



# SONOMA VALLEY COMMUNITY HEALTH CENTER

*Providing accessible, quality health care to those who need it – especially the underserved*



## Our start:

Cynthia Solomon was the office administrator for a Sonoma OB/GYN practice that provided a program for low income, Hispanic mothers during the early 1990s. When the practice closed, those women faced a gaping hole in health services.

Traveling to neighboring cities was burdensome, and the other doctors in town at that time didn't take Medi-Cal patients. Solomon received late-night phone calls at home from women desperately looking for care. In response, Solomon and fellow Sonoma resident, Heidi Stovall, worked to establish a community health center.

Holding meetings at the local library, they brought in enthusiastic community members, pharmacies, providers, and the Rotary Club, which contributed funding for equipment.

After searching for an appropriate spot for four months, SVCHC opened on West Napa Street in Sonoma in 1992.

## What we do:

Sonoma Valley Community Health Center (SVCHC) was established in response to a critical need for comprehensive, accessible health care for everyone in Sonoma Valley, regardless of their ability to pay. As our services became known, more families, elderly persons, immigrants, and others in need began to come to SVCHC for their primary care. The community now relies on SVCHC to meet a wide range of primary care needs for people of all ages and backgrounds. SVCHC is proud of its track record, both in terms of its service and its organizational stability.

## A single story:

From a patient of SVCHC:

In November, I desperately needed to see a physician. I am relatively new to Sonoma and, since moving to the community, had not considered identifying a primary physician. Since I had previous experience with community health centers as a data analyst, I figured the best last-minute option was SVCHC.

I showed up at the Health Center without an appointment. Amazingly, I was able to see a physician within 30 minutes of my arrival. The prescription I needed was electronically sent to a local pharmacy, which meant the medication was ready when I walked into the pharmacy. The Health Center takes walk-ins and scheduled appointments, accepts different insurance plans, and provides plenty of seating with two waiting rooms – one containing toys for children.

But, what impressed me the most was the relaxed, inviting atmosphere. Each staff person was pleasant, kind, and knowledgeable. Every staff person I met was genuinely happy and helpful. I was more than pleased with the service I received. Since my experience with SVCHC, I have been able to find a primary physician's office covered by my health insurance.

## Our future:

SVCHC's over-arching vision is to be a leader in providing community-centered care for patients in collaboration with other organizations. Our new facility is just one step of many necessary to reach this objective.



**Impact100 Sonoma has awarded two Community Grants to Sonoma Valley Community Health Center:**

**\$9,000 to equip two new exam rooms (2011) and \$13,000 to purchase equipment for its dental clinic (2014).**