

CalOptima Health Launches street medicine program in Costa Mesa

CalOptima Health, in partnership with the City of Costa Mesa and Celebrating Life Community Health Center, launched a street medicine program this month to deliver comprehensive health care to people experiencing homelessness.

Costa Mesa is the second city in Orange County to offer the CalOptima Health Street Medicine Program, which combines health and social services to address the unique needs of the vulnerable unhoused population. The program engages people experiencing homelessness where they are in the community, which reduces barriers to care and increases direct access to ongoing medical services. Expanded benefits are also available through Medi-Cal's new community-oriented services that provide coordinated, whole-person care. The CalOptima Health Street Medicine Program relies on collaboration with city, county and community organizations with the goal of helping individuals achieve better health outcomes and ultimately gain secure housing.

"In the past six years, the County of Orange, City of Costa Mesa and our partners have stood up a system of care to support the whole continuum of needs by Orange County residents. One pervasive need by our unhoused neighbors is safe, reliable medical care," said Supervisor Katrina Foley, who represents the Fifth District on the Orange County Board of Supervisors. "By expanding street medicine into Costa Mesa, CalOptima Health and Celebrating Life Community Health Center will provide necessary medical services, as well as establish a vital trusted relationship with our homeless neighbors, so CalOptima Health can stabilize health from the root – housing."

“The CalOptima Health Street Medicine Program is focused on serving members experiencing homelessness, combining experienced health care providers with compassionate peer navigators, to help those in need on the streets,” said Michael Hunn, CEO of CalOptima Health. “With the support of the City of Costa Mesa, the Mayor, City Council, Police and Fire, and our community-based partner provider, Celebrating Life Community Health Center, we will bring life-changing health care to those most in need.”

Costa Mesa spans 16 square miles, and a customized vehicle that serves as a mobile exam room will cover this area to reach people in need. According to the 2024 Orange County Point in Time Count, there are approximately 300 individuals experiencing homelessness in Costa Mesa.

“The City of Costa Mesa is honored to be one of three Orange County cities chosen to implement CalOptima Health’s Street Medicine Program,” said John Stephens, Mayor of Costa Mesa. “This innovative approach to bringing medical care to those with the greatest need enhances the City’s comprehensive system of care. I am proud of the outstanding work of City and CalOptima Health staff to bring this project to fruition. Costa Mesa continues to be a model for effective, compassionate care in our region.”

In operation since 2018, Celebrating Life Community Health Center is a well-established provider in the community, operating a clinic at 700 West 19th Street in Costa Mesa. “Celebrating Life Community Health Center is honored to join forces with CalOptima Health and the City of Costa Mesa to establish this transformative Street Medicine Program,” said Sergey Sergeyev, CEO of Celebrating Life Community Health Center. “This initiative is a testament to our firm commitment to serve the most vulnerable members of our community. Our dedicated team is passionate about meeting people where they are – directly on the streets – to provide essential medical care and support.”

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ABOUT

About CalOptima Health

A county organized health system, CalOptima Health provides quality health care coverage for low-income children, adults, seniors and people with disabilities in Orange County, California. CalOptima Health's mission is to serve member health with excellence and dignity, respecting the value and needs of each person. CalOptima Health serves more than 919,000 members with a network of 11,400 primary care doctors and specialists and 39 acute and rehab hospitals. CalOptima Health's first Street Medicine Program launched in Garden Grove in April 2023, and programs in Costa Mesa and Anaheim will begin in Summer 2024. Visit www.caloptima.org.

About Costa Mesa

The City of Costa Mesa was incorporated in 1953 and encompasses 16 square miles with a population of about 112,000, 30 parks, two municipal golf courses, 20 public schools and three libraries. Orange Coast College, Coastline Community College and Vanguard University and the Orange County Fair and Event Center are within the city limits. The City's Network for Homeless Solutions offers a comprehensive system of care to residents experiencing or at risk of homelessness with a 100-bed Bridge Shelter that provides interim housing coupled with wraparound services to support guests on their journey to a permanent housing option. The 9.5-acre Costa Mesa Civic Center is located at 77 Fair Drive. Visit www.costamesaca.gov.

About Celebrating Life Community Health Center (CLCHC)

CLCHC provides high-quality medical, dental, behavioral health and social services to underserved communities in Orange County. CLCHC goes beyond just health care to address the whole person with a wraparound, community-based support model that embraces customized patient care, including housing, food resources, childcare, job reintegration and more. CLCHC's multicultural team came together because of shared experiences of homelessness, food insecurity, poverty and discrimination, and in 2019, leaders embarked on a journey to become a community health care innovator. CLCHC has expanded to include clinics in Mission Viejo, Costa Mesa, Santa Ana and Irvine, and is now proud to partner with CalOptima Health to launch a Street Medicine Program in Costa Mesa serving unhoused children and adults. Visit www.clchc.org.

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