



Michael R. Bloomberg, *Mayor, City of New York*  
 Nicholas Scoppetta, *Fire Commissioner*

SEPTEMBER 2009 - WTC SPECIAL



# HEALTH CONNECTIONS

THE NEWSLETTER OF THE BUREAU OF HEALTH SERVICES • COUNSELING SERVICES UNIT • FDNY

## WTC ILLNESS:

- FEDERAL FUNDING RENEWED FOR THIS YEAR •
- CURRENT TRENDS AT FDNY •

The FDNY WTC Medical Monitoring and Treatment Program continues to evaluate active and retired members (Fire & EMS) who were exposed during the WTC rescue/recovery operation. This program began in October 2001 and was the first of its kind. Because BHS had pre-9/11/01 candidate and periodic examinations that captured baseline data, our program is the only one that can show objective changes in our members.

The program was developed as a collaborative effort between Labor and Management because we were all aware that our members suffered significant symptoms and illnesses after their intense exposures at the site. The FDNY WTC Program acknowledges the significant exposures of both active and retired members, who put their lives on the line that day to save others and all the days thereafter, working in the deepest areas to recover others.

Funding for this program has primarily come from the National Institute of Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH). Once again, with the combined efforts of Labor and Management, funding has been secured for this current year (7/1/2009 – 6/30/2010) to ensure that our FDNY members (Fire and EMS; active and retired) receive needed services. Long term funding is still required to ensure that these services can continue.

◆ The FDNY WTC program includes yearly medical monitoring



with testing for suspected WTC conditions. In addition to the standard WTC monitoring exam, FDNY routine testing also includes breathing tests, an electrocardiogram, blood screening for leukemia, multiple myeloma, and prostate cancer. Also available are Sinus and Chest CT scans, along with other specialized diagnostic tests and free medications for WTC conditions covered by the federal government. Both WTC physical and mental health conditions are also covered.

◆ Last year (7/1/08 – 6/30/09), the FDNY WTC program provided yearly medical monitoring to over 9,000 members and more than 3,000 to 4,000 members were provided with treatment for WTC related conditions.

◆ Part of the efforts of the FDNY WTC Program is to look at disease trends in our active and retired members. Respiratory conditions continue to be a major concern to our membership.

Over time, lower respiratory conditions appear to have stabilized while upper respiratory conditions appear to have increased. Our Program responded by expanding the availability of ENT (Ear, Nose and Throat) evaluations and testing to the already extensive pulmonary medicine services that we offer. The Program additionally recognized the need to address the many upper gastrointestinal issues that appeared in our First Responder population. Again, services were expanded to include a network of participating gastroenterologists who could provide testing and treatment to our symptomatic active and retired members.

◆ Mental health conditions also continue to be of concern. Over time we have seen a shift from patients having mostly Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) to patients having Depression or both Depression and PTSD. Treatment services have been adjusted to meet this change in conditions.

◆ Has Cancer rates changed? We continue our work to document and understand any changing trends in our members, both active and retired. This information is gathered by our FDNY WTC Program in several ways:

- through the medical questionnaire during the annual monitoring exam,
- at the BHS Clinic when members see the Medical Officer,
- when members call us to give us this information

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- d) FDNY pension disability records
- e) The NYS Cancer Registry providing documentation regarding trends in cancer in our members.
- f) In cooperation with your unions (UFA, UFOA, EMT, Paramedic Locals 2507 and 3621).

Ms. Nadia Jaber is a member of the WTC Program and a Physician Assistant; she is responsible for the collection of this vital Cancer information. She speaks to members (both active and retired) and requests pathology reports to ensure the accuracy of our data. In order for our information to be up to date and accurate, we request all members, active and retired to provide this information by calling her at 718-999-1223. You can also call your Unions with this information. Without this

important data, clinical trends in cancer cannot be documented.

The FDNY Medical Monitoring and Treatment Program remains committed to our members to maintain health and treat WTC conditions to restore health. Many of these conditions are chronic in nature and require long term surveillance and continued medications.

If members (active and retired) are having symptoms that could be related to their WTC exposure, we encourage you to talk to our doctors regarding further testing or treatment. In the last calendar year (1/1/08 to 12/31/08), our Program has provided active and retired members testing for these WTC related conditions with over 1600 Chest CT scans, over 440 Sinus CT scans, over 400 specialized breathing tests and nearly 500 Upper GI endoscopies. Free

medication for these covered conditions has been provided and in the last calendar year, we spent over 6 million dollars on medications for our membership. Sometimes even the best medications are not enough and then sinus and lung surgery has also been provided at no-charge to our members (active and retired) All of this has only been possible due to continued federal funding of this program.

For retired members, WTC Monitoring is available at BHS and also at satellite sites near where our members live. These sites provide Monitoring for retirees and physical health and/mental health WTC Treatment for both active and retired members.

At the same visit immunizations can be updated and other health benchmarks can be reviewed.

## Fire Disability Pensions

FDNY (Fire) Disability Pension Category	Post-WTC								Pre-WTC	
	2009*	2008	2007	2006	2005	2004	2003	2002	2001	2000
Upper Respiratory Tract	7	25	13	5	---	---	---	---	---	---
Lower Respiratory Tract (Pulmonary & Sarcoid)	53	102	77	127	181	153	181	132	44	58
Gastroesophageal Tract	2	4	1	0	---	---	---	---	---	---
Psychological	20	39	53	20	20	16	20	3	0	0
Cancer	16	32	20	35	19	12	19	10	15	23

\* 2009 is not a full years' data

The FDNY Board of Trustees reviews pension requests for members with significant disabilities. In

recognition of the many work exposures, firefighters and fire officers may qualify for service connected pensions for several presumptive illnesses, including LUNG, HEART, CANCER and STROKE. After 9/11, legislation was enacted to include illnesses related to WTC exposures. This legislation covers both active members and those who retired after 9/11 who had documented exposure at the WTC site. The pension covers several conditions believed related to WTC exposure. Since 2006, many members have qualified for the WTC pension. The FDNY Medical Monitoring and Treatment Program has been able to assist members in the evaluation and treatment of many of these condi-

tions.

The summary above illustrates FDNY disability pensions pre and post WTC, focusing on WTC related conditions and cancer.

**NOTE:** Some of these figures include individuals who applied for the WTC bill after retirement and those who requested reclassification of their prior pension under the WTC provision. Figures do not include EMS as they are part of a different pension system. Disabilities for Upper Respiratory Tract and Gastroesophageal Tract were not granted prior to 2006. These numbers continue to show that members have disabling problems since 9/11/2001.

### FDNY\*BHS

9 MetroTech Center, Brooklyn  
251 Lafayette Street, NY

**Dr. Kerry Kelly**  
Chief Medical Officer

**Dr. Viola Ortiz**  
Deputy Chief Medical Officer

**Malachy Corrigan**  
Director, FDNY CSU

**Mary T. McLaughlin**  
Director, FDNY BHS



**FDNY BHS WTC MONITORING (Retiree) /  
TREATMENT (Retiree & Active) - At Satellite Locations**  
*By Appointment Only*

For exams at locations listed below, **chest x-rays and blood tests will NOT be done on site.** (Blood will be drawn at Fort Totten starting September 8, 2009.) Referrals to *nearby* facilities for blood tests and chest x-rays will be given to you by a WTC nurse on the day of your appointment.

Site	Address	WTC MONITORING Day	WTC MONITORING Appointment Hours
<b>Staten Island</b> CSU Site	1688 Victory Blvd. Staten Island, NY 10314	<b>TUESDAY</b>	8 AM to 3 PM
<b>Fort Totten (Queens)</b> CSU Site	Fort Totten Building 413A Bayside, NY 11364	<b>TUESDAY</b>	8:30 AM to 3:30 PM
<b>Staten Island</b> CSU Site	1688 Victory Blvd. Staten Island, NY 10314	<b>WEDNESDAY</b>	8 AM to 3 PM
<b>Fort Totten (Queens)</b> CSU Site	Fort Totten Building 413A Bayside, NY 11364	<b>WEDNESDAY</b>	8:30 AM to 3:30 PM
<b>Orange County</b> CSU Site	2279 Goshen Turnpike Middletown, NY 10941	<b>THURSDAY</b>	9 AM to 2 PM
<b>Brentwood (L.I.)</b> CSU Site	Suffolk County Community College Crooked Hill Road Brentwood, NY 11717	<b>FRIDAY</b>	8 AM to 3:30 PM

To schedule an appointment or for more information please call BHS WTC Call Center at **(718) 999-1858**

**FDNY BHS WTC MONITORING (Retiree) At Headquarters**  
*By Appointment Only*

Site	Address	WTC MONITORING Day	WTC MONITORING Appointment Hours
<b>Headquarters (BROOKLYN)</b>	9 MetroTech Center BHS – 2 <sup>nd</sup> Floor	<b>TUESDAY</b>	32 sessions at 7:30 AM 15 sessions at 10:00 AM
<b>Headquarters (BROOKLYN)</b>	9 MetroTech Center BHS – 2 <sup>nd</sup> Floor	<b>WEDNESDAY</b>	32 sessions at 7:30 AM
<b>Headquarters (BROOKLYN)</b>	9 MetroTech Center BHS – 2 <sup>nd</sup> Floor	<b>THURSDAY</b>	15 sessions at 10:00 AM
<b>Headquarters (BROOKLYN)</b>	9 MetroTech Center BHS – 2 <sup>nd</sup> Floor	<b>FRIDAY</b>	32 sessions at 7:30 AM
<b>Headquarters (BROOKLYN)</b>	9 MetroTech Center BHS – 2 <sup>nd</sup> Floor	<b>One SUNDAY a Month</b>	30 sessions at 7:30 AM 15 sessions at 9:00 AM 30 sessions at 10:30 AM

**FDNY BHS WTC TREATMENT (Active & Retiree) At Headquarters**  
*By Appointment Only*

Site	Address	WTC MONITORING Day	WTC MONITORING Appointment Hours
<b>Headquarters (BROOKLYN)</b>	9 MetroTech Center BHS – 2 <sup>nd</sup> Floor	<b>MONDAY</b>	8:15 AM – 12:30 PM
<b>Headquarters (BROOKLYN)</b>	9 MetroTech Center BHS – 2 <sup>nd</sup> Floor	<b>TUESDAY</b>	8:15 AM – 12:30 PM
<b>Headquarters (BROOKLYN)</b>	9 MetroTech Center BHS – 2 <sup>nd</sup> Floor	<b>WEDNESDAY</b>	8:15 AM – 12:30 PM
<b>Headquarters (BROOKLYN)</b>	9 MetroTech Center BHS – 2 <sup>nd</sup> Floor	<b>THURSDAY</b>	8:15 AM – 12:30 PM
<b>Headquarters (BROOKLYN)</b>	9 MetroTech Center BHS – 2 <sup>nd</sup> Floor	<b>FRIDAY</b>	8:15 AM – 12:30 PM

For mental health treatment scheduling, you may call the individual sites. Scheduled appointments with our mental health professionals are available Monday thru Friday at each of these sites.



**FDNY COUNSELING SERVICES UNIT LOCATIONS**  
*By Appointment Only*



Site	Address	CSU APPOINTMENT Day & Hours	Phone Number
<b>Manhattan</b> CSU Site	251 Lafayette Street, 3 <sup>rd</sup> Fl. (Between Spring & Prince St) New York, NY 10012	<b>MONDAY – FRIDAY</b> <b>8:00AM – 6:00PM</b>	212-570-1693 Answered 24/7
<b>QUEENS</b> CSU Site	Fort Totten Building 413B Bayside, NY 11359	<b>MONDAY – FRIDAY</b> <b>8:00AM – 7:00PM</b>	718-352-2140
<b>Staten Island</b> CSU Site	1688 Victory Blvd. Suite 101A Staten Island, NY 10314	<b>MONDAY – FRIDAY</b> <b>9:00AM – 5:00PM</b>	718-815-4111
<b>Orange County</b> CSU Site	2279 Goshen Turnpike Middletown, NY 10941	<b>MONDAY – FRIDAY</b> <b>8:00AM – 5:00PM</b>	845-695-1029
<b>Brentwood (L.I.)</b> CSU Site	Suffolk County Community 1001 Crooked Hill Road – Center Cottage Brentwood, NY 11717	<b>MON, TUES, WED</b> <b>8:00AM – 7:00PM</b> <b>THURS: 8:00AM – 5:00PM</b> <b>FRI: 8:00AM – 4:00PM</b>	631-851-6888