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**SANTA CRUZ COMMUNITY HEALTH CENTERS RECEIVES GRANT TO EXPAND MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES**

**December 4, 2014 — SANTA CRUZ, CA** — The Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA) has awarded Santa Cruz Community Health Centers (SCCHC) a \$250,000 grant to expand and improve its mental health services.

Santa Cruz Community Health Centers will use the grant to add mental health staff and to ensure that mental health screening, intervention, and referral to treatment is integrated with its primary care services.

SCCHC Behavioral Health Director Holly Hughes, LCSW, said, "Mental health and substance abuse issues play a tremendous role in undermining the quality of life and the physical health of our patients. In addition, chronic conditions like diabetes often improve with the help of a behavioral health care provider who can support individuals to make healthy lifestyle changes."

The grant is one of 210 awarded by HRSA earlier this month, and part of a \$51.3 million investment that will result in establishing or expanding mental health services for 440,000 people nationwide.

SCCHC Executive Director Leslie Conner said, "The grant supports our commitment to "whole person health and wellness." Since mental health is integral to health, mental health services should be integral to primary health care. Our approach to wellness encompasses healthy bodies, minds, and spirits."

**About Santa Cruz Community Health Centers**

SCCHC provides primary healthcare services in English and Spanish for women, men and children, regardless of economic status, physical or mental disability, sexual orientation, homelessness or immigration status. SCCHC's health centers deliver proven high-quality care through compassionate, dedicated physicians, mid-levels, nurses, medical assistants and administrative staff. SCCHC's clinics provide comprehensive services including primary care, women's health, pediatrics, mental health, urgent care, chronic disease management, care coordination and more. Learn more at [www.schealthcenters.org](http://www.schealthcenters.org).

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