
Los Angeles, April 23, 2020

Watts Healthcare to Receive \$100K from Siemens Foundation to Support COVID-19 Response

- **Los-Angeles-Based Community Health Center is one of 12 Receiving Financial Support from the Non-Profit Organization**

The [Siemens Foundation](#) today announced it is providing \$100,000 to Watts Healthcare Center (WHCC) to respond to the COVID-19 crisis. The community health center is one of 12 receiving financial support from the non-profit organization established by Siemens USA. Aligning with its dedication to social equity, the Siemens Foundation, including funding provided by Siemens Healthineers, is committing a total of \$1.5 million to support these critical healthcare providers so they can continue serving their communities when they are needed most.

WHCC has been recognized at the local, state and national levels as a leader in the Community Health Center (CHC) setting, and over the last five decades has grown to become one of the most comprehensive private nonprofit, community-based organizations in the nation. In 2019, WHCC offered primary care, specialty and social services to an estimated 25,000 lives at seven locations in South Los Angeles County, which includes the historic House of Uhuru, a 66-bed residential and outpatient substance abuse treatment program.

Like all other community health centers, WHCC remains on the frontline to provide essential services and joins a network of hospitals and clinics in the response to the coronavirus outbreak. WHCC has established and continuously improves strict COVID-19 screening for all employees, visitors and patients who present at each health center location. Individuals with symptoms receive further clinical assessment and care as recommended by public health guidance and WHCC's clinical experts. Tests for the coronavirus are also performed based on the criteria the organization is following. WHCC's response is led by its Emergency Management Team, which

comprises a diverse, core group of clinical and operational leaders who support the organization's response to any emergency incident, such as a natural disaster or an interruption of business operations.

"I remain humbled by the rapid response, engagement and commitment from the Watts Healthcare family during this national public health emergency, as well as our enhanced collaboration with new and existing public health partners. The grant will support core daily operations, which will allow us to strengthen and sustain our COVID-19 response efforts," said Olusheyi Lawoyin, Chief Operations Officer of WHCC.

"The City of Los Angeles will continue to focus on ensuring that each citizen in our community is able to access the healthcare they need during this critical time, and we welcome the Siemens Foundation as a partner in this effort," said Eric Garcetti, Mayor of the City of Los Angeles. "We are grateful for their support of the Watts Healthcare Corporation and their dedicated teams who are fighting on the frontlines to flatten the curve and provide care for the people most in need."

While WHCC has always had telehealth capabilities, it has quickly transitioned to and adapted the utilization of telehealth technologies to address healthcare needs during this crisis. WHCC sees its role as a health system that is expedient, continuously improves access and enhances care coordination through this crisis. Outreach to patients who are determined to be at risk for COVID-19 due to morbidity are also scheduled to be seen as a priority. The organization will soon be offering convenient pharmacy home delivery services. Despite the strain the health center has faced, WHCC has not turned anyone away.

"This funding from Siemens comes at an opportune time and will help our healthcare workers who are significantly impacted. On behalf of our Watts community, we thank you Siemens Foundation for your thoughtful contribution," said LA City Councilmember Joe Buscaino.

WHCC was selected using equity criteria developed by the Siemens Foundation in consultation with the National Association of Community Health Centers, the Minnesota Association of Community Health Centers, and Siemens. The center is free to use the funding as it deems necessary in response to the crisis.

“As the COVID-19 crisis disproportionately threatens lower-income and medically underserved communities, it’s important for us to support the institutions that sustain our social compact,” said David Etwiler, CEO of the Siemens Foundation.

“Community health centers and their staff are on the front lines providing primary care every day and they now play an especially critical role in our medical services infrastructure when emergency services and hospital settings are overwhelmed. Vital services like these are paramount to supporting equity across America.”

The \$1.5 million total commitment is funded, in part, by the Siemens Healthineers Fund of the Siemens Foundation, supported by Siemens Healthineers business in the United States.

“It is a critical time to ensure all patients and families are able to access the care they need,” said Dave Pacitti, Siemens Foundation Board of Directors member; President of Siemens Medical Solutions USA, Inc.; and Head of the Americas for Siemens Healthineers. “The nation’s community health centers are a vital safety net for millions of patients, and these investments will help them to continue providing affordable care that strengthens the entire U.S. healthcare system in combatting the pandemic.”

For more information on the Siemens Foundation, follow @SFoundation on Twitter or visit [siemens-foundation.org](https://www.siemens-foundation.org).

Contact for journalists

Alexander Becker

Phone: +1 (202) 215 9010; E-mail: becker.alexander@siemens.com

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About the Siemens Foundation

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