The Public Health Department Awarded $302,776 to Increase Access in Santa Maria

Public Health Director Dr. Takashi Wada today announced receipt of $302,776 in Affordable Care Act funding to support additional physicians at the Santa Maria Health Care Center.

This funding enables the Santa Maria Health Care Center to increase access to comprehensive primary health care services by hiring physicians and other health care providers. The additional staff will accommodate 375 new patients in the Santa Maria area, many of whom are newly insured and may be accessing primary care for the first time in years.

“The Santa Maria Health Care Center is the health care home where more than 6,000 residents of Santa Barbara’s North County receive quality health care,” said Dr. Wada. “This funding will significantly improve our ability to serve the hundreds of additional patients who have long waited to take advantage of our excellent services.”

The Santa Maria Health Care Center provides adult and women’s services and delivers medical services at the clinic located at the Good Samaritan homeless shelter. “The Santa Maria Health Care Center is a vital provider of primary and preventive services in our community” said Health Center Administrator Linda Penny, R.N. “This funding will have an immediate and positive impact on our ability to expand access to care to the people that need it most.”

The Santa Barbara County Health Care Centers operate seven service delivery sites that provide care to about 30,000 patients. This award helps support high quality care for those newly enrolled into health care coverage by the Public Health Department.

The Santa Barbara County Health Care Centers continue to implement the Affordable Care Act, not only as providers of care but also by connecting individuals to coverage through outreach and enrollment in Medi-Cal and Covered California. The health care centers provided enrollment assistance to nearly 6,900 people over the last year with more than 4,200 enrolled into coverage.

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