



# County of Santa Cruz

COUNTY ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICE

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## PRESS RELEASE

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The County of Santa Cruz is pleased to announce several grants under the Affordable Care Act that further recognize the County's success in improving the quality of care at the County's network of clinics.

Recently, the County was awarded \$115,000 by the federal Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA) for its success in creating a patient-centered medical home for patients experience homelessness to better address their ongoing medical needs. The county was also awarded \$37,000 by the HRSA for reducing health care costs while improving health care for patients.

"We are proud to accept these funds as recognition of the work we do at the clinic level to care for the county's most vulnerable populations, including immigrants and those living with poverty and homelessness," said Giang Nguyen, Director of the Santa Cruz County Health Services Agency. "One measure of a society is how it treats the less fortunate."

The awards are in addition to last year's \$215,000 grant for County Health Centers to purchase new equipment to assist disabled patients and those with mobility problems, improve case management of people experiencing homelessness and to pay for patient transportation vouchers. The grant added services for 794 new patients.

"These awards will further our efforts to improve health care outcomes for all Santa Cruz County residents," said Amy Peeler, Chief of Clinic Services for Santa Cruz County. "Good health can be a foundation for a better life, and these funds will help people achieve those goals."



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Medical homes have a proven track record of improving patient outcomes, particularly for those with chronic conditions such as asthma and diabetes. By addressing medical issues on an ongoing basis and before a condition becomes acute, the county hopes to reduce local health care costs by keeping patients out of emergency and operating rooms.

Two key partners in providing low-income health care services were also recently awarded grants to expand access to medical care. Salud Para la Gente and Santa Cruz Community Health Centers received HRSA grants to improve patient care, including the hiring of new doctors and medical professionals.

Last month, Salud Para la Gente was awarded \$318,000 to support a new physician, pediatrician and health coach. The funds will support services for 1,055 new and existing patients.

Also in September, Santa Cruz Community Health Centers was awarded \$263,000 to pay for a new physician and medical assistant, with 1,500 patients expected to benefit from the award.

County-run health centers in Watsonville and Santa Cruz provide a range of health care services to thousands of county residents, including primary, orthopedic, pediatric and urgent care, vaccinations and more to approximately 15,000 patients.

Advocating the feminist goals of social, political and economic equality, Santa Cruz Community Health Centers serves 10,000 patients through its downtown Women's Health Center and the new East Cliff Family Health Center in Live Oak. Salud Para La Gente has been providing exceptional health care to a medically underserved and vulnerable community since 1978, and now serves nearly 26,000 patients annually.

The three organizations serve Santa Cruz County residents regardless of their ability to pay or their immigration status.