



**Northeast Valley
Health Corporation**
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NEVHC APPOINTS LONGTIME PHYSICIAN AS NEW MEDICAL DIRECTOR OF PEDIATRICS

San Fernando, CA – Northeast Valley Health Corporation (NEVHC) is pleased to announce that Dr. Gina Johnson, a pediatrician at San Fernando Health Center for the past 16 years, has been appointed as the new Medical Director of Pediatrics.

Dr. Johnson has cared for two generations of young NEVHC patients since joining the nonprofit organization in 2001 when she completed her pediatric residency at Children’s Hospital Oakland. In her new administrative role, she replaces Dr. Christine Park, who was promoted in March to NEVHC Chief Medical Officer.

“Dr. Johnson is an excellent fit to be our Medical Director of Pediatrics,” said Dr. Park. “She will transition well between the exam room, where she takes care of one family at a time, and this leadership position, where she looks at how to improve the care we provide for all of our pediatric patients.”

A native of the San Fernando Valley and a graduate of Los Angeles Baptist High School (now

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Heritage Christian School), Dr. Johnson received her undergraduate degree in human biology from Stanford University in 1994. She graduated in 1998 from UCLA School of Medicine and spent three years in the pediatric residency program at Children's Hospital Oakland.

"I loved my job as a full-time pediatrician," Dr. Johnson said. "But I had to ask myself if that was more important than assuring that we, as an organization, provide excellent care to the children in San Fernando and Santa Clarita valleys. I'm excited to think that I can impact pediatric care in a larger fashion."

With a microbiologist father and a mother who worked in medical billing, Dr. Johnson was exposed to hospitals and medical science from a very young age. She recalls numerous trips to Valley Presbyterian Hospital where her father worked. It was at that hospital where her pediatrician, Dr. Harold Maller, Valley Presbyterian's former Chief of Pediatrics, wrote in her chart that at age 11 she announced her intentions to become a pediatrician.

Years later, it was Dr. Maller who referred her to NEVHC when she was finishing her residency and wanted to return to her roots to work in a medically underserved community. Today, Dr. Maller is an NEVHC per diem pediatrician who reports to Dr. Johnson.

"I couldn't be more proud," Dr. Maller said. "I never doubted her. I recall that her first statement to me was not 'I *want* to be a pediatrician,' but 'I *am going to be* a pediatrician.'"

In her new administrative position, Dr. Johnson will continue to spend 50 percent of her time seeing patients at San Fernando Health Center. In 2016, she had a patient load of about 2,700 pediatric individuals. She is passionate about helping patients with their asthma and encouraging parents

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to read to their children.

“I always knew I wanted to work with children,” she said. “Medicine is interesting. But I truly believe in changing lives for the next generation. The most important thing I do in a day is give a child a vaccine because the protection is for life.”

An avid runner since high school, Dr. Johnson will be running the Comrades Marathon in South Africa next month as part of World Vision to raise money for clean water in Africa. The 43-year-old Sherman Oaks resident ran the 54-mile marathon last year at a time of eight hours and 58 minutes. For the past two years, she was the top female winner of the half marathon at the Santa Clarita Marathon.

NEVHC, a nonprofit, federally funded community health center serving the San Fernando and Santa Clarita valleys, provides health care in communities with a known shortage of health professionals to care for local residents. Since 1973, NEVHC has reduced barriers to care and improved health outcomes for all patients by providing safe, quality health care with comprehensive medical, dental, behavioral health, nutritional counseling and health education services.

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