

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Media Advisory: Grand Opening of California's First Surplus Prescription Redistribution Pharmacy, Tuesday February 16th, 10:00 a.m.-12:00 p.m.

Santa Clara County, CA. Members of the media are invited to attend the grand opening celebration of the Better Health Pharmacy. The Better Health Pharmacy is a surplus prescription redistribution program; the first in California dedicated to collecting and dispensing unused, unopened, and unexpired medications from state-regulated facilities to patients, for free.

The increasing need by many in the community for access to free prescription medications, coupled with the County's desire to decrease waste and lower health care costs – *both for the County and for residents* - led to a plan to expand the program and create a permanent home for the pharmacy.

Funds provided by the Santa Clara County Board of Supervisors, in 2015, helped to accomplish this goal. The funds helped to secure and remodel existing office space in the Mediplex building, in downtown San Jose, transforming it into a modern, cheerful and fully-functioning pharmacy. "We are delighted and grateful to have this beautiful space that we may better serve the people in our community who need these medications," said Public Health Pharmacy Assistant Director, Jennefer Yoon, PharmD. "The funding provided by the Santa Clara County Board of Supervisors is helping us meet our mission of 'medication access for all'."

The medication repository program was started in Santa Clara County in 2008, and until recently, was run out of the Public Health Department Pharmacy located at 976 Lenzen Avenue, in San Jose. It started as a small program, serving only Santa Clara County Health and Hospital System facilities. It has grown into a 16 hour per week service operated by nine volunteers, with oversight provided by Public Health Department Pharmacy staff. Since its inception the program has dispensed more than 8,700 prescriptions; a savings of over \$400,000. "When this program started we were storing donated medications wherever we could find the space," said Pharmacist-in-charge, Khanh Pham, PharmD. "We now have room to store and dispense a wider variety of medications. We hope this will help us serve more county residents at this pharmacy."

-Event details on page 2-

Event Details

Members of the media are invited to tour the new Better Health Pharmacy and learn how it works to save money, reduce waste, and improve lives. Media are encouraged to take photos and video of the new pharmacy location. Dignitaries, partners, and other attendees will be available for interviews following a brief program and remarks.

When: Tuesday, February 16, 2016 from 10:00 a.m. to 12:00 noon

Where: Better Health Pharmacy, 725 E. Santa Clara St., #202, San Jose, CA 95112.
(Enter the back parking lot from St. John Street at 15th Street.)

Quick Facts:

- The Better Health Pharmacy is the first dedicated drug donation pharmacy in Northern California. Our pharmacy accepts any valid prescription, serving patients who cannot afford their medications. Our hours are Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday 4-8 pm, and Saturday 9 am -1 pm.
- Unused medication waste is a huge problem. Annually, about \$2 billion worth of medications are discarded by US skilled nursing facilities; \$100 million of this is in California.
- Through programs such as the Better Health Pharmacy there is potential to salvage roughly 10 million prescriptions, equally about \$700 million dollars in savings.
- There is a great and growing need for free or low cost medications; about 23% of American adults report missing a dose or skipping prescriptions due to cost. Restricted access to medications is associated with poorer health outcomes and increased risk of cardiovascular events.
- Disposing of unused drugs is harmful to the environment and our health. Unused medication ends up in our waterways, and our air.

For more information about the Better Health Pharmacy, including hours, location and how to use the pharmacy, please visit: www.BetterHealthRX.org.

For questions about the Grand Opening Celebration, please contact Johanna Silverthorne: 408-834-6767.

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