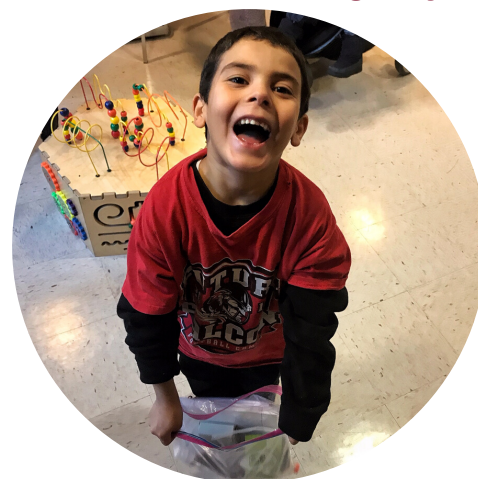# *State of Health Care in the Homeless Population*

Poor health and homelessness are inextricably linked in the following ways:

- Episodes of homelessness are often precipitated by health crises.
- Becoming homeless can exacerbate and complicate existing health conditions.
- It is difficult to end an episode of homelessness until an individual's health is stabilized.
- Once they become homeless, individuals and families focus on basic needs: food, clothing, shelter — before focusing on health care.

The result: homeless people suffer disproportionately from poor health. The following indicators illustrate the complex status of health within the homeless population:

- The death rate of NYC homeless persons is 3 to 4 times higher than the general population (O'Connell, 2005);
- Homeless children are at increased risk for having depression, attention deficit disorder, obesity, tooth decay, and poor school performance (United States Interagency Council on Homelessness, 2018);
- 55% of hospitalizations among homeless persons are related to substance and alcohol abuse (NYC DOHMH, 2005);
- Homeless persons in NYC suffer from mental illness at 3X the rate of the general population (NYC DOHMH, 2005);

CFH believes that homelessness is a condition, not a characteristic and <u>conditions can be treated.</u> CFH is expanding the number of homeless individuals ending their homelessness through solutions that include:

- **High quality health care:** We consistently receive the Level 3 Patient-Centered Medical Home designation, the highest awarded, by the National Committee on Quality Assurance. The NCQA is the nation's leading assessor of the quality of care.
- **The community-based health center:** Our new model of health care strategically locates health centers in neighborhoods with clusters of shelters, supportive housing and other services for homeless individuals and families. This system ensures that care is more concentrated, comprehensive and accessible.
- **Expanding our reach**: As the largest provider of services with 24 locations (and growing) we're creating a comprehensive ambulatory care network throughout 4 boroughs. The network will create a more efficient and cost-effective health care delivery model.