

Date: March 10, 2006
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- Huntington Beach Community Clinic
- West County Counseling Center
- Community Care Dental Center
- Clinica Medica de Ella

For Immediate Release

CCHC addresses the growing health care need for the medically underserved in Orange County

Huntington Beach, CA - **Community Care Health Centers (CCHC)**, the largest stand-alone nonprofit health center in Orange County, is busy with its 4-clinic expansion designed to address the health care of Orange County's poor and medically underserved. After two years in development, CCHC's efforts have successfully accomplished the following:

- Startup of a new women's health center in Santa Ana in September 2005 and the planned addition of pediatrics and general medicine in the same clinic by the end of 2006
- Transfer of ownership of two existing women's health clinics – one in Santa Ana, another in Orange -- from a hospital owner in January 2006 scheduled to close upon completion of licensure
- Startup of a pediatric clinic in Santa Ana due to open in April 2006

Four new community clinics are part of this clinic expansion initiative, whose addition widens CCHC's service area to include not only the western region of the county but also Central Orange County, where documented health care barriers and health disparity abound. The resulting service area is home to nearly half of the county's uninsured.

While Orange County is popularly characterized in the media as being prosperous due to the TV shows "OC" and "Laguna Beach," its urban core faces compelling and intractable health care dilemmas: 1 out of 20 children and 1 out of 5 adults age 18+ years *are without any form of health care coverage (OCHNA, 2005)*. Significant portions of the Western and Central regions of Orange County are federally designated as health physician shortage areas and a Medically Underserved Area. The barriers to care faced by the uninsured are primarily addressed by a patchwork of 'safety net' community clinics running at full capacity.

"Access to affordable health care remains one of the greatest challenges we face: locally, regionally and nationally. CCHC's commitment to its mission to provide high quality, affordable, accessible health care to people in need is alive and well. We are excited to announce new clinic additions to the CCHC clinic family in Central Orange County. Our expansion there brings affordable women's and children's health to the uninsured. This expansion will help meet patients' needs closer to their homes," says Jacqueline Cherewick, CEO for CCHC, who led the clinic expansion initiative into Central Orange County.

With its 4 expansion clinics, CCHC aims to create local capacity for 20,000-30,000 new appointment slots targeted for the low-income, medically-underserved and the uninsured in Orange County. "The timing is perfect," says Tracey Gould, CFO for CCHC. "Our own needs assessment study shows a growing need for neighborhood-based health care resources. These 4 clinics will allow us to respond to this need, while at the same time, ensuring the long-term viability of CCHC and drawing the support and generosity of funders to this part of California."

To find out more about how CCHC is building for the future of Orange County health care, please call Selina C. Hudgins at (714) 375-2272, or email her at shudgins@hbclinic.org.

About Community Care Health Centers

In the fall of 1969, 10 teachers and mental health interns came together to address the overwhelming health care need in Orange County. Each person put \$20 on the table and for \$200 they opened a store front office and what is now Community Care Health Centers was born -- its chartered mission: to lead in providing high quality, affordable, accessible health care to people in need. This mission remains the same today. CCHC is a critical component of Orange County's health care safety net, and is one of the leading non-profit health providers in the county to combine 'wrap-around' services with core medical services such as primary care, obstetric and gynecologic care, pediatric care, mental health, dental care, and pharmaceutical services -- thus providing a true 'medical home'. CCHC is the only Federally Qualified Health Center "Look-Alike" in Orange County.

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