▶ Referrals for mental health
- ▶ Referrals for housing and immigration court advocacy
- ▶ Income replacement
- ▶ Vocational retraining
- ▶ Emergency assistance for utilities, eviction, food

To make a monitoring exam appointment, call 888-702-0630.

For a benefits counseling appointment between exams, call 212-241-7304.

Free Legal Clinics for Workers Compensation Registration

ALL WTC MEDICAL Monitoring and Treatment Program participants are encouraged to register to protect their right to file for future Workers' Compensation benefits.

Whether or not you have already filed a claim, whether you are sick or well, everyone is encouraged to file in case you get sick in the future.

Come to one of our FREE Walk-in Legal Clinics for assistance in filling out the WTC-12 form.

You must register with the New York State Workers' Compensation Board by August 13, 2008.

2008 Walk-in Legal Clinics Schedule

All clinics will be held on Tuesdays from 2:30 to 7:00 PM. All sessions will provide assistance in English/Spanish.

Tuesday — June 17th

Tuesday — July 15th

Tuesday — July 29th

Tuesday — August 5th

Tuesday — August 12th

Location for Clinics: Center for Advanced Medicine (CAM) Building, 17 East 102nd Street, 4th Floor Conference Room.

For more information, please call (212) 241-6307.

PROMPT APPOINTMENTS AVAILABLE FOR ALL MONITORING EXAMS

Whether you need your first, second or third medical monitoring visit, no matter what language you speak, you can get an appointment at Mount Sinai within a few weeks when you call.

To make your appointment, call 1-888-702-0630. Medical monitoring examinations are available in English, Spanish and Polish. Additional languages available upon request.

The Mount Sinai Clinical Center is Moving



WHEN: Monday, June 2, 2008

WHERE: Annenberg Building (main Mount Sinai Hospital building)
1468 Madison Ave (South of 101st St)
3rd Floor

The same medical and social work services will be provided there.

The new clinic location is about a block away from the current location.

If you have questions, call 1-888-702-0630.

Law Enforcement Personnel—Active and Retired:

- ➔ Have you been noticing that you're more irritable in your relationships?
- ➔ Has it been harder to cope with work pressures and demands? Worrying more often than is usual for you?
- ➔ Have you been feeling resentful at work?
- ➔ Do you sometimes feel that your 9/11 efforts and the impact it has had on you went unrecognized?
- ➔ Have you been finding you have less interest in activities you used to enjoy and that you find yourself just wanting to get away from everything?
- ➔ If you are thinking of retiring, or have already retired, have you been wondering what to do with the next stage of your life?

If you can answer yes to any or all of these questions, then you may be interested in a special and confidential group being formed composed of law enforcement personnel—active and retired—to discuss these and other important post-9/11 issues with others who are feeling the same way you do.

Group will be led by Mount Sinai WTC clinicians knowledgeable on these subjects whose primary interest is in providing a safe and confidential environment for the group's participants. Please call Anne Yarowsky LCSW for more information at 212-241-8887.