

PRESS RELEASE

NATIVIDAD MEDICAL CENTER PARTNERS WITH USC

Partners with Leading Private Research University to Improve Operating Room Efficiency

SALINAS, Calif. – May 7, 2009 – Natividad Medical Center was selected to participate in a grant from the California HealthCare Foundation to the University of Southern California (USC) Viterbi School of Engineering to improve efficiencies in the hospital's surgical services.

"Management Engineering offers the opportunity to improve care delivery by improving productivity, thereby improving access to care and reducing, or at least controlling, costs and patient wait times," said David Belson, Ph.D., USC School of Engineering adjunct professor. "Natividad was selected because their application provided a clear goal and a significant need."

Work by engineering students from USC has led to significant improvements in turnover times for operating rooms at nine other California safety net hospitals thus far, including Children's Hospital in LA and San Francisco General Hospital. Belson says he and his team are working with Natividad's doctors and nurses to apply engineering principles, similar to the principles used by organizations like Toyota, to streamline productivity and save money.

"We've seen an average 21% reduction at other safety net hospitals, and that means many more hours of daytime surgery each year." Belson says USC is addressing the opportunities for improved efficiencies in healthcare through the new Master of Health Systems Management Engineering, which prepares students for process improvement roles in the health care industry.

"The goals of this partnership are to improve hospital operations and improve access to cost effective care – and then to share those results to help other safety net hospitals," said Harry Weis, CEO of Natividad. "We're fortunate to have an opportunity like this that is completely in line with NMC's VISION 2010 to be recognized as an evolving, model public safety net hospital providing high quality, affordable healthcare services."

The California HealthCare Foundation is an independent philanthropy committed to improving the way health care is delivered and financed in California. By promoting innovations in care and broader access to information, their goal is to ensure that all Californians can get the care they need, when they need it, at a price they can afford.

For more information about the Natividad Medical Center please call 831-755-4111 or visit www.natividad.com.

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About Natividad Medical Center - Natividad Medical Center is a 172-bed acute care medical center owned and operated by Monterey County, and has been providing healthcare for more than 120 years. A public community hospital, Natividad Medical Center emphasizes the care of women, children and families and offers comprehensive inpatient, outpatient, diagnostic and specialty care. With a medical staff of more than 235 physicians, Natividad's mission is to continually improve the health status of the people of Monterey County through access to affordable, high-quality healthcare services. Natividad is based in Salinas, California. For more information, please call 831-755-4111 or visit www.natividad.com.