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**Dignity Health Awards \$1M to Housing Matters to Build Permanent Supportive Housing**  
*Grant provides critical funding to begin construction on 120+ unit residence for individuals experiencing chronic homelessness in Santa Cruz, Calif.*

**SANTA CRUZ, Calif. (Feb. 17, 2022)** — Dignity Health and Housing Matters (formerly Homeless Services Center) today announced that Dignity Health is awarding a \$1M Homeless Health Initiative grant to Housing Matters to build a permanent supportive housing residence for individuals experiencing chronic homelessness in Santa Cruz County.

Housing Matters launched its Building with Purpose campaign in June 2021 specifically to raise money for Harvey West Studios, a five-story, 120-unit apartment complex to be built on Housing Matters' Coral Street campus. The \$1M grant from Dignity Health provides significant funding for moving this ambitious project forward. Dignity Health, a longtime Housing Matters partner, is a nonprofit health system that includes Dominican Hospital in Santa Cruz and Dignity Health Medical Group – Dominican physicians and locations throughout Santa Cruz County.

“As health care providers, we do all we can to mitigate the health impacts of our patients who are experiencing homelessness, but no amount of health care can substitute for stable housing,” says Dominican Hospital President Nanette Mickiewicz, MD. “We are proud to continue our longstanding partnership with Housing Matters as they provide innovative solutions to this pressing challenge.”

Currently, the lack of low-cost and supportive housing in Santa Cruz County, which has one of the highest per-capita rates of homelessness in the state, perpetuates chronic homelessness. Per the January 2019 Homeless Point-in-Time Count, a federally mandated census, there were 2,167 people experiencing homelessness in a county with 273,213 residents at the time.

Individuals experiencing chronic homelessness by definition experience prolonged and repeated periods of living unhoused, and struggle with a disabling condition. Their stability relies heavily on access to

daily supportive services like medical care and ongoing supportive services, as well as access to affordable permanent housing.

“Harvey West Studios will offer a healing environment where people can feel at home within a shared community,” said Phil Kramer, Housing Matters CEO. “On-site services and the proximity to services co-located on the Housing Matters campus will further support them on their individual paths to health and housing stability.”

Each studio apartment will provide approximately 300 sq. ft. of modest living space. The all-electric building will feature high quality, modular construction that incorporates solar and “clean air” technologies to reduce energy requirements and lower environmental impacts. The cutting-edge design will provide a restorative environment that includes gathering areas for residents, landscaped spaces, and onsite medical and behavioral health services.

“We’re so grateful to receive this contribution, which we see as a deep commitment to the health of our entire community,” said Mer Stafford, Chief Impact Officer at Housing Matters. “The grant will enable us to move solidly toward realizing our goal to provide long-term, stable housing for those most in need.”

Construction for Harvey West Studios, designed by David Baker Architects, is expected to begin in fall 2022.

### **About Dignity Health**

*Dignity Health is a multi-state nonprofit network of 10,000 physicians, more than 60,000 employees, 41 acute care hospitals (including [Dominican Hospital](#) in Santa Cruz), and 400-plus care-centers, including community hospitals, urgent care, surgery and imaging centers, home health, and primary care clinics in Arizona, California, and Nevada. Dignity Health is dedicated to providing compassionate, high-quality, and affordable patient-centered care with special attention to the poor and underserved. Dignity Health is a part of CommonSpirit Health, a nonprofit health system committed to advancing health for all people and dedicated to serving the common good. For more information, please visit our website at [www.DignityHealth.org](http://www.DignityHealth.org).*

### **About Housing Matters**

*Formerly known as Homeless Services Center, Housing Matters partners with individuals and families to create pathways out of their homelessness into permanent housing. Housing Matters offers shelter programs, case management, and day services—including hot showers, public bathrooms, and a mailroom—to people experiencing homelessness. Our campus shares space with a County-operated healthcare clinic and Dientes, a full-service nonprofit dental clinic, making these services easily accessible to Housing Matters’ guests. Our case management and housing navigation programs help end homelessness for hundreds of individuals and their families every year. Plans to build 120+ permanent supportive housing units are currently underway. Learn more at [www.housingmatterssc.org](http://www.housingmatterssc.org) or connect with us on Facebook, Instagram, or Twitter.*

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