



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

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***** PRESS RELEASE *****

**SAN FRANCISCO EXPANDS SERVICES FOR RESIDENTS DEALING
WITH HOMELESSNESS, SUBSTANCE USE
AND MENTAL HEALTH CHALLENGES**

New Hummingbird Navigation Center provides psychiatric respite and connections to care

San Francisco, CA – Mayor Edwin M. Lee and Public Health Director Barbara Garcia today announced the opening of a new 24-hour program at Hummingbird Place to provide respite and resources to care for San Francisco residents who are experiencing homelessness, mental health and substance use challenges.

The expanded program will offer respite, clinical and peer counseling, hot meals, showers and overnight accommodations to help clients regroup and find their footing after a crisis episode. Direct referrals to treatment will be available to Hummingbird Place clients.

“We are helping our most vulnerable residents break out of the cycle of streets and hospitalization,” said Mayor Lee. “Hummingbird Place will provide the personalized care necessary to ensure that individuals have a chance to reclaim their lives and start anew. We are committed to addressing the root causes of homelessness, and providing treatments for behavioral health and substance use will help us reach that goal.”

Hummingbird Place originally opened in 2015 as a day program providing peer counseling and support, which will continue. The new and expanded model of care adds multi-disciplinary staff, including professionals and peers. Clients may be referred from Zuckerberg San Francisco General Hospital, Psychiatric Emergency Services, the Homeless Outreach Team (SFHOT), the Encampment Resolution Team and community providers.

“The programs at Hummingbird Place will focus on those that are leaving psychiatric emergency care and also coming from the city's various homeless services,” said Barbara Garcia, Director of Health. “The program's focus will be on helping homeless people that have had multiple visits to hospitals due to psychiatric and addiction crisis. At Hummingbird Place, they will find a safe and supportive environment, assistance with health and social services, medication management, benefits counseling and a place to spend the night.”

Hummingbird Place is part of the City's Navigation Center system. A national model, Navigation Centers provide clients with access to intensive case management, critical service connection to healthcare, entitlement benefits, and drug treatment programs. More than 70 percent of residents who stay in Navigation Centers are successfully transitioned into permanent housing, safe temporary placements or reunited with family members. Hummingbird Place is the first Navigation Center in San Francisco specifically tailored for individuals experiencing mental health issues and addiction.

“The opening of the Hummingbird Navigation Center is yet another example of San Francisco's ongoing commitment to addressing the complex issue of homelessness,” said Jeff Kositsky, director of the Department of Homelessness and Supportive Housing. “Providing a safe place for people struggling with homelessness and serious health issues will help navigate some of our most vulnerable neighbors to the services and housing they so desperately need. I am deeply grateful for the leadership of Barbara Garcia and the hard work of everyone at the Department of Public Health who helped make this happen.”

The new program opens today with four beds and will expand to 15 beds by December. It will be managed by Positive Resource Center/Baker Places (PRC), a San Francisco provider with extensive experience caring for dual diagnoses (mental health and substance use) patients. Admissions will be by referral, managed by the San Francisco Health Network's Transitions team, and will mirror the criteria used by the City's navigation centers that allow for people to bring their belongings, pets and partners with them. Residents dealing with homelessness, as well as those who are marginally housed, will be eligible.

“As one of the only respite centers of its kind in the nation, Hummingbird Place is designed to help people who are not sick enough for the hospital, but they're too ill to live on the streets or stay in a homeless shelter,” said Brett Andrews, CEO of PRC. “By combining one-on-one peer support and professional staffing, this facility creates a unique short-term overnight model that fits well within our continuum of care practice.”

Hummingbird Place is located in the Behavioral Health Center next to the Zuckerberg San Francisco General Hospital campus. The BHC provides residential and outpatient services to adults with mental health and substance use needs, and is operated by the San Francisco Health Network, the care delivery system of the Department of Public Health.

Services provided at Hummingbird Place will include:

- Referral to primary care medical and psychiatric community providers
- Medication monitoring
- Linkage to social services
- Transportation to medical and social services appointments
- Hot meals
- Individual and group counseling
- One-on-one peer support
- Daily living skills training
- Provision of activities of daily living materials (i.e. clothing, showering, hygiene supplies, laundry facilities, etc.)
- Coordination of services and discharge planning

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