

Assisting pregnant women in crisis

Call 1.855.301.4CHS for assistance



**Catholic
Health Services**
of Long Island
At the heart of health

A woman or couple facing an unexpected pregnancy may feel anxious and overwhelmed, with a multitude of worries. It may be a single woman who had very different plans for her future, a teenager wondering how she will tell her family, or a couple already struggling to make ends meet. All too often, those in this situation feel pressure from friends, family members and others to terminate their pregnancy.

In these circumstances, it may seem as if abortion is the only option. Organizations offering pro-life alternatives are currently less coordinated than abortion providers, who extend what appears to be an easy solution. However, the truth is that there are many resources available to help expectant mothers and their families.

To provide assistance for an unexpected or crisis pregnancy, Catholic Health Services (CHS) has established a one-call outreach program with access to resources in the community. Services are given both to uphold the unborn baby's right to life and help sustain mother and baby following birth. In this collaborative program, CHS's trained professionals offer expectant mothers encouragement and an array of practical support at this critical time and beyond, in the hope of helping the mother to continue the pregnancy.

Through this outreach program, a social worker/health care navigator is available by phone from 8:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m., Monday through Friday, supported 24/7 by a team of trained professionals evenings, weekends and holidays. All conversations are confidential and follow HIPAA guidelines. Referrals to medical appointments can be scheduled and transportation arranged. If social or immediate material assistance (food, shelter and clothing) are required, CHS's navigator can provide information or connect callers with persons at agencies in the local area. Women and families in distress receive the respect and care they need to bring their baby safely to term.

Since needs exist beyond pregnancy, the comprehensive resources made available to callers will be beneficial after the baby's delivery. The goal is to provide nonjudgmental support and guidance, with an emphasis on education regarding all the assistance within reach to continue the pregnancy. Couples or single women who are experiencing challenges should not feel alone.

Crisis Pregnancy Outreach of Catholic Health Services

Call 1.855.301.4CHS if you or someone you know needs assistance with an unexpected or crisis pregnancy.

- Professionally staffed referral line
- 24 hours a day/7 days a week
- Confidential and nonjudgmental
- Guidance in connecting with available resources
- Assistance following a life-limiting prenatal diagnosis
- Post-abortion healing resources

Catholic Charities Crisis Pregnancy and Maternity Support Services

Women, Infants and Children (WIC) Program

- Serves infants, children under the age of five, and pregnant, postpartum or breastfeeding women who meet income guidelines.
- Provides vouchers for healthy foods as well as nutrition assessment, education, counseling and breastfeeding support.

Regina and Mary's Residences

- Serves single, pregnant and parenting young women and their children.
- Provides safe housing, emotional support, counseling, parenting guidance, educational support, child care assistance and life skills training to help young women become confident, loving, working mothers.

Mentoring of Mom's Program

- Serves single, pregnant and parenting young women.
- Provides one-to-one relationships with role models who encourage and support these young women to develop into effective parents and workers.



In addition, this one-call outreach assists expectant parents who have received a prenatal diagnosis of a life-limiting illness such as anencephaly, severe chromosomal anomalies, inoperable cardiac abnormalities or Potter's syndrome.

Gabriel's Courage

Through Gabriel's Courage—CHS's family-centered perinatal program—obstetricians, registered nurses, social workers, chaplains, child life specialists and bereavement specialists work together to offer compassionate support, education and birth planning services. Through the development of a birth plan, parents are able to determine the care they want for their baby and make decisions for their newborn prior to birth. An important component of the program is taking memory-building photos, footprints and handprints, reaffirming the precious life of this special infant. For more than a year after the child's birth, the team will remain in contact with the family to help bridge the feelings of loss, while validating the role of the parents.

Post-Abortion Healing

Affirming the sanctity of life from the moment of conception, Catholic Health Services respects the dignity of each person and continues Christ's healing mission. Recognizing that abortion is prevalent on Long Island, this program is designed to be part of the solution, providing expert medical, social, economic, emotional and spiritual resources to those in crisis.

Post-abortion healing resources are also offered for those in need, providing the opportunity to experience the loving

mercy of God in a safe and sacred space, without judgment, and information is kept strictly confidential. There are Project Rachel Days of Prayer and Healing throughout Long Island, led by the Sisters of Life. Regardless of faith, number of abortions or other issues, all are welcome to attend. Participants will not be asked to discuss their abortion, and privacy is always a priority.

One-call Outreach

While these services are offered from the Catholic tradition, CHS's one-call outreach program is intended to serve individuals from any walk of life. Our staff are prepared to assist people of all religions or persons of no particular faith tradition. It's not necessary to identify your faith, but doing so may help in obtaining spiritual support or connecting with clergy or chaplains (if requested or needed).

Many who are suffering alone take great comfort in sharing their burden. CHS counselors are available to meet with women individually, in person or over the phone, whether in a single conversation or in ongoing meetings. This outreach allows women, couples and families the opportunity to respond with courage to what may be their life's most difficult moments.

The confidential, dedicated telephone number for this program is 1.855.301.4CHS, supported by the availability of multilingual interpretive services. Anyone of any faith may call or refer to this support line, including representatives of parishes, colleges and crisis pregnancy centers, to facilitate safe, nonjudgmental companioning for women and couples in a crisis pregnancy. ■