



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Phoebe and Albany Police Partner to Reduce Violence in the Community

Albany, Ga. – Phoebe is hosting a two-day violence prevention conference bringing together healthcare providers, law enforcement leaders and public health officials to find solutions to violence plaguing certain neighborhoods in Albany. The conference is focused on implementing the Cardiff Violence Prevention Model, a project designed to reduce violence through data-driven strategies. The model is supported by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), and it was developed by Dr. Jonathan Shepherd – a surgeon and professor at Cardiff University in the United Kingdom – who participated virtually in the Albany conference on Thursday.

“We’re extremely fortunate to have Dr. Shepherd take part in our conference because he is the world’s foremost expert in helping healthcare providers and law enforcers work together to prevent violence,” said Leon Dent, MD, Phoebe Medical Director for Trauma Services. “We’re also excited to welcome trauma team members from Grady Health and other leaders from Atlanta where this model has been successfully implemented.”

Experts estimate more than half of violent crime in the United States is not reported to law enforcement, meaning communities lack a complete understanding of the location, frequency and types of violence happening locally. The Cardiff Violence Prevention Model uses health data to complement police crime data, providing a more comprehensive understanding of violence and improving the ability to develop and deliver successful solutions.

“I think the motivation for this partnership work grows as people learn how to work together – law enforcement and emergency physicians and city government – and that’s exciting. That’s new,” Dr. Shepherd said.

The Phoebe Trauma Services team has been working with the Albany Police Department for several years on this project and both organizations are already sharing data with the Georgia Department of Public Health. The next step is to create a violence prevention board and community safety partnerships involving more groups and individuals to help develop and implement programs and initiatives.

“Albany is the right size community for this. We’re not so big that things get too convoluted or territorial, and we’re not so small that we don’t have enough resources to bring to the table. I believe we have the answers to our community problems right here in Albany. We want to get the right people together and act on it. This is not just talking, this is acting,” said Albany Police Chief Michael Persley.

The model does not use any protected health information or personal identifying information of Phoebe patients. It does collect de-identified violence-related injury data such as location, time, date and mechanism of injury. When combined with law enforcement data, the information helps create maps to home in on where and when violence is most common. The model also provides a framework to implement collaborative violence prevention strategies.

“Violence is among the most common causes of traumatic injuries that we see in the Phoebe Trauma Center. Violence is truly a public health problem that needs to be addressed in a concerted and collaborative way, and that’s what we are trying to accomplish with this conference,” Dr. Dent said.

One of the primary champions of the Cardiff Model in Atlanta is Dr. Daniel Wu, a Professor of Emergency Medicine at Emory University and Chief of Emergency Medicine at Grady Health. Dr. Wu is attending the Albany conference to share details of work that has been done in Atlanta, and he announced that Albany is one of three cities nationwide chosen to receive a \$30,000 grant from the American Public Health Association to help implement the Cardiff Model here.

“In Albany, they have the ability to really make a difference. It’s a unique partnership that’s already advanced. The hospital and the chief of police are set up and partnering. Albany has all the right pieces at the table and is set up for success,” Dr. Wu said. “This is just making our neighbors and communities better, and that’s why we went into medicine.”

The main goals of the conference are to identify additional community partners who should be involved, determine if there are ways to improve data collection and begin to develop specific plans to utilize the data to prevent violence in Albany. Leaders from Phoebe, Albany Police Department, CDC, Grady Health, Emory University School of Medicine, Georgia Department of Public Health and several social service agencies are participating in the conference Thursday and Friday at the Phoebe Simulation & Innovation Center on Phoebe’s main campus.

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