



**Northeast Valley  
Health Corporation**  
a californihealth<sup>+</sup> center

# NEWS RELEASE

March 28, 2016

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

CONTACT:  
Judy Shay, Manager  
Marketing & Communications  
o: (818) 270-9518  
c: (661) 297-3011  
e: judyshay@nevhc.org

## **NEVHC HIRES NEW BEHAVIORAL HEALTH DIRECTOR, ADDS MORE PATIENT SERVICES**

*San Fernando, CA* – Dr. Yolanda Cespedes, a licensed clinical psychologist, has joined Northeast Valley Health Corporation (NEVHC) as its new Behavioral Health Director.

The addition of Dr. Cespedes enables NEVHC to better serve patients who require mental health and substance abuse counseling and screenings. This year, the Behavioral Health Department is increasing its staffing to offer an additional 5,370 patient visits, nearly doubling the 6,195 sessions provided in 2015.

“There is a tremendous need for behavioral health services,” said Dr. Cespedes. “We are committed to allocating more resources to behavioral health because research has shown that providing patients with behavioral support greatly benefits their overall well-being.”

Dr. Cespedes previously worked as a clinical director and a licensed psychologist for a private practice in Los Angeles. She also was a tenure-track assistant professor at the University of La Verne. A native New Yorker and graduate of Amherst College, she received her master’s and

(continued)

doctorate degrees in clinical psychology from the University of Southern California, and she completed an internship and a fellowship at Children's Hospital Los Angeles.

Currently, Dr. Cespedes has a staff of 17, including a psychiatrist, licensed clinical social workers and licensed marriage and family therapists, who provide behavioral health services at NEVHC's 14 primary healthcare centers. They screen for and treat mental health issues including depression, anxiety and stress. For acute diagnoses such as bipolar disorders, schizophrenia, and alcohol and drug abuse, patients are referred to outside specialists.

"Dr. Cespedes has the right balance of excellent training, management experience and clinical expertise," said Dr. Richard Seidman, NEVHC Chief Medical Officer. "She also has the personal commitment to serving our patient population. We are very happy to have her on board."

Aside from her administrative duties, Dr. Cespedes, who is bilingual in Spanish, will spend about 40 percent of her time providing direct care to patients at Pacoima Health Center and the Teen Health Center on the campus of San Fernando High School. Her specialty is child psychology.

"This job is a perfect fit for me," said Dr. Cespedes, who is married with two young children. "I can provide the leadership and still be at the clinics seeing patients, which is very important to me."

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.

###