



**For Immediate Release**

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**Sonoma West Medical Center Signs Contract  
with Blue Shield of California**

Sebastopol, CA...July 15, 2016...Sonoma West Medical Center [SWMC] announced today they signed a contract with Blue Shield of California, effective August 10, 2016.

Luke Tharasri, newly appointed CEO of Sonoma West Medical Center, said, "SWMC has been working on securing the Blue Shield contract for the benefit of our greater community and hospital, and we are very pleased to see this through." Tharasri comes to SWMC from Pipeline Health, LLC an organization with 25 years of experience managing hospitals, physician groups, and healthcare organizations.

"Blue Shield represents a significant contract for us," stated CFO Robert Heinemeier, also newly appointed from Pipeline Health. "This contract will allow our physicians the ability to provide care locally for Blue Shield members in our community and it marks the beginning of a number of strategic growth initiatives for the hospital."

Sonoma West Medical Center opened its doors for service on October 30, 2015, and has been steadily negotiating health insurance contracts since that date. Currently, SWMC accepts Medicare, Medi-Cal, Partnership, Western Health Advantage, SCAN and Health Net insurance. Effective August 10, 2016, Blue Shield of California will be added to this growing list.

Sonoma West Medical Center is a 37-bed acute care, full service, not-for-profit, DNV-accredited district hospital located in the center of Sebastopol, CA. Our Emergency Department is open 24/7, and is staffed with a physician around the clock. SWMC offers a full range of medical and diagnostic services, including 3D mammography, GI, general and orthopedic surgery, and compassionate, attentive patient care by our excellent nursing staff and physicians.

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