

Business

Getting a checkup Thursday July 24, 1997



Sun-Star photo by Greg Hubbard

Dr. Matthew Weeks gives Brittany Smith, 5, a health checkup. Weeks has been named medical director for the 13 Golden Valley Health Center sites in Merced and Stanislaus counties.

New director of health centers named

By **ARLENE BARTHOLOME**
Correspondent

Dr. Matthew Weeks, trained at Mt. Sinai School of Medicine in New York City, has moved to Merced to become the medical director for the 13 Golden Valley Health Center sites in Merced and Stanislaus counties.

Weeks was a pediatrician in private practice in Maryland until he decided to make a career change and move into medical administration.

One reason for accepting this position, he says, is the fact that he can still see children, while at the same time, act as an administrator.

One of his duties as an administrator will be to recruit and retain physicians for the centers.

"I see myself as a bridge between the administration, the providers and the medical staff," he says, adding that he is looking forward to the challenges of leading the organization into managed care.

Weeks participated in the Maryland medical community's transition into managed care and says he is aware of some of the pitfalls Merced needs to watch for as it makes the transition into a new sys-

tem.

He also watched the transition of the Maryland community as it changed from a largely agriculturally-based region to a highly populated one.

"The farmland disappeared quite rapidly, and I see that happening here in Merced County. Once it starts, it progresses quickly. There are regrets later, but there are benefits, also," he says.

Golden Valley Health Centers are family practice offices treating some 50,000 patients in over 160,000 visits a year. The system features 13 sites in the two-county area.

According to Weeks, 60 percent of the babies born at Sutter Medical Center are delivered by OB-GYNs practicing at the center.

Golden Valley is a private, non-profit corporation emphasizing primary care and prevention to a population that does not have easy access to medical and dental care, he notes.

Pre-natal care is a high priority to ensure that a healthy baby is born at a hospital.

"I really believe in the Golden Valley Health Center organization, and I'm looking forward to the opportunities ahead of me," Weeks says.

Health centers receive \$568,465 grant

By **MARLENE BRYANT**
The Journal

Golden Valley Health Centers has been awarded a \$568,465 state grant from the Department of Health Services that will be used to hire health educators at each of Golden Valley's 13 clinic locations.

Dorilyn Harrison, the organization's program coordinator for the grant, said Golden Valley Health Center officials had options on how to utilize the funding but chose services that were most needed.

"The administration chose to write the grant, which is for three years, for health educator and outreach services targeted at seasonal, agricultural and migrant farm workers," Harrison said.

"We are screening applicants now. The Turlock office should have the positions of a part-time health educator and a part-time patient representative filled by the end of March."

The Turlock office on East Hawkeye Avenue will receive \$39,182 of the funding; the 797 Childs Ave. office in Merced, \$25,323; the 847

Childs Ave. office in Merced, \$32,978; the Hammond Street office in Modesto, \$38,428; the Las Vegas Street office in Modesto, \$38,662; the Sixth Street office in Modesto, \$39,153; and the McHenry Avenue office in Modesto, \$37,428, state officials said.

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