

Clinic succeeds in diverting patients

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A year ago, La Clínica North Vallejo Medical Clinic, 220 Hospital Drive, Vallejo, opened its doors after many months of planning by local health-care providers, county health officials and La Clínica staff.

What brought all of these people together was a commitment to improve community health by ensuring more Vallejo-area families, many of whom did not have health insurance or regular access to care, a "medical home."

Too often, these patients sought episodic care in hospital emergency rooms and did not have access to the kind of appropriate follow-up care a primary clinic can provide.

As La Clínica North Vallejo completes its first year of operation, clearly this commitment has paid off.

Since opening in November 2008, more than 5,000 people have sought care there. According to preliminary data collected by the University of Southern California, many of these patients would have otherwise sought care in local emergency rooms, or worse, wouldn't have sought care at all.

Having a "medical home" like La Clínica North Vallejo provides many benefits including:

- * Helping to improve the health of that particular patient;
- * Helping to improve the overall health of the community;
- * Freeing up emergency room staff to more quickly treat patients with emergency needs;
- * Reducing the overall costs of health care by treating nonemergency health issues in the appropriate environment.

Everyone involved in making the vision of La Clínica North Vallejo a reality is to be commended for our first year of success.

In particular, our appreciation goes to the Solano County Board of Supervisors for its support of the La Clínica North Vallejo project and for its foresight and leadership in protecting public health in our community.

Jane Garcia, CEO
La Clínica de La Raza
Vallejo

This letter was also signed by Terry Glubka, CEO of Sutter Solano Medical Center; Rose Calhan, senior vice president and area manager for Kaiser Permanente; and Rosalia Velazquez, executive director of Solano Coalition for Better Health. -- Editor

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