



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Media Contacts:

Emily Lynn Anderson for Health Center Partners

HCP@havasformula.com

619-234-0345

U.S. Department of Health and Human Services Awards Four Health Center Partners Members More than \$1.4 Million to Improve Substance Abuse Services

Community Health Centers Bring Significant Federal Funding to Southern California to Help Address Prescription Opioid Abuse and Heroin Epidemic

SAN DIEGO—(March 23, 2016)—[Health Center Partners](#) (HCP), a premier consortium of primary care organizations in Southern California, today announced four of its member health centers received combined funding of more than \$1.4 million from the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) to improve and expand substance abuse services. Administered by the HHS Health Resources and Services Administration, the grants to San Diego community health centers are part of \$94 million in Affordable Care Act funding awarded to 271 health centers in 45 states, the District of Columbia and Puerto Rico to help treat opioid and heroin abuse, a rising epidemic in the United States.

“Substance abuse is one of the most pressing challenges facing the health of our communities today,” said Henry Tuttle, CEO of Health Center Partners. “Studies have shown that a holistic approach to health care, one that combines substance abuse services, behavioral health and primary health care under one roof, is most effective in increasing overall patient health. We applaud our health center members’ success in bringing millions of dollars in federal funding to San Diego, Imperial and Riverside counties and look forward to continued cooperation, facilitated in part through our subsidiary, Health Quality Partners, to help treat substance use disorders and reach even more lives.”

According to HHS, approximately 4.5 million people in the United States used non-medical prescription pain relievers in 2013. The number of unintentional overdose deaths from prescription pain medications nearly quadrupled from 1999 to 2013, and deaths related to heroin increased by 39 percent between 2012 and 2013. The HHS health center funding awards will enable key substance abuse services to be more readily available, supporting access to treatment for approximately 124,000 new patients nationwide.

The following Health Center Partners members received individual awards from HHS to increase the number of patients screened for substance use disorders and connect them to appropriate treatments:

- [Clinicas de Salud del Pueblo, Inc.](#) received \$406,250

- [La Maestra Community Health Centers](#) received \$379,167
- [Neighborhood Healthcare](#) received \$325,000
- [Vista Community Clinic](#) received \$325,000

In total, \$1,435,417 has been awarded to Health Center Partners members, building on the consortium's successful track record of providing access to quality primary and behavioral health care, substance abuse treatment and related services for Southern California's diverse communities.

"Our collaboration with Health Center Partners continues to be invaluable in terms of advocating for the health care needs of the 'safety net' population in our communities, and ensuring we have access to federal financial resources to respond to emerging medical issues in our region," noted Zara Marselian, CEO of La Maestra Community Health Centers. "As one of 17 HCP member health centers, it is evident that we are better together, and that our voice is amplified when we share a unified vision for how best to effectively serve the most vulnerable residents of San Diego County and surrounding regions."

Health Quality Partners (HQP), a subsidiary of Health Center Partners, has worked with health centers on integrated behavioral health for the last nine years. While most of the focus has been on intra-clinic integration and cross-system integration of mental health services, HQP will facilitate additional, on-going technical assistance on medication assisted treatment of substance use disorders in 2016 and beyond.

About Health Center Partners

Health Center Partners (formerly Council of Community Clinics) and its subsidiaries serve as the nexus for its members and partners to transform primary care through the power of innovation and collaboration. Our health policy, public affairs and advocacy efforts enhance the development of and recognition for our members who enrich the patient experience and improve the human condition through access to quality health care and related services for their diverse communities, with an emphasis on low-income and uninsured populations. For more information, visit www.hcpsocal.org.

###