



County of Santa Cruz

HEALTH SERVICES AGENCY Health Centers Division



Santa Cruz Health Center
1080 Emeline Ave.
Santa Cruz, CA 95060
(831) 454-4100

Watsonville Health Center
1430 Freedom Blvd. Ste. D
Watsonville, CA 95076
(831) 763-8400

Homeless Persons Health Project
115-A Coral Street
Santa Cruz, CA 95060
(831) 454-2080

The County of Santa Cruz Integrated Community Health Center Commission

May 28, 2025

Dear Members of the Board,

We are writing to inform your Board that we have reviewed the Health Services Agency (HSA) Health Centers' recommended budget for fiscal year 2025–26 and would like to express our support for the proposed plan.

The proposed budget underscores the importance of continued federal support for our local healthcare infrastructure. It was also gratifying for our Commission to see that all three health centers have earned national recognition from the National Committee for Quality Assurance as "Patient Centered Medical Homes." This distinction reflects a significant accomplishment by the HSA Health Centers' staff and highlights their dedication to prioritizing patient needs.

One of the major changes in the proposal involves transitioning laboratory and radiology services to community-based providers in Watsonville and Santa Cruz. While we recognize that this change is fiscally necessary due to the high fixed operational costs of maintaining these specialized services in-house, we also acknowledge that it may result in less convenient options for some of our patients. Health Center staff are diligently working to mitigate the loss in convenience.

This restructuring represents a difficult but necessary business decision to ensure the long-term sustainability of healthcare services in our county. It is reassuring that patients will still be able to access these services in the

community at no additional cost. Nonetheless, we understand that adjusting to new service locations may pose challenges for some.

We also appreciate the commitment from County Human Resources to work closely with affected employees to explore job placement and retraining opportunities. This thoughtful approach reflects the value placed on these dedicated staff members.

As the Santa Cruz County Integrated Community Health Center Commission, we remain a strong partner to HSA and are committed to supporting efforts that promote budget sustainability while continuing to provide timely, high-quality, and cost-effective health services to our community.

Therefore, the Commission strongly urges your Board to approve HSA's Recommended Budget.

Sincerely,

Signed by:

Christina Berberich

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Christina Berberich, PharmD, MPH, RD

President, Santa Cruz County Integrated Community Health Center
Commission

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