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## Community health centers to receive stimulus funding

Two New Jersey community health centers will receive \$2.6 million in federal stimulus funds over the next two years to provide health care to low-income medically underserved residents.

The Center for Health, Education, Medicine and Dentistry in Lakewood and the Monmouth Family Health Center in Long Branch and are among 126 health centers nationwide that are receiving \$155 million in federal stimulus funds to help an estimated 750,000 low-income people across the country, according to a press release.

The funding is being provided by the Health Resources Services Administration, a branch of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, as part of the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA).

"New Jersey's healthcare safety net must remain strong during this economic crisis," said Gov. Jon S. Corzine. "It is reassuring to know that New Jersey has a true partner in health care in Washington."

"This funding will provide critical medical care to thousands of patients who use these Federally Qualified Health Centers in Monmouth and Ocean counties," said Health and Senior Services Commissioner Heather Howard.

The centers awarded funding are part of a statewide network of 20 community health centers—with a total of 91 sites — that provide primary and preventive health services to patients who are either uninsured, enrolled in FamilyCare or recipients of Medicaid and Medicare. More than 300,000 patients received care in community health centers last year, and because of the economy the centers are expecting to see an increase in patients of between 3 and 4 percent, according to the press release.

The centers awarded federal stimulus funds had already been approved as Federally Qualified Health Center (FQHC) "Look-Alikes," but not yet qualified for full FQHC funding.

Katherine Grant-Davis, president and CEO of the New Jersey Primary Care Association, the trade association that oversees the work of the health centers in New Jersey, called it "gratifying to see this level of commitment from the federal government so we can ensure that citizens have access to accessible primary and preventive health care. The new administration has recognized the quality work performed by FQHCs and has taken steps to increase the number of centers to expand services."

"We are thrilled that this money has become available for the residents of Long Branch," said Marta Silverberg, executive director of the Monmouth Family Health Center. "This money will increase access for the low-income population including the uninsured and underinsured. It will also help our efforts to reduce health disparities among the lowincome population that the center serves."

"This funding comes at a critical time for our health center," said Dr. David Friedman, chief executive officer of the Center for Health, Education, Medicine and Dentistry in Lakewood. "We can now move forward with our mission to service the uninsured and underinsured. We thank the Primary Care Association for their invaluable assistance."

The Monmouth Family Health Center in Long Branch has been an FQHC Look-Alike since 2004. The Center for Health, Education, Medicine and Dentistry was designated as an FQHC Look- Alike in January 2009.



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