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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Venice Family Clinic Opens a New Free Clinic, the Irma Colen Health Center, in Mar Vista

Many Patients Can Walk to the New Site, which Triples Venice Family Clinic's Capacity in the Area

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The neighborhood that is home to the highest concentration of low-income families on the Westside of L.A. County recently got a new free clinic. After opening the site on March 1, Venice Family Clinic formally dedicated its new Irma Colen Health Center on Tuesday evening, July 6, with help from donors, elected officials, and members of the Mar Vista community.

"People need care in the neighborhoods where they live," says Elizabeth Benson Forer, Venice Family Clinic's CEO. "Situating a clinic here saves time and transportation costs for families who have the least of these to spare, and it strengthens the community."

For L.A. County's low-income uninsured, the health care crisis is exacerbated by geography. Many poor people work long days, made even longer by lengthy commutes in a congested transportation system, and they often live miles from an affordable primary care facility.

Venice Family Clinic, which is the largest free clinic in the country, serves over 24,400 low-income and uninsured patients annually. More than a third live in Mar Vista or surrounding neighborhoods in Palms and Culver City.

The 3,400-square-foot Irma Colen Health Center, which is located at the northeast corner of Inglewood Boulevard and Braddock Drive, is a short drive or even walking distance for most Mar Vista residents. Its seven exam rooms and one counseling room will accommodate 15,000 visits from 4,000 patients annually, tripling Venice Family Clinic's capacity in the area. Partner agencies providing additional family services are located nearby.

Services provided at Venice Family Clinic's Irma Colen Health Center include primary care, dental care, mental health services, and public health insurance enrollment, emphasizing the needs of women and children. In addition, a new three-year pilot project, funded by OneWest Foundation and UCLA Health System, will enable select uninsured patients of the Irma Colen Health Center to access specialty care and hospitalization at the UCLA Health System.

The Irma Colen Health Center is named in honor of longtime Venice Family Clinic supporter Irma Colen, who passed away in 2006. Irma, in partnership with her husband, Lou, raised approximately \$30 million to further Venice Family Clinic's mission of providing free, quality health care to people in need. Lou Colen's \$1 million gift made the new site possible.

Venice Family Clinic operates eight sites in Venice, Santa Monica, Mar Vista, and Culver City. For information about appointments, please call 310.392.8636.

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About Venice Family Clinic

Venice Family Clinic's mission is to provide free, quality health care to people in need. Established in 1970 by founder Phillip Rossman, MD, and co-founder Mayer B. Davidson, MD, the Clinic has grown from a small storefront operation into the largest free clinic in the country. With the help of more than 2,000 volunteers, including nearly 500 physicians, Venice Family Clinic provides a medical home for over 24,400 patients through eight sites in Venice, Santa Monica, Mar Vista, and Culver City. For more information, please visit www.venicefamilyclinic.org.