

## NEWS RELEASE:

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## NC Community Health Centers Left Out in Funding Announcement

*(Hendersonville, NC)* Blue Ridge Community Health Services (BRCHS) has received notification that no dollars will be flowing to North Carolina from the Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA) to support Facility Investment Program (FIP) for community health centers. BRCHS had submitted a grant request through the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) in the amount of \$5 million to help build a proposed \$7 million new medical facility in our community. (For the full HRSA announcement and list of award, see the following link: <http://www.whitehouse.gov/the-press-office/president-obama-announces-recovery-act-awards-build-renovate-community-health-cente>)

“While the news is disappointing, we knew receiving this award could be tough,” said Jennifer Henderson, Chief Executive Officer of BRCHS. “There were over 600 applicants in this particular ARRA category and only 85 grants were awarded. Unfortunately for BRCHS and for our state, there were no awards made to community health centers in North Carolina from these FIP funds.”

BRCHS will now revise plans for a new medical facility to serve the people of Henderson County as well as surrounding areas. “This particular ARRA grant would have allowed an accelerated response to the growing health care needs in our area, not just for the uninsured and the underinsured, but for anyone in need of our broad range of services,” continued Henderson. “Regardless of this news, the need for a new building remains as we had

to abandon our main medical facility in July 2009. The temporary solutions that we have come up with have allowed us to remain functional to this point, but we simply have to move from our ‘band-aid’ solution to a successful long-term fix regarding our medical building.”

Henderson stated that an engineering report conducted this summer concluded that the medical facility had numerous structural, environmental and overall safety concerns that required the building to be immediately vacated. “We are committed to constructing a professional medical building and we will immediately harness all of our organizational will and resources to put us on the fast track to achieving this goal. We will re-scale the project as necessary to remain a fiscally sound provider of health care in this region.”

“While new construction plans are underway, BRCHS will continue our capital campaign, and with a combination of support from individuals, businesses/corporations, and other grant sources, as well as bank financing, we will achieve the financial resources needed to complete the project,” said Steve Kirkland, Chief Development Officer.

Blue Ridge Community Health Services has been serving Hendersonville and the surrounding communities for more than 45 years, providing high quality, affordable medical and dental care, increasing access to health care for all, with special emphasis on the underserved and the uninsured. BRCHS health centers include the William F. Stokes Jr. Dental Center, the Kate B. Reynolds Children’s Center, Blue Ridge Family Practice, and school-based health centers at Apple Valley Middle School, North Henderson High School, and Bruce Drysdale Elementary School. BRCHS is accredited by the Joint Commission.

If you would like more information about BRCHS, contact BRCHS at P. O. Box 5151, Hendersonville, NC 28793, call 692-4289 ext 2509 or visit online at [www.brchs.com](http://www.brchs.com).

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