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## **MAYOR BLOOMBERG RELEASES THIRD ANNUAL REPORT ON 9/11 HEALTH**

*Latest Report from the Medical Working Group Reviews Scientific Research on Health Impacts and Recommendations for WTC-Related Cancer Analyses*

*City's WTC Centers of Excellence Continue to Enroll and Treat Patients*

Mayor Michael R. Bloomberg today released the *2010 Annual Report on 9/11 Health*, a comprehensive review of the latest medical research on the health impact of the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001, which includes a series of recommendations about the methods researchers should use when conducting complex analyses of confirmed cancer diagnoses in WTC-exposed individuals, including New York City Firefighters and WTC Health Registry participants. While the majority of people exposed to the WTC attacks are healthy and free of symptoms, thousands have developed chronic mental and physical health conditions. The report cites recent studies showing that the steep declines in lung function detected among firefighters and EMS workers within a year of 9/11 have largely persisted, even among those who never smoked. It is estimated that four times as many firefighters and twice as many EMS workers had below-normal lung function for their ages six to seven years after 9/11 than before the attacks.

To date, most WTC-related research and health services have been funded through federal appropriations, but the current grant funding from the National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health will expire in 2011. The James L. Zadroga 9/11 Health and Compensation Act, now being considered by Congress, would provide long-term funding for WTC-related health monitoring, treatment and research.

“This year, New York City has provided specialized treatment for World Trade Center-related illnesses to more than 15,000 people in the New York area,” said Mayor Bloomberg. “Over the past nine years, we have ensured that everyone who rushed to our City’s aid received the care they needed. Passing the James L. Zadroga 9/11 Health and Compensation Act is the best way we can demonstrate our continued commitment to helping everyone and anyone who needs medical care.”

“For three years the World Trade Center Medical Working Group has been helping us better understand the continuing need for medical treatment from the September 11<sup>th</sup> attacks,” said Deputy Mayor Gibbs. “With assistance from the federal government, the City has made long term investments and devoted resources to the WTC Centers of Excellence, and is providing care to the people who need it the most.”

“Thanks to the Medical Working Group’s most recent review, we have a better picture of the mid-term health effects of WTC exposure,” said Commissioner Farley. “By compiling and reviewing all available research findings, the group has deepened our understanding of the attack’s health impact. It has also helped inform the way public agencies and private providers care for those who are still suffering.”

“There were thousands of adults and children who were either exposed to the dust and fumes of the WTC disaster or to the related tragic events through the loss of family, friends and colleagues. Even nine years later they may now be experiencing persistent and worsening cough, asthma, persistent sadness, irritability or other problems that may stem from 9/11,” said Alan Aviles, president of HHC. “We encourage people who think they or their children may be sick from 9/11 events to reach out to us at the WTC Environmental Health Center for help.”

According to the new report, more than 23,000 people in the New York and New Jersey area were monitored for WTC-related illness during the past year, with the vast majority (95%) being rescue and recovery workers. Another 15,200 people in the area underwent treatment in the last year through the federally funded WTC Centers of Excellence. This includes approximately 2,600 who were treated at the World Trade Center Environmental Health Center, the program for those living, working or going to school in Lower Manhattan in the weeks and months after 9/11; nearly 5,000 who were treated at FDNY’s treatment program; and more than 7,500 who were cared for by the NY/NJ treatment consortium, which includes the Mount Sinai School of Medicine, for rescue workers and recovery workers. Since 9/11, more than 50,000 rescue and recovery workers, residents, students and office workers in the New York area have enrolled in 9/11 health programs for respiratory and mental health conditions.

The cancer research recommendations included in the report are based on the expert advice of nationally recognized biostatisticians, environmental health scientists and cancer epidemiologists who were convened by the Health Department and FDNY for a two-day analytic methods meeting last June. The recommendations call for researchers to develop consistent methods for tracking cancer diagnoses among people exposed to the attacks and for researchers to use similar measurements when possible to determine exposure levels across affected groups. The recommendations also state that formal cancer analyses among WTC exposed people should be conducted no more than every five years and call for ongoing consultation and collaboration between researchers. The recommendations have already improved collaboration among the WTC Centers of Excellence and the WTC Health Registry, resulting in a newly formed WTC Analytic Methods Workgroup that also includes labor and community representatives.

The report also shows that posttraumatic stress disorder (PTSD) remains the most common 9/11-related health effect among exposed adults. Trauma before or after 9/11 unrelated to the terrorist attacks, such as losing a job or a loved one, or experiencing violence of some kind, was also associated with PTSD or with greater symptom severity among exposed individuals. Studies suggest that a lack of adequate social support can slow recovery from PTSD. Despite widespread evidence of PTSD among all exposed groups, studies have not shown an increase in suicide in the four years following 9/11.

Mayor Bloomberg convened the World Trade Center (WTC) Medical Working Group in June 2007. Members meet regularly to review clinical research findings on the health effects of WTC exposure. In addition to publishing an annual report, the Medical Working Group reviews the adequacy of physical and mental health services available to WTC-exposed persons, and advises city government on approaches to communicating health risk information related to WTC exposure.

The WTC Centers of Excellence offer treatment and medication for WTC-related illnesses by health professionals specializing in 9/11-related conditions, with no out-of-pocket costs to patients. The

centers also offer assistance with applying for 9/11-related benefits, such as Workers' Compensation. New Yorkers interested in learning more about the resources available should visit [www.nyc.gov](http://www.nyc.gov) or call 311.

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