

Urgent care clinic to help low-income

By Reporter Staff

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The recent opening of La Clinica's North Vallejo Urgent Care Clinic represents a great step forward in the provision of both urgent and primary care for the community's low-income, uninsured and underinsured populations.

Located adjacent to Sutter Solano Medical Center, the facility receives both walk-in patients and those deemed non-urgent by the hospital's Emergency Department personnel.

Site Manager Monique Sims explained that the clinic serves the community in a number of ways, providing high-level care from physicians, nurses and medical assistants with up to 30 years of experience. Operating as a hybrid, it offers procedures that are beyond those usually found at primary care clinics and provides shorter wait times for non-emergency patients.

"The early feedback we've had has been fantastic, and we're working closely with the Sutter team to research protocols and review the data on avoidable (emergency) visits, which currently take up about 50 percent of the emergency department's time," Dr. Sims said.

"This pilot program will be studied by organizations ... through a California Health Foundation grant, to determine the efficacy of operating urgent care facilities next to emergency rooms," she added.

In addition to assisting from a medical standpoint, Sutter Solano secured a \$100,000 grant for La Clinica De La Raza, which operates three other health care facilities in Vallejo. Those funds are just part of the \$2.5 million that Sutter Health awarded recently to 26 medical and dental care centers across Northern California that serve large percentages of low-income, uninsured and underinsured patients. The hospital has also made a financial commitment to provide \$100,000 annually to La Clinica de la Raza over the next three years.

"This is a critical need for the Vallejo community and I'm proud of the partnership we've formed with La Clinica," said Terry Glubka, SSMC CEO. "The new clinic will serve Vallejo's more vulnerable population."

La Clinica North Vallejo, located at 220 Hospital Drive, is operating for 20 hours a week (5 to 8 p.m. Monday through Friday and 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. Saturday) until it receives full licensing from the state. When that occurs, the hours will be increased, to ensure as many patients as possible can be served.