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### **[A Place for the Homeless to Heal](#)**

Supervisor Mark Ridley-Thomas declared, “No more patient dumping!” as he celebrated the grand opening of the Martin Luther King, Jr. Recuperative Care Center, a place for homeless patients to recover from illness or injury after being discharged from a hospital.

The latest addition to the Martin Luther King, Jr. Medical Campus will provide all the basic necessities, including interim housing, meals, transportation and various health services to homeless patients from four to six weeks, on average. It will also connect them to other services – from life skills classes to mental health counseling to substance abuse treatments – intended to help them achieve stability and transition into permanent supportive housing.

The 100-bed Recuperative Care Center will take in about 600 homeless patients a year, reducing the costly overutilization of public hospitals, jails and first responders.

“These homeless patients have multiple chronic illnesses and psychiatric impairments and would ordinarily have lingered in a hospital because they had nowhere else to go,” Supervisor Ridley-Thomas said.

“The Recuperative Care Center ensures that these medically-fragile persons receive the right level of TLC so they can recover and move on to more appropriate housing,” Supervisor Ridley-Thomas added. “A path to recovery – that’s why we’re here.”

James Tyiska is among the first to benefit from the Recuperative Care Center, which began serving patients January 19. “This place more than helped me, it lifted me up,” he said before the ribbon cutting ceremony. “A change is gonna come, I see it.”

In his invocation, the Reverend Dr. Norman Johnson, Sr. of the First New Christian Fellowship Baptist Church said the Recuperative Care Center will live up to the legacy of its namesake. "We are witnessing a new day, a better day... and hoping the healing that Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. represents will continue," he said.

Operated by the Los Angeles County Department of Health Services (DHS), in partnership with JWCH Institute Inc., the Recuperative Care Center is located in the sprawling MLK Medical Campus, which also has the MLK Community Hospital, MLK Outpatient Center, MLK Mental Health Urgent Care Center, and Center for Public Health.

The Recuperative Care Center is the second facility of its kind in the Second District, and boosts the number of recuperative care beds for homeless patients from 63 to 163 countywide. Referrals can come from all County hospitals and clinics.

DHS Director Mitch Katz said the Recuperative Care Center will restore not only the health but also the dignity of the homeless. Supervisor Ridley-Thomas has said the County's crisis of homelessness is the "defining civil rights issue of our time," and has been instrumental in helping provide coordinated outreach, affordable housing and supportive services to the estimated 44,000 people homeless on any given night in the County.

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