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**Opening Celebration Planned for the Medical Respite and Sobering Center & Community Awareness & Treatment Services (CATS) Administrative Offices**

**San Francisco, CA** -- San Francisco's Medical Respite and Sobering Center, the City's newest facility providing temporary post-hospitalization care and sobering services for many of the City's most vulnerable residents, is **celebrating its Grand Opening on Wednesday, July 1, 10 a.m. – noon, 1171 Mission St., San Francisco.** The Center is also the new home of Community Awareness and Treatment Services (CATS), a private non-profit agency that has served this primarily street-based population for over 30 years.

The Medical Respite and Sobering Center provides an important alternative to costly emergency care and also links individuals to longer-term residential options. The Center evolved as a result of a successful partnership between the Department of Public Health and CATS who have worked together for many years serving thousands of the City's hardest-to-serve, homeless men and women. The project was helped along by a generous award of \$250,000 from the Kaiser Permanente Community Benefits program that supported the renovation of the facility and saw an un-met need in the community to help people who are homeless avoid long hospital stays.

Like many initiatives in San Francisco, there is an element of novelty to the Center with its 45 respite beds and 12 beds in its sobering unit. Ten acute care hospitals throughout the City discharge patients directly to the Center, preventing hospital beds from becoming temporary housing for homeless patients who are well enough for hospital release but still in need of recuperate care. At the same time, the Center has become a viable option for short term sobering and stabilization services for alcohol-dependent persons, thereby decreasing ambulance trips to emergency departments and over-use of emergency medical staff. One of the great efficiencies of the respite-sobering combination is the cross over and sharing of on-site medical staff such as clinicians, nurses and social workers who can deliver appropriate medical services to the clients whose needs are similar during their stay at the Center.

"This Center would not have happened without the political will of Mayor Newsom whose commitment to a sobering center goes back to his days as a Supervisor," noted Marc Trotz, Director of Housing and Urban Health. "We are equally grateful to Kaiser Permanente and its Community Benefits program for their support of the respite piece of this new facility. Kaiser understands the special care required to help individuals with medically complex needs and their contribution to this program is a good fit for everyone."

The administration office of CATS is also a good co-location fit for the Center. CATS' niche is serving the most at-risk, hardest-to-serve, homeless men and women with multiple problems. Well known programs such as the Mobile Assistance Patrol and the Homeless Outreach Team

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operate out of CATS' offices and their array of other programs and sites offer important options to homeless people such as emergency shelter, transitional housing, permanent housing and substance abuse treatment.

“We are very happy to share this beautiful facility with the Medical Respite and Sobering Center,” said Janet Goy, Director of CATS. “With St. Anthony Foundation as the building owner and the productive collaboration we’ve enjoyed with Public Health, we look forward to operating out of this great location for many years to come.”

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