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\$7.5 million expansion for Oceanside center

By Edward Sifuentes 12:01 A.M. NOV. 5, 2013

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A rendering of The North County Health Services' expansion project at its Mission Mesa campus.

Oceanside — North County Health Services will break ground next month on a \$7.5 million expansion project that will more than quadruple the size of its Mission Mesa campus in Oceanside.

With the help of a \$5 million federal grant, the San Marcos-based community clinic will expand its

pediatrics building at 2210 Mesa Drive from 3,000 to 12,600 square feet, officials said. The expansion will help the clinic serve more patients, said CEO Irma Cota.

“Not only will this project create a new health center for our community, it will enable us to continue to deliver quality care to our current and future patients,” Cota said.

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The expansion will help the clinic prepare for an anticipated increase in the number of patients it expects to serve as a result of the implementation of the federal Affordable Care Act, which will help uninsured families enroll in health plans, officials said.

The Oceanside facility serves more than 5,000 patients a year, providing women's health services and pediatric care. The clinic also provides Women, Infants and Children nutrition services.

Most of the patients, about 95 percent, are low-income families who earn less than 200 percent of the federal poverty level, or about \$47,000 a year for a family of four, said Stacy Rungaitis, the clinic's director of fund development.

The expansion will increase the number of exam rooms at the facility from six to 18. It will also add a two health education rooms, a visiting room, a lactation consultation room and a financial consultation room.

"It's going to be an awesome opportunity for our patients to have quality care," Rungaitis said.

North County Health Services bought the Mission Mesa location for \$1.3 million in 2010. The \$5 million grant from the U.S. Health and Human Services Administration will cover only part of the construction cost of the new facility. The remaining \$2.5 million will come from a mix of foundation grants and individual donations, Rungaitis said.

"We are counting on the support of private donors and the local philanthropic community to make this a reality," she said.

The nonprofit North County Health Services serves more than 60,000 patients each year through its 10 community health centers in Carlsbad, Encinitas, San Marcos, Oceanside and Ramona, and through two mobile clinics.

Completion of the new Mission Mesa facility is expected by spring 2015. The clinic will be open for services during the expansion.



Edward Sifuentes

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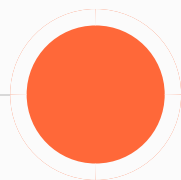
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