



County of Santa Cruz

COUNTY ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICE

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PRESS RELEASE

Date: September 7, 2016
Release: Immediately
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454-3401

ALLIANCE, COUNTY ANNOUNCE HEALTH CARE GRANTS

In conjunction with the Central California Alliance for Health, the County of Santa Cruz is pleased to announce \$3.1 million in grants to expand primary care, public health maternal child health services, and mental health and substance use disorder services throughout Santa Cruz County.

The grants, from the Alliance's Medi-Cal Capacity Grant Program, are aimed at expanding access to high-quality medical care for a growing Medi-Cal client base under the Affordable Care Act, particularly in the areas of behavioral health and substance use disorder services. At \$2.5 million, the largest grant will fund a new, 10,000-square-foot County mental health treatment facility at the Watsonville Health Center.

"The Affordable Care Act expanded the number of people with access to health care coverage, but it is up to the community to meet that promise with access to health care services," Santa Cruz County Health Service Agency Director Giang Nguyen said. "These much-needed grants will help us fill in gaps in our health care safety net."

"We are undergoing a fundamental change in how we provide healthcare in the United States. I'm proud that our local health plan is investing in proven prevention and health strategies rather than just sickness management. This investment will create a healthier community for decades to come," Santa Cruz County Supervisor Ryan Coonerty said.

Projected to be completed by the end of 2017, the new Watsonville mental health clinical facility will replace existing facilities by tripling the number of treatment spaces from 11 to 33, providing intake and crisis service (including for monolingual Spanish speakers)



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for the first time in South County, creating separate waiting areas for adults and juveniles, and allowing an estimated increase of 8,000 clinic visits annually.

Further grants will support the planned Nurse Family Partnership, including funding for three full-time nurses, equipment and technical assistance. Once in place, the program would provide intensive case management for first-time mothers living in poverty, connecting them with health care, social services, education, and parenting, coping and life skills. Additional funding is being sought for this program.

An additional grant will provide hardware and software to field service workers – including case managers, mobile clinicians, psychiatrists and more – to perform clinical work in the field. The use of technology to meet the needs of a range of mental health and substance use disorder clients (including homeless persons) while reducing paperwork is a County priority.

“I would like to thank our Behavioral Health Director Erik Riera, Chief of Clinics Amy Peeler, Director of Public Health Nursing Anita Alvarez and Director of Administrative Services Michael Beaton for their commitment and teamwork in the successful completion of these competitive grant applications, as well as the Alliance staff for advancing our goal to protect and promote the health of the community,” Nguyen said.

ABOUT THE COUNTY OF SANTA CRUZ: The County of Santa Cruz administers a range of medical and public health programs to meet the needs of all residents and promote healthy people and communities, regardless of race, gender, religion, ethnic background, age, sexual orientation, economic status, immigration status or medical or mental condition.

ABOUT THE CENTRAL CALIFORNIA ALLIANCE FOR HEALTH: The Alliance is a locally governed, regional non-profit health plan that serves more than 350,000 members in Santa Cruz, Monterey and Merced counties. Since 1996, the Alliance has worked to improve health care locally for people living in the Central Coast region through accessible, quality health care guided by local innovation.