



PRESS RELEASE

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Gateways Hospital Breaks Ground on Inpatient Expansion to Support Vulnerable Youth

Gateways Hospital & Mental Health Centers commemorated the start of construction of a new building with 37 beds to provide specialized, no-cost services for at-risk youth

LOS ANGELES – February 19, 2025 – Gateways Hospital & Mental Health Centers broke ground on its newest adolescent inpatient building. The 27,000-square-foot youth mental health center will include 37 adolescent inpatient beds, making Gateways one of the largest providers of acute adolescent mental health services in Los Angeles County. Once complete, the Adolescent Inpatient Psychiatric Center will provide services to support youth with serious emotional or behavioral issues or who are experiencing an acute psychiatric emergency.

According to a study from the [Centers for Disease Control and Prevention](#), 64.9% of transgender students reported poor mental health in the past 30 days, with this group reporting higher rates of bullying and missing school because they felt unsafe. The expansion will ensure greater specialized support for gender-diverse youth to address the behavioral health challenges they face as a result of social pressure, prejudice, discrimination and bullying from their gender identity.

“With so many of California’s youth struggling with mental health issues, this new Gateways hospital wing for youth and adolescents in Echo Park represents a critical expansion of care. By adding specialized adolescent beds, Gateways is taking concrete action to support our young people during their most vulnerable moments,” said Mark Faucette, Senior Program Director, Behavioral Health Continuum Infrastructure Program. “Gateways is bringing these much-needed services to our district, and we’re extremely grateful.”

The expansion project is supported by a \$19.2 million grant from the Behavioral Health Continuum Infrastructure Program (BHCIP), as part of the Los Angeles County-based projects that address gaps in care and create sustainable improvements that better serve county residents. BHCIP prioritizes projects that are designed to support the most vulnerable populations who face the greatest barriers to accessing care. Gateways’ program is designed to reach at-risk youth where they are, providing comprehensive behavioral and social services that provide a restorative path to achieve their wellness goals, as opposed to falling into homelessness or incarceration.

“The Los Angeles County Department of Mental Health (LACDMH) values its long-standing collaboration with Gateways and appreciates our shared vision and commitment of providing care to the most

vulnerable communities,” said LACDMH Chief Deputy Director Rimmi Hundal. “This significant investment in infrastructure for youth mental health services will undoubtedly have a meaningful impact for those who need specialized services to fully address their needs.”

Currently, Gateways Childhood and Adolescent Outpatient Program (GCAOP) provides mental health services across the county and in partnership with Los Angeles Unified School District (LAUSD). Gateways provides free services to students at 22 LAUSD schools, including services in Spanish and American Sign Language. Gateways providers are representative of the communities they serve, with the staff population being 53% Hispanic and 21% African American, similar to Gateways’ youth client population which is 65% Hispanic/Latino and 21% African American. Having staff that represents the community means that Gateways can provide culturally relevant care to clients.

Gateways providers implement Trauma Informed Care (TIC) and Adverse Childhood Experience (ACE) screenings to ensure that clients’ treatment plans fully address their wellness needs. Trauma, especially trauma experienced at a young age, has a lasting impact on physical and mental health, increasing an individual’s likeliness to have a stroke, cancer or heart disease. When working with vulnerable youth, using trauma screenings allows providers to contextualize behaviors and assess their overall health needs.

"Gateways is uniquely positioned to address the growing demand for youth mental health services, as a comprehensive care provider that has worked with the most vulnerable populations for over seventy years. This expansion project will increase capacity for services while ensuring that more vulnerable youth get the support they urgently need,” said Dr. Phil Wong, CEO of Gateways Hospital & Mental Health Centers. “We are committed to strengthening infrastructure so that every individual gets the support they need, regardless of their ability to pay.

The Adolescent Inpatient Psychiatric Center is the largest infrastructure project upgrade at Gateways to its Echo Park headquarters since it was first established. The project involves Clayco as general contractor, S.L. Leonard & Associates as the construction management firm, and HMC Architects.

Here’s what elected officials are saying about the Adolescent Inpatient Psychiatric Center:

“Expanding access to behavioral health care for our adolescents in need is one of the most critical investments we can make in their future. As mental health challenges continue to grow, especially among our adolescents, we need real solutions to ensure people get the care they need. I’m proud to celebrate this milestone with Gateway’s Hospital and will continue working to support efforts that strengthen our mental health system.”

- Congresswoman Laura Friedman, 30th District

"This new wing at the Gateways Hospital and Mental Health Center in Echo Park is a significant milestone in our fight to provide comprehensive mental health support where our young people need it most," said Senator Maria Elena Durazo. "This expansion demonstrates our unwavering commitment to addressing the growing mental health needs in our community."

- California State Senator Maria Durazo, 26th District

"Gateways Hospital is stepping up to meet the adolescent mental health crisis head-on. This expansion means more young people – especially those leaving foster care and LGBTQ+ adolescents– will get the care they need and deserve."

- Los Angeles City Councilmember Hugo Soto-Martinez, 13th District

About Gateways Hospital & Mental Health Centers

Founded in 1953, Gateways Hospital & Mental Health Centers is a leading nonprofit organization providing high-quality mental and behavioral health care in the Greater Los Angeles area. Serving over 1,700 individuals annually, Gateways offers comprehensive inpatient and outpatient services to children, adolescents, and adults, with a focus on supporting the most vulnerable populations, including those experiencing severe mental illness, homelessness, and systemic inequities. To learn more, visit www.gatewayshospital.org

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