



MASSACHUSETTS
GENERAL HOSPITAL

CENTER FOR COMMUNITY
HEALTH IMPROVEMENT

Kraft Center for Community Health Launches *CareZONE* Mobile Health Van

This past July, the [Kraft Center for Community Health](#) transitioned from Partners HealthCare to Massachusetts General Hospital. Along with the move to MGH came a shift in approach to deliver more **direct** services in addressing some of our most pressing community health challenges, chief among them the opioid epidemic.

On January 9th, MGH leadership came together with the Kraft family, Governor Baker, Mayor Walsh, Attorney General Healey, project collaborators from the GE Foundation, Boston Health Care for the Homeless, the Boston Public Health Commission's AHOPE Program and others, to launch *CareZONE*, a new mobile health van program.



The goal of CareZONE is to increase access to addiction and health care services, to engage people in recovery and to connect them with long-term, community based care. The mobile health program goes beyond traditional brick and mortar to reach people "where they are." Initially, the van will be targeting the Dudley Square and West End areas, communities with high numbers of fatal opioid overdoses.

"We have six people dying each day in the Commonwealth from opioid overdoses," said Robert Kraft to a packed tent on Boston City Hall Plaza. "To solve our country's opioid crisis, we need innovation more than ever."

Kraft Center for Community Health Executive Director, Dr. Elsie Tavares, expressed her gratitude to the Kraft family for their generous support, as well as other donors and project collaborators and said, "No issue demands leadership, action and innovation more than the opioid crisis. We are thrilled to finally get this van to the streets."

Massachusetts Governor Charlie Baker commended the Kraft Center for putting a new, innovative tool on the streets of Boston to battle the opioid

crisis. “Everybody’s path to treatment is different. This is the beginning of what could be a different way of thinking about pathways to treatment,” said Baker.

The *CareZONE* van, staffed by the Boston Health Care for the Homeless medical group and AHOPE’s harm reduction team, will provide on-demand, preventative care, such as screenings for tuberculosis, cancer and sexually transmitted infections, immunizations and chronic disease management including HIV. It will also offer low-threshold treatment for substance use disorders and will offer an opportunity for individuals, many of whom are homeless, to receive overdose prevention and risk reduction counseling.

Boston Mayor Walsh, speaking to both a deeply personal issue and a major focus of his administration, summed it up by saying, “This epidemic has stolen too many of our neighbors, our friends, and our family. This opioid crisis is all hands on deck.”

To learn more about the Kraft Center for Community Health and *CareZONE*, go to: <http://www.kraftcommunityhealth.org>

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