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Contact: Bethany Hardy, 202-277-3848

Surgo Ventures Announces “Rides for Moms” Program with Uber to Provide Access to Transportation to Prenatal Appointments for Patients at Two Federally Qualified Health Centers in Washington, DC

Community of Hope & Mary’s Center Hope to Enroll up to 500 Women Each in the Program to see if Free Rides Improve Attendance Rates for Prenatal Appointments

WASHINGTON, March 31, 2021—Surgo Ventures today announced that they are working with two federally qualified health centers in the District of Columbia—[Community of Hope](#) and [Mary’s Center](#)—to provide their clients with free-of-charge, on-demand transportation to and from their prenatal appointments in a program called Rides for Moms with Uber.

Over the course of the project, Surgo Ventures and Uber will offer up to 1,000 pregnant women in the Washington, D.C. area vouchers for Uber rides through their existing Uber accounts, or pre-scheduled rides via [Uber Health](#) for those who do not have access to a smartphone or the Uber app. Community of Hope and Mary’s Center have recently started enrolling women in Rides for Moms—with 40 women enrolled to date.

“It’s important to provide customer-centric solutions to improve health, and this project is a perfect example of how we can do that,” said **Dr. Sema K. Sgaier, CEO of Surgo Ventures and Adjunct Assistant Professor at Harvard T.H. Chan School of Public Health**. “For many pregnant women, transportation can be a significant barrier to attending their prenatal care appointments. COVID-19 has made this situation even more challenging due to concerns about the risk of public transportation and cuts in public transit service. We are hoping this pilot will make a big difference in the lives of these women.”

“Access to transportation is a key social determinant of health, and specifically for expecting mothers, being able to reliably get to and from appointments is critical for consistent prenatal care,” said **Michele Blackwell, Public Policy Manager of Uber**. “This work with Surgo Ventures, Community of Hope, and Mary’s Center is a step in the right direction towards making sure transportation is never a barrier to care, especially for our most vulnerable communities, and we’re hopeful that it will lead to improved health outcomes for mothers and their children.”

“Community of Hope is proud to be part of this innovative collaboration to help expectant parents obtain critical prenatal care during a time when obtaining access

to transportation is especially challenging,” said **Kelly Sweeney McShane, President and CEO of Community of Hope**. “This program allows us to seamlessly carry out our mission to offer quality healthcare and social services to the most vulnerable families who face health inequities and unnecessary barriers to care.”

“We are delighted about this opportunity to better serve the pregnant mothers who use our services at Mary’s Center,” said **Maria S. Gomez, President and CEO of Mary’s Center**. “This program fits so well within our Social Change Model, which allows us to provide the healthcare and the social support services parents and families need.”

The Rides for Moms program includes **an evaluation study to assess the potential impact of offering free-of-charge rides to pregnant women for prenatal appointments**. The study seeks to determine whether the program improves prenatal appointment attendance, and to understand participants’ satisfaction with and perceptions of the value of the program. The overall results of the study will be shared after the conclusion of the program in the summer of 2022.

For more information on Surgo Ventures visit surgoventures.org. For more information about how Uber partners with healthcare organizations to help reduce barriers to care, please visit uberhealth.com.

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