

Residents will receive attention for 9/11 related health conditions!

February 1, 2007

Along with a team of select community groups last week, I met with Dr. Joan Reibman and associates of Bellevue Hospital to discuss free clinic services for residents as relating to World Trade Center health issues. I went representing Independence Plaza North tenants. We have been meeting for years, trying to get environmental issues straightened out – pushing for health care for downtown residents. The group who organized us, is the 911 Environmental Action group – a group that some of the IPN tenants originally organized in 2001 and then turned over to these highly efficient folks who run it now (while we were busy fighting to save our homes here at IPN.)

Finally we are making headway. The Mayor's office has granted \$16 million dollars to this clinic at Bellevue – the one that has been taking some residents in a volunteer program. (No funding!) However, they could only handle a certain limited amount of people and it was not publicized widely. Now they will open their doors to others. It is a beginning.

\$16 million is not enough for a long term program. The same group (myself included for IPN) also met with two representatives from the Mayor's Office last week asking for Federal funds to support this clinic: Rima Cohen and Anthony Russo. Rima is the Director of Health and Human Services with the Mayor's office. She's a former Clinton Administration staffer and considered to be an excellent health policy person. Anthony is from her department. That's still a discussion and we hope we can obtain that funding.

In the meantime, if you have WTC issues – and your doctor is not responding to it being WTC related, or if YOU DO NOT HAVE INSURANCE – please call this number and make an appointment. 212-562-1720

We also asked that the Mayor's office help educate all of the doctors in NYC to know how to look for and assess WTC related conditions. Too many of us go to doctors now who claim our conditions have nothing to do with 9/11. That is because they are ill informed. The city has long been afraid of litigation. Time to just do the right thing by all of the residents, many of whom have themselves done heroic deeds that day and the days that followed. At IPN, it was 10 days of taking care of each other in dangerous circumstances. We also had the barges parked downstairs on the highway.

You may have to wait for an appointment, but you will be seen and testing and treatment will begin. I urge IPN tenants to move on this as others will be calling and we want you to get in as soon as possible.

SAMPLE CONDITIONS: respiratory illness; esophageal reflux; sinus infections that have come back often. There are many other conditions that only the doctors would be able to ascertain. They will also discuss psychological issues. There was plenty of trauma and you could be affected by not sleeping properly, feeling uneasy, etc. Do not be ashamed to get assistance. It's time for us to heal. Certainly if you have any doubts, call up. Again, do it NOW.

Sincerely,
Diane Lapson
President IPNTA