



The Effort joining hands to meet health needs

Just six years ago, The Effort was one small clinic that served people with addictions and provided primary health care. The roof leaked and, each winter, buckets would be set up indoors to catch the rainfall.

Today, The Effort is a powerful example of how partnership can help nonprofits expand beyond their wildest dreams. In 2005, The Effort merged with the Sacramento Family Service Agency, which provided family therapy, crisis intervention, child abuse prevention and violence prevention. Keeping The Effort's name, the group became a community clinic offering multiple services under one roof.

The mission of The Effort, a United Way certified partner, is to transform and improve lives by offering an integrated continuum of mental health care, addictions treatment and health care services for individuals, families and the community in the Sacramento region. The group also operates a nationally certified all-volunteer suicide prevention line in 36 California counties, as well as a parent support line.

"We're able to give patients and clients a place where they can feel good about coming," said Rich Kuck, director of facility development. "Everyone deserves a place where they can feel safe with good doctors and good beds. They need a health care home."

The Effort now has eight locations across Sacramento, including its main facility on J Street, and 95 percent of its sites offer health care, mental health care and addiction recovery in one location. Health services include primary care, children's dental, prenatal care, family planning, breast exams, immunizations, well child care, testing, diagnosis and treatment. Mental health services include psychiatry, evaluation, medication management, therapy, counseling and employee assistance programs. Addiction services include prevention, medically monitored detoxification, residential rehabilitation, outpatient substance abuse counseling, and individual and group counseling.

Gone are the buckets filled with leaking water, and in their place are state-of-the-art treatment beds and exam rooms – all provided through donations at no capital expense.

Yet with state and federal grants tightening, The Effort is in need of more in-kind and monetary donations. Although the group cannot accept donations of medicine, people can donate clinic equipment, supplies, clothes and blankets. The Effort also needs volunteers to staff the suicide prevention line.

"We're providing a service here that takes people out of emergency rooms and urgent care facilities, saving taxpayer dollars and unnecessary expenses while providing a caring environment to meet their needs," Kuck said.

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