

NEWS



26% of non-citizen Asian Children in Southern California do not have health insurance

A group of Chinese-American physicians are working with the Chinese Christian Herald Crusades (CCHC) to open a low-cost community clinic for uninsured Asians who live in the San Gabriel valley. The community has significant un-met need for medical services. It is estimated that over 30% of Asians in Southern California are non-citizens. Few have health insurance. Reverend David Lee, the CCHC Branch director, commented that

"...due to the language barrier or the lack of health insurance many Chinese immigrants are unable to seek medical attention even when they are sick. These delays in treatment have caused even bigger health problems."

Dr Saulan Eng shared the dream of a clinic for uninsured Asian immigrants with a sister in Christ, who works in the Department of Public Health. Next came a meeting with Dr. Calderon, who asked one of his community liaisons to work with Dr Eng. The community liaison, John Jennings, invited a group of local hospital representatives to a brainstorming and needs assessment meeting on June 22, 2005.

Dr Eng tells the story, "During the meeting it was decided that there is such a big need that we proceeded with the idea of opening a clinic. The next day, we found out that the building across the street is for sale by the owner for \$1.88 million. We sought confirmation from God, for 10 health professionals and \$100,000 in 10 days."

During a 10 day fasting prayer chain, \$100,000 was raised for the creation of the Herald Christian Health Center. CCHC and the physician group then took a step in faith and made an offer on a 4500 square foot building in San Gabriel, California. Because more money

was needed, the physicians and CCHC are now raising three million dollars prior to December 15th, 2005 to pay for the clinic building, remodeling and a 1 million dollar medical trust fund to cover the cost of future operations. "At this stage, we are still in the process of raising funds and seeking doctors and nurses to volunteer for the clinic which is projected to open in June of next year", said Dr Eng.

The Health Center will provide low cost basic health and dental care for low income and uninsured families. According to Dr Eng, "We will charge \$20-30 per visit to avoid abusing of the system. Of course, if patient stated that they cannot afford the charge, we will waive it on an individual basis. We also will not accept patients who have Medicaid, Medicare or insurance. We do not want to compete with local doctors; we want people with insurance to go to local doctors".

Specialty care will be provided outside of the clinic by Christian physicians who are willing to donate their services. The clinic will also provide cancer screening, preventative education and cancer patient support. The Health Center will be devoted to wholistic healing, showing the love and compassion of Jesus Christ to the people whom they serve. Lay ministers, who will be know as Gospel Ambassadors in the clinic, will provide comfort and pray for patients.

This is a novel model of Christian cross-cultural healthcare here in the United States!