



Press Release

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Lack of Housing and Healthcare Impacts Most Vulnerable in Our Community

New Health and Housing Hub in Live Oak will Help Families and Seniors

Santa Cruz, CA. (May 22, 2021)—In a community where nearly 15 percent of Live Oak Elementary School students are homeless, 15,000 people do not have a doctor, and 78 percent of adults on Medi-Cal do not have a dentist, the need for integrated services is great. Too many of our community's most vulnerable are facing risks and adversities that pose lifelong threats to health, school success, and overall well-being.

While Santa Cruz Community Health (SCCH) and Dientes Community Dental currently provide care to thousands of people living at or below the Federal Poverty Level, the demand far outweighs capacity. That is why SCCH, Dientes, and MidPen Housing are partnering to create 1500 Capitola Road, a vibrant 3.7-acre health and housing complex in the heart of Live Oak. This crucial first step toward increasing access to healthcare and affordable housing in Santa Cruz County will provide healthcare for up to 10,000 patients, along with affordable housing for 157 people. Phase one includes a 20,000-square-foot medical clinic and 11-chair dental clinic. Phase two includes 57 units of affordable housing.

Trust Strengthens Community

Diana Valadez, a mother of two, knows first-hand how worry and stress from health issues can affect the entire family. "The lack of money and insurance is just one problem," she explains. "Many people are scared to ask for help because they have been denied care and treated poorly." Her experience was quite different at SCCH when a small lump was discovered in her breast. Within a week, the lump had expanded to the size of a baseball and she was scared. Diana says the staff not only helped her get the care she needed, they treated her with respect. When her eldest son was struggling to see his mom in pain, they offered counseling to help him deal with his mom's illness. Diana wants to see all families receive that same level of care.

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Santa Cruz Community Health
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shealthcenters.org



“My children are happy with the experiences they have had during their regular visits to Dientes,” Diana adds. “They talk with their friends and tell them to not be afraid to go to the dentist! The new clinics will help mothers like me who do not drive and have to walk for 30 or 40 minutes to get to our appointments.”

“When a mom is emotionally and physically healthy, it makes it possible for the whole family to be successful in school and work,” adds Angelica Caballero, a mother of two who has struggled with her own health issues. The staff at SCCH not only worked with her to get her diabetes and high blood pressure under control, they gave her the emotional strength to continue caring for her family. “I want more people to have this experience, especially those who are either too scared or too poor to seek help.”

Janis Bolt, a Dientes patient and board member says she sees many seniors suffering from untreated dental issues because dental services are not included with Medicare. The problem is exacerbated by the fact that many seniors are living on a fixed income and do not have the means to seek care when an issue arises. “There are so many seniors in the community who don’t have access to dental care and who would be out on a limb without Dientes,” says Janis. “We all know someone who isn’t covered and that is why we are so grateful to see these services expanded with the new clinic.”

Prevention/early intervention and family support services are core to the vision that SCCH and Dientes have for 1500 Capitola Road. The new facility will meet the needs of our Live Oak neighbors in a way never-before seen in Santa Cruz County by providing a strong foundation for health, opportunity, and prosperity at all stages of life.

Capital Campaign is Ongoing

The 1500 Capitola Road campus integrates the strengths and services of its three owners:

- Santa Cruz Community Health has been serving the medical and mental health needs of underserved Santa Cruz County residents since 1974, with a special focus on low-income children and families as well as patients with complex needs such as homelessness.
- Dientes has a nearly 30-year track record of providing affordable, high-quality and comprehensive dental care through three existing clinics and a 30+ location outreach program.
- MidPen Housing owns and manages 13 affordable housing communities throughout Santa Cruz County, serving families, senior, and special needs populations and providing on-site resident services tailored to the unique needs of each population.



Designed by WRD Architects, the campus is being built in two phases by Santa Cruz-based Bogard Construction. Dientes and Santa Cruz Community Health have broken ground on their clinics and a community plaza and will open in 2022. MidPen will break ground on the housing component in 2022 and open in 2023.

To learn more about the project or make a donation, visit: <http://1500CapitolaRoad.org>

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Photos: SCCH and Dientes Patient Diana Valadez 051121.jpg
SCCH Patient Angelica Caballero 051121.jpg

About Santa Cruz Community Health

Santa Cruz Community Health's mission is to improve the health of our patients and the community and advocate the feminist goals of social, political, and economic equality. Driven by a 47-year commitment to health care as a human right, Santa Cruz Community Health Centers is a leading nonprofit provider of high-quality, affordable, and comprehensive health services in English and Spanish to all ages, gender identities, ethnicities, abilities, and sexual orientations, regardless of their ability to pay. Through the Santa Cruz Women's Health Center and the East Cliff Family Health Center, Santa Cruz Community Health (a Federally Qualified Health Center) serves over 11,000 patients through a dedicated staff of medical providers, nurses, licensed clinical social workers, health educators, and administrative staff. SCCH's clinics offer primary care, pediatrics, prenatal care and education, mental health and substance abuse counseling, chronic disease management, health insurance enrollment, food distribution, and more. Learn more at shealthcenters.org, facebook.com/shealthcenters or on Instagram @shealthcenters

About Dientes Community Dental Care

Dientes Community Dental Care's mission is to create lasting oral health for the under-served children and adults in Santa Cruz County and neighboring communities. Dientes serves 11,000 patients annually, 97% of whom live at or below the poverty level. Dientes accepts Medi-Cal and offers sliding scale fees for uninsured patients. Learn more at dientes.org.

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