



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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PROJECT ACCESS SAN DIEGO AND TRI-CITY MEDICAL CENTER PARTNER TO IMPROVE ACCESS TO HEALTHCARE

San Diego, CA (December 8, 2010) - North County residents who are in desperate need of outpatient medical procedures and who are living without health insurance can now access vital healthcare services through an innovative partnership between Project Access San Diego, a project of the San Diego County Medical Society Foundation, and Tri-City Medical Center. The first patient to receive donated services under this program will have a tracheostomy closure procedure on December 8th.

Maria, the patient, is elated to finally bring closure to the medical issue she has been battling with since 2007. After suffering a stroke that required multiple surgeries and resulted in an impaired ability to swallow, Maria had to undergo a tracheostomy, a procedure to create an opening through the neck. She has had two strokes and three neurosurgeries since then and now needs the tracheostomy reversed, allowing her to swallow normally and regain her speech. She is hopeful to have her life return to normal after her surgery and is most excited to finally regain the ability to speak clearly. She is thankful of the generosity of all involved in her care including Tri-City Medical Center and Project Access San Diego.

Project Access San Diego is a coordinated, donated network of healthcare services available to low-income, uninsured patients and is run in partnership with local healthcare facilities. Volunteers are the heart of Project Access San Diego's success as they selflessly give of their time to improve the health of people in San Diego County. More than 500 physician volunteers and 15 healthcare facilities partner with Project Access to provide free, life-changing services to uninsured patients.

In Maria's case, the anesthesiologist and surgeon are donating their time and expertise during the surgery and Tri-City Medical Center will donate the ancillary staff, their state-of-the-art surgery suites and the care needed while Maria recovers in the hospital following the procedure.

Kitty Bailey, executive director, San Diego County Medical Society Foundation states, "Project Access gets people out of the emergency rooms and back to good health so that they can return to work or caring for their families. This is possible because of the generosity of our volunteers."

"Tri-City Medical Center is pleased to be partnering with Project Access San Diego. We believe that helping vulnerable patients is part of our commitment to the community. Not only is it the right thing to do, it is also a good business decision because it saves money through avoided emergency room visits," says Larry Anderson, CEO of Tri-City Medical Center.

To qualify for care through Project Access San Diego, an individual must live in San Diego County, be ineligible for public health programs, be low-income, and be referred by a community health center. Individuals can be connected to their local health center by calling 211. Over 550 patients have received free specialty care, including both inpatient and outpatient surgeries and procedures, since Project Access San Diego's inception in December 2008.

Tri-City Medical Center is administered by the Tri-City Healthcare District. Founded in 1957 to serve the healthcare needs of coastal North San Diego County the district includes most of Carlsbad, Oceanside and Vista. Tri-City Medical Center is a full-service, acute care hospital with physicians practicing in 60 specialties.

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About Project Access San Diego (www.SDCMSF.org)
About Tri-City Medical Center (www.tricitymed.org)