



Gavin Newsom  
Mayor

Mitchell H. Katz, MD  
Director of Health

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Eileen Shields, Public Information Officer  
415/554-2507

### New Leaf to Close Doors in October

**San Francisco, CA**—The Board of Directors of New Leaf: Services for Our Community (New Leaf) and the San Francisco Department of Public Health (DPH) have announced that New Leaf will be closing as of October 15, 2010 after 35 years of service to the LGBTQ community. New Leaf is a LGBTQ community-based organization providing mental health, substance abuse and HIV/AIDS services. Over the last several years the organization has faced increasing costs in leases and health care benefits, making it financially impossible to continue to operate.

In response to New Leaf's closure, DPH has been working with several LGBTQ organizations to ensure that New Leaf's clients are evaluated and transferred to services with other community based organizations and DPH.

Thom Lynch, Interim Executive Director of New Leaf, stated, "We are profoundly saddened at having to close our doors. Over the years, New Leaf has developed a clear understanding of the unique needs of our community and we have designed special services to meet those needs. Regrettably, the harsh economics of today's climate have been too much for us to overcome."

Several LGBTQ organizations have already agreed to provide expanded services to New Leaf's clients.

- Lyon Martin Health Center will provide mental health and substance abuse services
- AIDS Health Project will provide HIV/AIDS and mental health services
- San Francisco AIDS Foundation will provide substance abuse services

"The impending closure of New Leaf is a great loss to the LGBTQ community," said Barbara Garcia, Deputy Director of Health, "but its important legacy will be continued by existing LGBTQ community organizations. New Leaf's Mental Health Intern program has trained hundreds of mental health professionals that work throughout the City, including here at DPH."

The response from other community based organizations that also serve the LGBTQ community has been supportive and nostalgic. "We've long admired New Leaf for its impressive track record of providing important services to the local LGBT community, and we're saddened by the news," said Bob Rybicki, Vice President of Programs & Services at San Francisco AIDS Foundation. "We share DPH's commitment to ensuring no patient need goes unmet during the transition, and look forward to welcoming the clients of New Leaf's substance abuse program to our organization."

Terri McGinnis, Executive Director for Lyon-Martin Health Services, whose clinic will be providing mental health and substance abuse treatment to some of New Leaf's clients, expressed her organization's on-going support. "As a health services clinic founded by a group of medical providers and health activists for lesbians who lacked access to non-judgmental, affordable health care, we are proud to be part of the citywide solution for the LGBTQ patients who will be displaced by New Leaf's closure. Clearly, we are saddened by this announcement."

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Garcia also noted that her office is working closely with employees of New Leaf to provide them with the opportunity to apply for new positions at Lyon Martin Health Center, AIDS Health Project and San Francisco AIDS Foundation that will be created as a result of New Leaf's closure.

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