



Re: BASIC HEALTH PLAN BUDGET REQUEST FOR COMMUNITY CLINICS

Dear Contra Costa County Board of Supervisors,

Aliados Health, and the three Contra Costa primary care community clinics are requesting that the Board of Supervisors authorize \$750,000 in FY 2024-25 using unallocated Measure X funds to partially cover the cost of primary and behavioral health care services to Basic Health Care patients utilizing the community clinics between July 1, 2024 – June 30, 2025.

Background

For the past several years, California has been expanding Medi-Cal coverage to undocumented residents based on age group. As of January 1, 2024, all adults with incomes up to 138% of the federal poverty level (FPL) can qualify for Medi-Cal, regardless of citizenship or legal permanent residency. However, undocumented Contra Costa residents between 138-300% of FPL, still considered low-income for Bay Area counties, are not eligible for Covered California subsidies, leaving health insurance out of reach for most in this income category and leaving thousands of residents and essential workers in our community uncovered.

An estimated 2,000 of residents in this category already receive care at one the nine community clinics operated by three community-based, community-governed non-profit health centers that are members of Aliados Health: Brighter Beginnings, La Clínica de La Raza, and LifeLong Medical Care. For decades, these health centers have provided essential primary care, behavioral health, dental, case management, and other wraparound care to low-income, uninsured residents with and without citizenship or legal permanent residency. As federally qualified health centers or “look-alikes”, they meet the same federal quality standards as the County’s medical system. Their health centers represent trusted health homes for the population now eligible for the expanded BHC program.

Earlier this year, following an extensive Health Options stakeholder group process, the County Board of Supervisors extended the County’s Basic Health Care (BHC) program to all county residents, reversing prior policy decisions excluding undocumented county residents. We applaud this decision and the leadership of the Board of Supervisors and the Health Department.

An important next step is ensuring funding to financially support care for residents choosing to utilize the community health centers through the BHC program. As outlined in the April 9 presentation by the Health Department, this funding will allow the community health centers to become part of the network of primary care offered under the BHC program.

In the first half of 2024, January 1 – June 30, 2024, the three community health centers provided approximately \$1.9 million in care to uninsured patients, many of whom are now eligible for the BHC program, as shown below:

Health Center	Jan-June 2024 Uninsured Visits	Average Cost per Visit	Total Cost of Uninsured Care, Jan-June 2024
Brighter Beginnings	1,514	\$266.93	\$404,132
La Clínica de La Raza	4,308	\$270.00	\$1,163,160
LifeLong Medical Care	2,846*	\$267.22	\$760,508*
TOTAL	8,668	N/A	\$1,870,127

*Estimate

Based on these visits, we are recommending that funds be allocated as follows:

Brighter Beginnings	\$97,545.22
La Clinica de La Raza	\$306,416.88
LifeLong Medical Care	\$346,037.90
TOTAL	\$750,000.00

Funds would be disbursed as grant payments under the condition that patients meeting BHC income and other eligibility are enrolled and tracked through the health center systems, reported to Aliados Health, and not charged for their care.

It will take time for the County and community to design effective systems to educate and enroll these patients into the BHC program or other coverage as available. Over the course of the next year, Aliados Health, Contra Costa Health and the community clinics will then work to ensure smooth processes are developed and implemented which facilitate smooth client enrollment; appropriate information-sharing across systems; referrals between primary care, pharmacy, diagnostic and specialty care; health home assignment; and financial processes.

Our plan is then to work with the Health Department, Board of Supervisors, Measure X CAB, local hospitals and other partners to ensure appropriate funding for future years beyond this first year period.

Contra Costa County's commitment to health equity has been laudable. Thank you for your support for continuing Contra Costa County's leadership role in providing quality health care to all the county's residents. We truly appreciate the partnership.

Sincerely,



Tracy Mendez
Acting CEO, Aliados Health