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Southern San Mateo County Non-Profits See Surge in Demand for Services
Sequoia Healthcare District financial support maintains essential safety net services

REDWOOD CITY, CALIF. – (May 4, 2020) – As the COVID-19 pandemic continues to disrupt life across the Bay Area, non-profit service providers are seeing an unprecedented rise in the demand for their services. In southern San Mateo County, Sequoia Healthcare District is working at breakneck speed to provide flexibility and extra financial support to a number of non-profit partners as these agencies adapt to this new level of need.

Over the past three weeks, Sequoia Healthcare District has undertaken a number of measures, to ensure nonprofit service providers, many of whom rely on grant and donor support, can maintain operations and continue their life-saving work.

Samaritan House San Mateo, which provides a range of support including healthcare services, children’s clothing, food support, financial assistance, and more, has been a Sequoia Healthcare District partner for more than 20 years.

“Being able to keep our community healthcare clinics open, so that vulnerable populations can get care for non-coronavirus issues, keeps emergency room space open and provides an essential service for those in need,” said Bart Charlow, CEO of Samaritan House.

“Demand for food services is up 50% per week. Calls for rental assistance are through the roof. Sequoia is flexible and thoughtful in their funding support and they came to us right away and asked how they could be helpful,” Charlow continued.

To see more information about Samaritan House San Mateo’s services, or to support their work, [click here](#).

For **Menlo Park-based Peninsula Volunteers**, COVID-19 has forced the closure of revenue-generating programs, which help support their safety net services like Meals on Wheels. Funding support and flexibility from Sequoia Healthcare District has meant that Peninsula Volunteers can not only keep Meals on Wheels running for seniors in need, but can expand the program to include frozen meals for later use.

“By opening grants and marshalling resources, with flexibility, Sequoia Healthcare District is helping us to keep providing meals on wheels and purchase equipment needed to get more meals out the door every day,” said Peter Olson, CEO and Executive Director of Peninsula Volunteers.

To see more information about Peninsula Volunteer's services, or to support their work, [click here](#).

At **Jewish Family and Children's Services**, the Seniors at Home program, which provides assistance, care, financial support, and other bridge services, has seen a significant rise in need since the rise of the novel coronavirus, and demand for food support is coming from a much larger swath of families than ever before.

"At this point, the needs have consistently risen. While our programs have historically supported generally lower-income populations, our focus has expanded to anyone vulnerable, including a wider age range and more folks with health challenges who need assistance," said Joan Golder of Jewish Family and Children's Services.

"Our region is lucky to have support from so many generous benefactors. Sequoia Healthcare District has been tremendous and supportive, moving quickly to expedite processes to increase flexibility and funding for organizations including JFCS," Goldner continued.

To see more information about Jewish Family and Children's Services, or to support their work, [click here](#).

"Our agency partners are essential lifelines for so many our community, and Sequoia Healthcare District is staying nimble to provide them with the resources and support they need at this critical moment," said Pamela Kurtzman, CEO of **Sequoia Healthcare District**. "These service providers are stepping up to meet unparalleled demand and we are happy to be in a position to help."

Sequoia Healthcare District's Board of Directors' approved up to \$3 million in grants and loans on March 18 for nonprofit agencies with whom Sequoia Healthcare District already partners that provide safety net services to the District's most vulnerable populations. The District annually funds the work of more than 70 nonprofits that provide a multitude of community and school-based health services to more than 60,000 residents.

Last week, the Sequoia Healthcare District Board's unanimously approved specific direction and details on the allocation of these funds, in [four specific areas](#):

1. Allowing current grantees to repurpose programmatic grants for general operations use and extending reporting deadlines.
2. Providing flexible funding assistance to agencies that serve the most at-risk populations.
3. Providing no-interest loans to support partner agencies with substantial hardship.
4. Continuing to support school staff funded by SHD's [Healthy Schools Initiative](#), including school nurses, wellness coordinators, PE+ coaches, and mental health specialists.

About Sequoia Health District

Sequoia Healthcare District (SHD) was formed in 1946 and was the first healthcare district in California. The District is committed to improving residents' health by enhancing access to care and promoting wellness through responsible stewardship of taxpayer dollars. The District includes Atherton, Belmont, Menlo Park, Portola Valley, Redwood City, San Carlos, Woodside, and parts of Foster City.