

Mountain View VOICE

November 14, 2014

Life-saving devices installed in Mountain View

COUNTY WORKS WITH MOUNTAIN VIEW TO INSTALL
46 DEFIBRILLATORS ACROSS THE CITY

By Kevin Forestieri

A nonprofit committed to saving lives by installing portable defibrillators in public spaces is making its mark on Mountain View this month as part of a pilot program to bring more than 40 Auto External Defibrillators (AEDs) to locations all over the city.

Racing Hearts, a health and safety nonprofit, is on a mission to make AEDs available to the public. A defibrillator can be used to get a heart pumping again and greatly increase the rate of survival of a person who has a heart attack and whose heart stops beating.

More than 350,000 people in the United States die from sudden cardiac arrest each year — roughly equal to the number of people killed by firearms, house fires, car accidents, suicides, breast cancer, cervical cancer, colorectal cancer, prostate cancer, diabetes, Alzheimer's disease and HIV combined, according to the Sudden Cardiac Arrest Foundation.

In partnership with the city of Mountain View, Santa Clara County, El Camino Hospital and both Mountain View school districts, Racing Hearts will be installing 46 AEDs across the city, including parks, schools and police cars.

Stephanie Martinson, who started Racing Hearts two years ago, has worked with the nonprofit to place more than 150 AEDs in the Bay Area. Martinson focused primarily on Palo Alto and the under-served, at-risk communities in East Palo Alto at first, and now she wants to expand that AED presence into Mountain View.

The partnership with the county and Mountain View agencies was largely orchestrated by Santa Clara County Supervisor Joe Simitian. Simitian said he had been in touch with Racing Hearts since he came back as supervisor in 2013, and that he was aware of the good work Martinson and the nonprofit had done to expand the availability of AEDs in Palo Alto.

A member of the county health and hospital committee, Simitian said it seemed like a "wonderful" opportunity to bring the success that Racing Hearts experienced in Palo Alto to other parts of the county. Simitian proposed starting a pilot program to bring AEDs to Mountain View.

"In chatting with Stephanie, I said I was interested in Mountain View, and she said 'so are we,'" Simitian said.

The Board of Supervisors approved a budget item that would put \$50,000 towards purchasing AEDs for Mountain View. On top of that, Simitian asked agencies in the city to match the funding, and convinced the city to contribute \$26,000. El Camino Hospital also contributed \$25,000, and both of the city's school districts contributed \$10,000 each — more than a match, Simitian said.

At the Oct. 9 Mountain View Whisman school board meeting, Superintendent Craig Goldman said he appreciated Martinson's effort to get defibrillators placed at all the Mountain View schools. "We're extremely grateful," Goldman said. "Stephanie has really headed up what seems to be a one-woman campaign to get AEDs at our school sites."

Defibrillator locations include

one at each of the elementary schools, two at each middle school and three at each high school. AEDs will also be at the snack shacks at McKelvey park and the Cuesta Park tennis courts.

The money will also go towards five years of maintenance and any needed replacements for the AEDs.

"We didn't want to just go out and acquire the devices and have them just sort of sit there," Simitian said. "It's not a one-off — it's a longer term commitment."

A life-saving tool

Defibrillators can play an important role in saving someone suffering from sudden cardiac arrest, and having one close-by can make a big difference. Dr. Chad Rammohan, a physician and medical director of the El Camino Hospital Chest Pain Center, said AEDs deliver a shock to restore the normal rhythm of a heart beat. He said the heart rhythm experiences something similar to a "short circuit" and begins to beat so fast it stops, and the shock applied by the AED breaks that short circuit and brings back a normal heart rhythm.

Response time is a key component for treating sudden cardiac arrest. "The faster the better," Rammohan said. "The clock starts as soon as the heart stops."

Rammohan cited a study that found the rate of survival "with intact neurological function" is more than three times higher among people who were treated with an AED available on site at the time of sudden cardiac arrest than people who were not.

According to the American Heart Association, every minute
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Defibrillators now located in public areas all around Mountain View through a joint effort with the Racing Hearts nonprofit. PHOTO COURTESY OF RACING HEARTS

where AEDs are located across the Bay Area, denoted by giant pink pins. The information is all crowd-sourced, meaning people volunteer to record the exact location of the AED, as well as a picture of the defibrillator, for each location.

The map shows a significant number of AEDs installed in Palo Alto, specifically on the Stanford campus, and fewer in Mountain View in Sunnyvale.

As a kick-off event to introduce the 46 new AEDs, the city of Mountain View will hold a hands-on CPR class for fourth- and fifth-graders at Landels Elementary School on Monday, Nov. 17, at 1 a.m. The class will also include an introduction to AEDs and how to use them, according to Mountain View Fire spokeswoman Jaime Garrett.

At the event, Garrett said, students will be walked through the steps on how to open the AED unit and put the defibrillator pads on mannequins.

that passes without CPR or defibrillation decreases the chance of survival by 7 to 10 percent.

Traditionally, Rammohan said, it was typical to have a bystander perform CPR until an ambulance carrying a defibrillator arrived, and that the real role of CPR was to manually pump blood until that happened. Having a readily available AED means delivering the shock in a fraction of the time it takes for an ambulance to arrive, which can increase the chances of survival.

The AEDs installed in Mountain View use foolproof technology, allowing anyone to use it in the event of sudden cardiac arrest. Martinson said the defibrillators come with voice instructions, along with stickers and visual queues, that guide you through all the steps. The AEDs analyze the heart rhythm and determine whether

or not the person needs a shock.

“It won’t shock if they don’t need it,” Martinson said

Simitian said the current state-of-the-art AED technology is very easy to use and something people should not be reluctant to pick up. “The systems are essentially fail-safe and walk you through the process,” Simitian said.

Education a key component

Racing Hearts isn’t just about getting more AEDs slapped onto the walls of gyms, libraries and parks. Martinson said the group is also looking to spread awareness, and get people talking about where their nearest AED is, and how they would handle an emergency situation.

The Racing Hearts website has what’s called an “AEDSpotter,” a map system set up by Martinson to show



March 10, 2023

COMMENTARY

Racing Hearts can make a difference between life, death

By Joe Simitian

Racing Hearts is a lifesaver.

In just 10 years, they've placed more than 1,000 automated external defibrillators (AEDs) within Santa Clara County, and they've made Santa Clara County the first county in California to have defibrillators in virtually all public schools. It's an outstanding example of the good that nonprofits and government can do when we work hand in hand.

And what a journey it's been.

Two decades ago, Stephanie Martinson was out climbing Yosemite's Half Dome when she suffered an aborted sudden cardiac arrest. She was just 23 years old.

Stephanie was not the first young adult, and she won't be the last, to experience sudden cardiac arrest. We hear too many stories of otherwise healthy people collapsing suddenly. Maybe it's a student at sports practice, a friend at work or a neighbor at a farmers'

market. It can happen to anyone, anytime, anywhere.

Sudden cardiac arrest is not the same as a heart attack, but it's just as dangerous. Instead of a blockage, it's an electrical disturbance that stops the heart beating correctly.

After her ordeal, Stephanie was inspired to do something. In 2012, she founded Racing Hearts with a clear mission: to increase the survival rate of people suffering a sudden cardiac arrest. How would she and her volunteer team get that done? By placing AEDs in easy to access locations throughout the community, and by teaching people how to use them.

An AED is a small but powerful device. It uses electrical pulses to reset the heart, like turning a frozen computer off and on again. "Public access" AED models, like the ones placed through our partnership with Racing Hearts, are easy to use and capable of defibrillating a cardiac patient before the

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Simitian

ambulance arrives.

There are more than 350,000 cases of sudden cardiac arrest each year in the U.S. — 7,000 of them children under age 18 — and nearly 90% are fatal. The survival rate for those experiencing this kind of cardiac event is 5%-8% when traditional car-

diopulmonary resuscitation (CPR) is used but increases to 80% with the use of AEDs. Clearly, having AEDs widely available makes a huge difference between life and death.

In 2014, I proposed that Racing Hearts partner with the county's Board of Supervisors, the City of Mountain View, El Camino Health and local school districts to place 49 AEDs in public locations throughout Mountain View, including schools and recreation/community centers.

Following the success of the Mountain View pilot, in 2015 the Board of Supervisors allocated \$500,000 in matching funds to get even more AEDs out into the community, including county park ranger and sheriff patrol cars in Cupertino and Saratoga along with Los Gatos-Monte Sereno police cars. Soon after, Racing Hearts,

the county and El Camino Health collaborated with our local state legislators to update California legislation to make it easier to own and maintain AEDs.

By 2018, Santa Clara County was the first county in California to have AEDs in virtually all public schools, spread among elementary, middle and high schools, including those in Cupertino, Saratoga, Los Gatos and Monte Sereno. When we started our partnership with Racing Hearts, fewer than 10% of our local public schools had access to the equipment.

To have placed more than 1,000 AEDs in Santa Clara County is a triumph, to put it simply. After completing their mission to raise awareness and blanket our county with lifesaving AEDs, Racing Hearts' journey has recently come to a natural close. I'm honored to have worked with Racing Hearts from day one, and I hope the Racing Hearts story continues to inspire partnerships between nonprofits, local organizations and government.

Thank you, Racing Hearts. You're a lifesaver.

Joe Simitian is a member of the Santa Clara County Board of Supervisors, where he serves as chair of the county's Health and Hospital Committee.



February 27, 2019

Health Emphasized as Priority in 'State of the County' Address

By **Bay City News** • Published February 27, 2019 • Updated on February 27, 2019 at 1:29 am

Board of Supervisors President Joe Simitian delivered the annual "State of the County" address Tuesday, focusing on health issues as a critical priority for county residents.

He discussed the county's victories and failings over the last year, including a high rate of insured residents and an increasingly high population of homeless individuals.

"I don't care who you are where you came from or how much money you have in your pocket," Simitian said, to loud applause. "Every man, woman and child in this county should get the healthcare they need, it is the right thing to do and it is the smart thing to do."

The State of the County Address was attended by dozens of elected officials, including San Jose Mayor Sam Liccardo, District Attorney Jeff Rosen, city councilmembers and trustees from community colleges.

While healthcare has become a major political issue both statewide and nationally, Simitian said the county cannot wait for this debate to play out before it begins attending to its residents.

He touted the county's recent purchase of O'Connor Hospital in San Jose and St. Louise Regional Hospital in Gilroy, despite blocks from the state attorney general, and said 93.5 percent of county residents are covered by public or private insurance.

Still, he said, "It's not good enough, we have to keep pushing."

Among the county's upcoming projects are a partnership with Planned Parenthood in Mountain View, culturally competent health centers that understand the needs of LGBTQ and other diverse populations and attentive services for undocumented immigrants who have been unenrolling from health services for fear of tracking and deportation.

"We have remained committed to ensuring that any resident facing deportation proceedings in this
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county has access to legal representation," he added.

Simitian also set a goal to open an inpatient mental health facility for youth by 2023. The project has been stalled for years, but was approved by supervisors in October 2018.

"Mental healthcare is healthcare, and too often the system seems to forget that," Simitian said. "For too long, stigma has prevented behavioral health from getting the attention it deserves."

He emphasized homelessness as a health crisis, and said, "At the risk of stating the obvious, homelessness is unhealthy."

He said the Santa Clara County Office of Supportive Health will continue to tackle the problem, after 157 homeless individuals - the highest number ever recorded - died in the county last year.

Simitian closed his speech with a call to make prescription medications free, as the county has done through its drug donation program. He also said distracted driving, which causes hundreds of deaths annually, should be treated as a health crisis.

"Action is the antidote to despair," Simitian said, quoting county native, singer and activist Joan Baez. "The state of our county is healthy and getting healthier every day, because this county - our county - is committed to doing the good and important work that will help make it so."

Los Altos Town Crier

Community news for Los Altos, Los Altos Hills and Mountain View since 1947

December 4, 2019

County offers new low-income dental services

Special to the Town Crier

The Santa Clara County Board of Supervisors voted unanimously Nov. 19 to lease dental office space in Mountain View in an effort to provide access to dental health care for North County residents who would otherwise go without.

The new offices will house a dental clinic serving patients who were previously seen at the Valley Health Center clinic in Sunnyvale, and will now be able to serve additional low-income patients, including those covered by Medi-Cal, Valley Health Plan and some commercial insurers. The clinic will be open to those without insurance on a sliding scale up to 200% of the Family Poverty Level, which is approximately \$50,000 for a family of four.

"Dental health care is an essential. It's not a 'nice to have,' it's a 'have to have' component of health care," said Santa Clara County Supervisor Joe Simitian about the expansion of dental

care services.

Simitian serves as president of the Board of Supervisors and chairman of the board's Health and Hospital Committee.

"The county is stepping up to provide these services closer to home for North County residents," he said.

The county will be leasing space at 2486 El Camino Real in Mountain View. The space is equipped with nine dental suites, is completely furnished with new equipment, including an X-ray unit, and is already Americans with Disabilities Act compliant. The facility is easily accessible by transit, as it sits on a major thoroughfare.

"We are excited to expand our dental services and significantly improve access to the full range of oral health services to residents in North County," said Paul Lorenz, CEO of Santa Clara Valley Medical Center hospital and clinics. "A person's oral health is important and can affect their overall general health. Being able to expand these services to more

residents of our community is an investment in their health."

The clinic will allow the county to more effectively respond to the state Department of Health Care Services' Dental Transformation Initiative, whose goal is to increase the number of children receiving preventive services by 10% over a five-year period, reduce the risk of tooth decay and improve dental care for children and families.

The new site will reduce the three-month wait time to get a dental appointment for adults and seniors and will relocate the dental service from Sunnyvale to the new Mountain View clinic.

Residents should expect services at the new clinic by next spring. Dental services will continue at Valley Health Center in Sunnyvale, which is scheduled to be remodeled in 2020. An additional primary care dental office for oral health screenings for women and children will open in early 2021. Mobile dental services will continue throughout Sunnyvale and Mountain View.

San Jose Mercury News

April 21, 2020

Santa Clara County to expand healthcare access for uninsured people

At least 20,000 people expected to be covered under new expansion

By **FIONA KELLIHER** | fkelliher@bayareanewsgroup.com | Bay Area News Group
PUBLISHED: April 21, 2020 at 12:47 p.m. | UPDATED: April 22, 2020 at 3:36 a.m.

SAN JOSE — Thousands of people lacking health insurance in Santa Clara County could soon access discounted or free care thanks to a newly-expanded county program.

In an unanimous vote Tuesday, the Santa Clara County Board of Supervisors broadened the income requirements for the county's stopgap insurance plan. The goal is to get health coverage for people in the "missing middle" during the pandemic and beyond, while also lessening the burden on local emergency rooms.

Under the new consolidated program, which replaces and expands a constellation of programs now serving uninsured people through the Santa Clara County Valley Medical System, the income threshold for those qualifying for healthcare has jumped to 650% of the federal poverty level, up from 350%.

That means those making less than \$170,038 for a family of four — and who are not eligible for Medi-Cal or Covered California — could get coverage.

"I sometimes have people say, 'Gee, is that someone who really needs support?'" said District 5 Supervisor Joe Simitian, who led the effort to expand the program over the past year. "Ask yourself, if you're trying to support a family of four in the high-cost Silicon Valley on \$105,000" — or 400% of the poverty level — "what happens when you get a catastrophic medical bill?"

An estimated 95.9% of people in the county have health insurance, county staff said in a recent report, leaving at least 78,000 of about 1.93 million residents uninsured. It's hard to say exactly how many people could ultimately be captured with the new expansion, but Simitian estimated Tuesday that at least 20,000 people or more could be included in the expanded program.

That number is expected to grow as more and more people lose jobs amid the coronavirus pandemic. A staggering 3.1 Californians have now filed for unemployment as the economic fallout from the virus deepens, according to Gov. Gavin Newsom. The number of planned Bay Area layoffs, meanwhile, skyrocketed this week to more than 44,000.

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Locally, Simitian said his office has been inundated with callers over the past month who are out of work — and don't know where to get health insurance. Many people without coverage ultimately turn to the emergency room to get care: During the month of February, nearly 23,000 uninsured patients countywide presented themselves to the county for care, according to the most recently available data.

Aside from raising the income threshold, the new program will also slash costs. For instance, for eligible residents with a family income between 350 to 400% of the federal poverty level, contribution costs would drop to zero. And for the first time, county residents with family incomes between 400% and 650% of the federal poverty level could qualify for write-offs of up to 70%.

Non-county residents may now also access discounted care for a single “episode” of care if their income is under 400% of the federal poverty level.

The expanded program will cost the county about \$3 million, Simitian said.

Those looking to enroll would first receive a financial screening to make sure they don't qualify for other coverage. If they don't, they could enroll in the new program, which would apply for one year and will kick in within the next few months.

“We know that there are still far too many folks who are simply going without,” Simitian said. “The current crisis is a reminder that that can be a matter of life or death.”

November 11, 2021

Supervisors propose expanding program to provide health care to over 20K uninsured residents

Duo wants to increase eligibility for the county-run Primary Care Access Program

by Jana Kadah / Bay City News Service

Uploaded: Thu, Nov 11, 2021



Santa Clara County Supervisor Joe Simitian speaks to media gathered on Nov. 10, 2021, in San Jose. From left to right, Dolores Alvarado, CEO of Community Health Partnership, Supervisor Otto Lee and County Executive Jeff Smith stand behind him. Courtesy Jana Kadah/Bay City News Service.

More than 20,000 uninsured Santa Clara County residents may become eligible for primary health care services through a resolution proposed by supervisors Joe Simitian and Otto Lee.

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The duo wants to increase eligibility for the county-run Primary Care Access Program (PCAP), which essentially acts like a safety net for uninsured residents who do not qualify for insurance through the Affordable Care Act or other state and federal programs.

"(These are) folks who remain uninsured for whatever reason," Simitian said at a news conference Wednesday. "Maybe that they have seasonal work and just don't have the ability to access health insurance, maybe they're undocumented, it may be that they are that missing middle — folks who make what we thought was a decent middle-class wage back in the day, but who now discover in our high-cost Valley ... they can't access the help they need."

There are currently an estimated 80,000 uninsured residents in the county who fall into those categories, Simitian said.

Right now, about 8,000 of those people qualify for PCAP. The current requirement provides services to those making 200% of the federal poverty level — under \$53,000 a year for a family of four.

For families making that much, "that leaves the family with about \$13,000 to buy food, transportation, clothing, education costs, emergency expenses," said Dolores Alvarado, CEO of Community Health Partnership.

So, with such little money left for everything but rent, health care tends to fall on the back burner, Alvarado said.

Under the new proposal, those making 400% of the federal poverty level, or under \$106,000 for a family of four, would qualify. For an individual, they would need to make less than \$50,000 a year to qualify. It would more than triple the number of residents who could access the services to roughly 30,000 residents.

"If you have two kids, the health care costs plus your child care costs, your housing costs, \$100,000 doesn't go very far in the Valley at all," Lee said. "So it's important to bridge this gap between the \$53,000 and \$106,000."

Lee, along with Alvarado and Simitian, also emphasized that access to quality health care was not a privilege, but rather a human right.

"This is not charity, this is social justice," Alvarado said. "And most importantly is

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what's good for the goose is good for the gander."

The expansion of eligibility would require a roughly \$10 million investment, but it would save costs in the long run because residents wouldn't turn to the emergency room for health care, for example.

"The revenue from PCAP will help the clinics continue their service and be sustainable," Alvarado said. "It will help the families by not having to use 30-40% of their income for health care."

She said it would also allow families to seek preventative care instead of waiting until their health was seriously at risk.

And Simitian said it may even get more individuals insured, who may not know that they qualify for certain programs, because they would finally go to a county clinic because of PCAP expansion.

Alvarado, Lee and Simitian called it a "transformational" and "innovative" proposal. "If we can get 20,000 of those 80,000 folks who are uninsured health care directly, without the intermediary as an insurance program, we'll make a big, big dent in getting to the folks who still don't have access to the health care they require," Simitian said.

He said the county Board of Supervisors will likely approve the proposal during the board meeting on Tuesday.

Even without a unanimous vote, the proposal will likely pass because Supervisor Cindy Chavez suggested making a similar pilot program about a month ago, so she will likely vote in favor. With her, Simitian and Lee, the motion has enough votes to go through.

"The world is upside down when you have to ask yourself, 'how poor do I have to be to get health care?'" Simitian said. "We're trying to create a different world here in Santa Clara County. That may seem a little aspirational, far reaching, but for the 20,000 folks we hope to include in the program, I think we can make that real."

SAN JOSÉ spotlight

March 10, 2022

Kohli: Addressing the unique health care needs of our AAPI communities

by Special to San José Spotlight

MARCH 10, 2022



Duc Thiaiu receives a COVID-19 vaccine outside Grand Century Mall in March 2021 in this file photo.

All too often our Asian–American and Pacific Islander (AAPI) communities are seen and described as a monolith. However, our AAPI neighbors, who comprise more than one–third of Santa Clara County’s population, embody a vast array of nationalities and languages that span roughly half the globe.

Their diversity in history, culture and lifestyle means AAPI communities also experience unique health care challenges. As we look ahead to serving the health care needs of these growing communities, it’s incumbent on us to understand the

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health issues they face. And though these communities share certain health challenges, such as an increased risk for cancer, heart disease and diabetes, taking a closer look at individual subgroups reveals a much more complex set of needs.

Thanks to an effort spearheaded by Supervisor Joe Simitian, Santa Clara County in 2017 commissioned a comprehensive health assessment of our various AAPI communities. From this assessment, we learned that: 1) Every one of these communities does indeed face significant barriers to accessing health care, and that 2) the challenges and needs vary from one community to the next.

Vietnamese Americans, for example, experience the highest rates of liver cancer, while Filipino Americans experience the highest premature birth rates. Asian Indian women have the highest age-adjusted breast cancer rates, while Japanese Americans are the highest proportion diagnosed with high blood pressure and high cholesterol.

The COVID-19 pandemic has further exposed health care inequalities faced by our AAPI communities and has highlighted a serious need to address these concerns. Add to that the rise in hate crimes and prejudicial acts of violence against our Asian-American residents and the need to act quickly takes on greater urgency.

In response to these challenges, Asian Americans for Community Involvement formed a partnership with the county to pilot the API Community Health Worker program, with the goal of training members of these communities to provide health education, wellness and referral services that specifically address each community's unique health care needs. We envision a program where community health workers connect people to physicians who speak their language, or to exercise and nutrition classes taught by someone from their community.

That's why Supervisor Simitian has also pushed for the API Community Health Worker program at the county. As he says, "First we had to figure out who had what
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needs in our diverse community. Now we've got to address them.”

This strategy has proven to be successful in the past, but we need the federal government's support to fully expand the program to all our AAPI communities. We have asked for \$1 million in funding over two years for the expansion of the API Community Health Worker program. In July 2021, Rep. Ro Khanna was successful in securing the inclusion of our funding request in a federal spending bill passed by the House of Representatives. We're optimistic about the bill's prospects in the Senate in the coming months.

Congressman Khanna said it well: “We've all seen how the pandemic has deepened existing inequalities in our health care system and fueled anti-Asian racism and xenophobia. One way to help confront these disparities and prejudices is to ensure that health providers have cultural knowledge of the populations they serve.”

Although this program relies on grassroots networks embedded in our neighborhoods, it also represents a concerted effort between community-based organizations, the county and our congressional representatives. We are encouraged by this commitment and hopeful that with county backing and the federal government's support, we can continue to improve the health, wellness and resilience of Santa Clara County's diverse communities as we emerge from the pandemic.

Sarita Kohli is the president and CEO of Asian Americans for Community Involvement.

The Campbell Reporter



November 25, 2022

West Valley clinic moves forward

Residents of Campbell and other West Valley cities are one step closer to having a full-service, county-run health clinic after Santa Clara County and the Foothill-De Anza Community College District agreed to pursue the development of same.

The county will undertake a feasibility study to bring a Valley Health Center clinic to the De Anza Community College campus in Cupertino.

The intent is for the county and the community college district to work together on the planning and construction of a building that will provide health care services to both the college campus population and residents of the surrounding West Valley community.

Services would include primary care, mental health, imaging, laboratory and pharmacy. To support the district's healthcare profession programs and curriculum, the county and district would develop education and internship programs within the clinic.

While some residents of Campbell, Cupertino, Los Gatos, Monte Sereno

and Saratoga have access to quality health care through established providers, there are almost 90,000 people who earn less than 400% of the federal poverty level, which can make it difficult to obtain adequate medical care in a high-cost area like Santa Clara County.

Currently, there are no county or community clinics located in the West Valley. There are more than 43,000 residents in the area who receive health care coverage through Medi-Cal.

County Supervisor Joe Simitian, who serves as chair of the county's Health and Hospital Committee, introduced a proposal in October 2021 for staff to develop options for building a North County/West Valley primary care health clinic.

"It's essential that all our residents have access to primary and preventative health care," Simitian said in a statement. "Otherwise, they wait too long, end up seriously ill and then find themselves in the emergency room."

Los Altos Town Crier

Community news for Los Altos, Los Altos Hills and Mountain View since 1947

October 19, 2022

County announces new clinic to open late next year in Palo Alto



NICK SHERRELL/SANTA CLARA VALLEY HEALTHCARE

County Supervisor Joe Simitian, left, last week announces plans for a new Valley Health Center in Palo Alto. Santa Clara Valley Healthcare CEO Paul E. Lorenz, above right with Simitian, said the new clinic will expand the system's coverage area.

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The County of Santa Clara Healthcare System plans to open a new Valley Health Center serving the North County region in 2024.

The new 24,500-square-foot clinic – located at 4151 Middlefield Road in Palo Alto – will provide primary care, mental health, OB/GYN, pediatrics and urgent-care services. Lab, pharmacy and imaging services also will be available.

Patients in and near the Mountain View and Palo Alto communities will be able to access services closer to home when the clinic opens in late 2024.

“This is an absolute winner for our community,” said Santa Clara County Supervisor Joe Simitian, chairperson of the county’s Health and Hospital Committee. “A county primary care clinic in North County will make it easier for people to access the care they need, where they need it. The new clinic ensures that there will be affordable, accessible preventative health care in North County conveniently located just along the border of Mountain View and Palo Alto.”

The new health center in Palo Alto will make it easier for residents to achieve better health, according to Paul E. Lorenz, CEO of Santa Clara Valley Healthcare.

“With the support of Super-

visor Simitian and the County Board of Supervisors, the County of Santa Clara Health System will expand our service locations to provide more care for more people in our county,” Lorenz said.

Dr. Angela Suarez, primary care medical director at Santa Clara Valley Healthcare, noted that the county is “rich in ethnic diversity,” which includes both its residents and its workforce.

“Our multi-lingual and -cultural staff will provide a setting that makes patients feel welcome, as in our other Valley Health Centers,” she said. “Understanding a patient’s background and ability to communicate in their language makes it easier to explain to them why preventative screenings are so important to maintaining good health. It also allows them to communicate their needs and puts them at the center of their care team.”

The services provided are part of the county’s health care delivery system, Santa Clara Valley Healthcare, which operates 13 Valley Health Centers throughout Santa Clara County, in addition to O’Connor Hospital and Santa Clara Valley Medical Center in San Jose and St. Louise Regional Hospital in Gilroy.

For more information on the County of Santa Clara Health System, visit health.sccgov.org.