



St. Francis Medical Center

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NEWS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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St. Francis Medical Center Announces New South LA Trauma Recovery Center

(LYNWOOD, Calif., December 8, 2016) – St. Francis Medical Center and Southern California Crossroads (Crossroads) today announced the opening of the South LA Trauma Recovery Center (TRC) in partnership with Pepperdine University Graduate School of Education and Psychology, University of Southern California Department of Psychology, Jenesse Center, Inc., YWCA Greater Los Angeles, and Journey Out. Supported by funding from the California Victim Compensation Board, the initiative helps centralize and coordinate a range of free services for victims of violent crime and families of homicide victims.

According to St. Francis President and CEO Gerald Kozai, “The South LA Trauma Recovery Center harnesses the expertise, capacity and resources of multiple organizations to create comprehensive and cohesive support for crime victims, ranging from medical care and mental health counseling to housing and other basic needs. Our goal is to mitigate the long-term physical, mental and emotional trauma associated with violent crime by providing a multidisciplinary continuum of care that promotes healing and recovery.”

Besides a Level II Trauma Center, St. Francis already offers a variety of services to meet the needs of crime victims, including a Behavioral Health Unit, Children’s Counseling Center and Health Benefits Resource Center. However, as Trauma Medical Director Dr. Tchaka Shepherd explains, the level of care needed for the sheer volume of crime victims often exceeds the hospital’s resources.

“Over a third of our trauma patients are victims of violent crimes such as sexual assault, domestic abuse, human trafficking, robbery and gang violence,” says Shepherd. “After patients are released from the hospital, they still need strong support. Our new Trauma Recovery Center will help close the gaps in the system to ensure victims have access to the ongoing services and care they need.”

The South LA TRC is headquartered at Crossroads’ offices, nearby the medical center. St. Francis and Crossroads, founded by Executive Director Paul Carrillo, have been partners in serving victims of crime and trauma for 10 years. Carrillo, who is also the injury prevention coordinator at St. Francis, is responsible for the day-to-day operation of the South LA TRC.

More than a dozen organizations have already pledged referrals, cooperation and support to the South LA TRC, including the LA County Sheriff's Department and the LA District Attorney's Office Bureau of Victim Services. This community network helps ensure crime victims in minority and hard-to-reach multilingual neighborhoods are aware of the services available to them.

All victims of violent crime, as well as community-based organizations and healthcare providers wanting to be part of the program or receive training, are urged to contact the South LA TRC for more information at 424-785-5157.

About St. Francis Medical Center

Providing compassionate, patient-centered care since 1945, St. Francis Medical Center is a nationally-recognized 384-bed acute care facility and proud home of a state-of-the-art Level II Trauma Center. A part of Verity Health System, St. Francis serves over one million area residents, including a disproportionate number of low-income, high-crime communities in South Los Angeles. St. Francis operates one of the busiest private emergency trauma centers in the county, receiving nearly 80,000 visits to its emergency room and more than 2,400 trauma patients last year alone. In 2010, the St. Francis Medical Center Trauma Department and Southern California Crossroads formed HAVEN (Hospitals Against Violence Empowering Neighborhoods), a collaborative of hospitals and community-based agencies dedicated to violence prevention.