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New Low-cost Acupuncture Treatment Program Comes to Boston

BOSTON – The idea of making acupuncture affordable for working people began on the West Coast. Now, that idea has moved eastward as Pathways to Wellness, a Boston-based holistic therapies clinic, prepares to launch its own low-cost acupuncture program.

Set to begin in mid-September, acupuncture treatments will cost \$35 and will be provided in small group settings on Saturdays at Pathways' Back Bay clinic. (In Boston, acupuncture typically costs anywhere from \$70 to \$125.)

The Pathways to Wellness program is modeled after Portland, Oregon's Working Class Acupuncture (WCA), which seeks to provide "accessible acupuncture and wellness resources that empower people, build community, and break down class divisions." At WCA their goals are to make acupuncture available to their clients as often as they need it and to create a national community of like-minded practitioners in independent clinics that provide low-cost, high quality acupuncture using their practice model.

"Pathways is a non-profit organization, so we are committed to finding new ways to overcome barriers to care. We know that cost is often the primary reason that prevents more people from accessing acupuncture, or it keeps people from coming in often enough to get better and stay better. Most health insurance providers don't cover acupuncture. So, we see this new program as a way to provide an affordable and accessible health care option," says Kristen Porter, MAc, LAc, executive director at Pathways to Wellness.

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While WCA's idea is catching on in other parts of the country, Pathways to Wellness is the first acupuncture clinic in Boston to put it into practice. At Pathways, Saturday group treatments will be open to all people regardless of their income level. Treatments will be provided by Jeff Miller, a licensed acupuncturist and 1998 graduate of the New England School of Acupuncture, who has been practicing at Pathways since 2001.

"Our hope is that this new program will encourage those who have never used acupuncture to give it a try, as well as those currently using acupuncture to come in more frequently to speed up the healing process. In China, acupuncture is often utilized 2-3 times a week in this traditional group format. And, we want people to realize that acupuncture is not just for specific conditions such as back pain, stress, and allergies but that it can also play an important role in their overall health and well-being," says Porter.

Additional information on this new program, acupuncture and other holistic therapies, and making appointments can be found at www.pathwaysboston.org or by calling 617-859-3036.

About Pathways to Wellness

For 16 years, Pathways to Wellness, a nonprofit public health organization, has provided equal access to high quality holistic therapies including acupuncture, shiatsu, and Chinese herbal medicine.

Open to all people needing care, Pathways practitioners work collaboratively in a team environment and in conjunction with Western medical professionals to offer an integrated approach to care.

Located at 142 Berkeley Street, 2nd Floor, Boston, MA 02116, Pathways to Wellness can be reached at 617-859-3036 or kporter@pathwaysboston.org. Additional information on Pathways to Wellness' services can be found on its web site at www.pathwaysboston.org

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