



County of Santa Cruz

COUNTY ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICE

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\$3M IN HEALTH CARE GRANTS TO BENEFIT COUNTY RESIDENTS

The County of Santa Cruz is pleased to announce more than \$3 million in grants to improve health care delivery and services for local residents.

The State and federal grants will assist with facility improvements and expansion, and projects that will benefit clients needing crisis intervention and stabilization, mental health care and primary care services. The grants were awarded to the County's Health Services Agency.

"We work hard competing for grants to improve services for all our clients," Health Services Agency Director Giang Nguyen said. "I appreciate my staff's dedication and tireless effort to protect and improve the health of our community."

At \$1.2 million, the largest grant provides capital funding to assure the continued operation of 2nd Story, a peer-operated, adult crisis respite program that began in 2010 and was scheduled to end in 2015 following the expiration of a five-year federal grant. The new \$1.2 million grant is from the California Health Facilities Financing Authority (CHFFA), which provides financial assistance to public and non-profit health care providers throughout California.

2nd Story is operated by Encompass Community Services. It has been searching for a new home since the residential building that housed the program was sold. For more information, go to <http://www.encompasscs.org/community-support-services/2nd-story>.

"2nd Story has proven to be an effective hospital diversion program. It is staffed by peer counselors, who have specialized training in working with other peers in crisis. We are



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pleased that this grant will provide funding to permanently house the program,” said Erik Riera, Director of Mental Health and Substance Abuse Services for the County of Santa Cruz.

A \$925,000 grant from the federal Health Resources & Services Administration (HRSA) will help remodel the clinic facility and expand exam rooms at the 1080 Emeline Ave. clinic, which serves Medi-Cal clients and other low-income populations. It was one of 290 grants nationwide, including 40 in California, issued to help build and improve health centers.

Another HRSA grant, for \$625,000, will assist with establishing medication-assisted therapy clinics and case management for patients at county-run clinics living with substance use disorders, as well as expand staff training to better serve those patients.

“It is so gratifying to see these federal dollars being spent to improve the lives of some of the most vulnerable community members throughout our county. We are thrilled to expand and enhance our services,” said Amy Peeler, Santa Cruz County’s Chief of Clinic Services.

A third grant, for \$247,000 and also issued by CHFFA, will fund renovations to significantly expand facilities to serve youths at the behavioral health unit, significantly improving response times for those children and their families. The grant will also support and expand the capabilities of the County’s Mobile Emergency Response Team (MERT).

The County is grateful to our partners at the State and federal level for their assistance in improving health care for Santa Cruz County residents, and we look forward to the completion of these critically important projects.