

## ARIZONA



## CHERRYBELL HEALTH CENTER

Tucson, AZ (2018)

In 2018, the Corporation for Supportive Housing provided \$16 million in NMTC allocation to El Rio Santa Cruz Neighborhood Health Center ("El Rio") to finance the construction of the Cherrybell Health Center ("Cherrybell HC") in Tucson, Arizona.

Pima County has the second largest concentration of homelessness in Arizona and El Rio is a minority-controlled federally qualified health center (FQHC) and Tucson's only Healthcare for The Homeless provider. The new 48,990 sq. ft. project doubles the size of the two clinics that relocated, and allowed El Rio to expand its healthcare services and Healthcare for the Homeless programs in a Medically Underserved Area to meet the needs of its growing patient base. El Rio also provides healthcare to those experiencing

**THE NEW HEALTHCARE FACILITY MEETS THE NEEDS OF THE MOST VULNERABLE CITIZENS IN PIMA COUNTY, ARIZONA**

homelessness at 14 other locations and partners with 25 community agencies, connecting patients to services addressing the social determinants of health, including housing, healthy food and employment training. Due to El Rio's fully-integrated, patient-centered model of care, its adult Medicaid patients have the lowest hospitalization and readmission rates in the state, and it's one of two organizations in Arizona with a 100 percent score for best practices in healthcare delivery and outcome-based care for the lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer (LGBTQ) community.

Despite maximizing the commercial debt the project could support at \$11.8 million, there was a significant financing gap of \$4.9 million which was filled with NMTC equity.

As an FQHC, El Rio serves all patients regardless of ability to pay, and relies heavily on government grants, private contributions, and Medicaid and Medicare funding to support its operations. The NMTC loan's favorable terms maximized resources to cover the added operating costs of an expanded facility to provide quality care to very low-income and homeless populations, including those with complex medical needs.

In its first year after construction in 2019, Cherrybell HC served 14,190 patients, more than double the patients served at its relocated clinics, including people living with HIV/AIDS and those experiencing homelessness. The new health center expands primary care, dental, mental health, substance use, lab, pharmacy, and other services under one roof, including care coordination, assistance with housing, case management, insurance enrollment, and nutrition/wellness programs.

## FINANCING

**NMTC Financing:** Corporation for Supportive Housing: \$16 million  
**Equity Investor:** Wells Fargo

## IMPACT

- 137 construction jobs
- 139 permanent jobs
- 48,122 annual patient visits

## COMMUNITY

- Poverty rate: 26.3%
- Unemployment rate: 11.3%
- Medically Underserved Area
- Food Desert