



## **NEWS RELEASE**

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**Contact Person:** Ashley Armstrong

Company Name: FirstSight Vision Services, Inc.

Telephone Number: (909) 920-5008

Fax Number: (909) 932-0062

Email Address: Ashley.Armstrong@firstsightvision.net

Web site address: <http://www.firstsightvision.net/>

### **North County Health Services Welcomes New Vision Center, FirstSight**

San Marcos, CA - North County Health Services (NCHS) is pleased to announce the opening of a FirstSight Vision Services optometric office on April 25<sup>th</sup>, 2011 at the San Marcos Health Center located at 150 Valpreda Road. NCHS, a private, nonprofit organization providing healthcare to North County San Diego, is the first community health center to partner with FirstSight and it is hopeful that this partnership will set the stage for further collaboration with community health centers throughout California.

FirstSight is a California vision care plan that provides eye care at convenient retail locations such as Walmart, Sam's Clubs, and Vision Center stores throughout California. Vision services are provided by professional optometrists and include comprehensive eye exams, contact lens evaluation and fitting, eye dilation, and medical eye care. The cost for comprehensive eye exams including all pretesting starts at \$45. Professional services are provided by FirstSight and the eyewear is provided by National Vision. The vision services center is open six days a week including Saturdays from 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. making it more convenient for patients to seek services. Dr. Janice Lau and Dr. Michelle Suwabe, two highly trained and experienced optometrists, will provide services to patients.

FirstSight and National Vision sublease a portion of our San Marcos Health Center and will provide vision services to the entire community as well as NCHS patients through a referral program. In addition, NCHS WIC sites and NCHS' Project All Ready will identify and refer children in need. Appointments are available and walk-ins are always welcome.

"NCHS provides exceptional patient care that is affordable, which makes NCHS the right choice for FirstSight. FirstSight, its doctors and affiliates provide high quality eye care services, eyewear, and contact lenses at affordable prices in convenient locations," said Robb Patton, President and CEO of FirstSight Vision Services. "It is a privilege to serve the community at the San Marcos clinic."

"NCHS is pleased to partner with FirstSight to provide vision care that complements our comprehensive approach to healthcare," said Irma Cota, President and CEO of North County Health Services.

According to the American Academy of Pediatrics, vision disorders are the most prevalent handicapping conditions in childhood. The most common and significant vision disorders of preschool children include amblyopia, strabismus and significant refractive error. Additionally, vision problems can interfere with the process of learning. However, early and frequent vision screening can lead to the detection, treatment and prevention of many eye diseases for both children and adults. Clinicians recommend that adults receive a complete eye exam every year.

### **About North County Health Services**

North County Health Services is a private not-for-profit organization that serves more than 59,000 patients annually at 11 health centers in Carlsbad, Encinitas, Oceanside, Ramona and San Marcos. In 2011, NCHS celebrates 40 years since its inception. Services at NCHS include pediatrics, obstetrics, gynecology, internal medicine, adolescent medicine, dental care, mental health services and radiology as well as community health outreach, prevention and disease management programs. Accredited by The Joint Commission (TJC), NCHS is one of only five percent of community health centers nationwide to earn this prestigious designation. For more information, visit [www.nchs-health.org](http://www.nchs-health.org) or call (760) 736-6700.

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