



Edwin M. Lee  
Mayor

**Bay Area's Most Vulnerable Babies and Children Have a New Clinic  
To Save and Restore Sight  
San Francisco General Hospital and Trauma Center Opens  
the David and Elva Sinai Pediatric Ophthalmology Clinic**

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*SAN FRANCISCO* – San Francisco General Hospital and Trauma Center's (SFGH) new pediatric eye clinic is a dream come true for Alejandra de Alba Campomanes, MD, MPH. Her vision to create a specialized eye clinic to serve the community's most vulnerable families is now a reality.

The clinic, which started seeing patients in August, features two exam rooms designed and equipped for children, as well as a special screening room and a family waiting room. For the 600 pediatric patients at SFGH's eye clinic, this is a welcome and much needed upgrade.

"Everybody's been commenting on how pretty it is, how kids are happier, more willing to wait," said de Alba, who is also an Assistant Professor of Ophthalmology and Pediatrics at UCSF. "We're already seeing how better an exam we can have, and get more information."

The exam rooms, for instance, now feature kid-friendly "fixation targets" – otherwise known as stuffed animals for the children to focus on during an eye check. They also have videos in English and Spanish, so that the doctors can watch the young patients train their eyes on a moving target, to assess their alignment and focus. **Approximately 50 percent of the pediatric eye patients at SFGH are Latino.** Another 20 percent are African American, 20 percent Asian and 10 percent are white or other ethnicity.

The busy ophthalmology clinic serves about 18,000 adult and child patient visits per year. Children waiting to be seen often were squeezed onto the floor in the jam-packed waiting room, making for an unpleasant start to a visit that could be scary for some. Now, their waiting room has bright colors, activities, kid-sized chairs and lots of light.

"It makes a world of difference," said Bennie Jeng, MD, MS, Chief of Ophthalmology at SFGH and a Professor of Ophthalmology at UCSF. "Kids feel nervous when they see a white coat. They don't know what's going to happen."

A more relaxed patient makes for a better exam. That, and the new equipment that allows for a more accurate reading of children's eyes. De Alba recalls a recent visit with a 20-month-old baby girl whom she suspected of having a problem with eye pressure. With new equipment, the doctor could check then and there, and learned that the pressure was fine. Before the remodel, she would have had the patient return every few weeks, to keep an eye on the pressure, and might have had to schedule an examination under anesthesia to assess it. With appropriate instruments she can now do the job more efficiently, less invasively, and free up appointment space for more patients who need it.

The need is great. Jeng and de Alba estimate that their patient volume could double, now that they have the space for it. And, these kids really should be seen.

"Children with eye problems are at a critical stage," Jeng said. Many eye ailments can be corrected, or greatly improved, if addressed by the time the child is 10-years-old. After that, it can be too late. "It's about saving vision for people for the rest of their life."

The most common problems among kids are cataracts in newborns, misaligned eyes leading to crossed eyes or lazy eye, and eye illnesses suffered by premature babies. All of these can lead to blindness if not treated. The American Foundation for the Blind reports that in California approximately 9,000 children under the age of 5 and nearly 50,000 children between the ages 5 and 7 are visually impaired.

That Man May See, a foundation that supports the UCSF Department of Ophthalmology as well as patient care at UCSF Medical Center, led the fundraising efforts for the new pediatric ophthalmology clinic at SFGH. Major contributors include The David and Elva Sinai Foundation, Inc., Bernard A. Newcomb Foundation at Silicon Valley Community Foundation, William Randolph Hearst Foundation, The Kimball Foundation, The Herbst Foundation, Inc., Kern Family Fund at the San Francisco Foundation, Koret Foundation, and Morgan Stanley Foundation.

That Man May See previously raised money to open the Visual Center for the Child at UCSF Medical Center in 2010, where the same physicians also practice. The current gift marks the first time the foundation has supported a program on the SFGH campus, responding to the needs of the patients and clinicians who serve them.

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### San Francisco General Hospital and Trauma Center (SFGH)

San Francisco General Hospital and Trauma Center is the sole provider of adult and pediatric trauma and psychiatric emergency services for the City and County of San Francisco. A comprehensive medical center, SFGH serves some 100,000 patients per year and provides 20 percent of the city's inpatient care. In 2011, SFGH became the first hospital in the country to be certified for a Traumatic Brain Injury program. As San Francisco's public hospital, SFGH's mission is to provide quality health care and trauma services with compassion and respect to patients that include the city's most vulnerable. General Hospital is also one of the nation's top tertiary academic medical centers, partnering with the University of California, San Francisco School of Medicine on clinical training and research.

