



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE – August 16, 2016

**LITTLE FREE LIBRARY – NEWEST SITE NOW UP AND RUNNING
FOR LOCAL (HEALTH) LITERACY AND OUR KIDS**

(French Camp, CA) – Health Plan of San Joaquin (HPSJ) staff have joined together to create and staff the latest installation in the Free Little Libraries movement. HPSJ staff donated quality children’s books. “The books are already flying off the shelves,” said HPSJ Health Promotions Manager Jenny Dominguez, who oversees the restocking of the donated books from HPSJ employees.

	<p>Photo #1 – attached On July 15, HPSJ CEO Amy Shin (2nd from left, back row) and San Joaquin General Hospital (SJGH) Ambulatory Care Director David Jomaos (3rd from right) hosted HPSJ and SJGH staff for the unveiling of the newest Free Little Library (LFL), at Cesar Chavez Family Medicine Clinic #2 (located behind SJGH).</p>
	<p>Photo #2 – attached HPSJ CEO Amy Shin spends some quiet time inside the SJGH family clinic with one of the first Little Free Library patrons.</p>

HPSJ, which this year celebrates its 20th anniversary, collaborates with community partners to promote health for area residents and has long had literacy – especially health literacy – as one of its key priority reinvestment initiatives. HPSJ’s Dominguez explained that the not-for-profit, managed care health plan’s vision “to improve the health of our community is made all the more difficult when members may have difficulty reading materials that tell them how to lead a healthier lifestyle, including preventive health reminders.”

Research shows that the ability to read proficiently by the end of the third grade is also a powerful indicator of future academic success. For HPSJ’s service area (San Joaquin and Stanislaus counties), recent data show that as few as 30% of third graders score at grade levels or higher on standardized language arts tests. Studies show that once a child has fallen behind, many never catch up.

(more)

“It is known that learning to read does not just happen in a classroom, it happens in the community,” Dominguez said. “Together, we can change these outcomes, one Little Free Library at a time.”

Because healthy communities read, in addition to Little Free Libraries, HPSJ, through this key priority reinvestment initiative on behalf of health literacy, partners with: **the Record’s Family Day at the Park, Rotary Read-In, San Joaquin County RTD’s Books on Buses, and, for the past 18 years, Reach Out & Read San Joaquin.**

HPSJ is committed to continued support for literacy collaborations, believing that progress for literacy will improve members’ health and well-being through their ability to:

- Understand prescription instructions
- Read bus routes, resource directories and other documents that help them access healthcare services
- Comprehend the materials from HPSJ that explain their benefits

About Free Little Libraries

“To promote literacy and the love of reading by building free book exchanges worldwide and to build a sense of community as we share skills, creativity and wisdom across generations. There are nearly 40,000 Little Free Library book exchanges around the world, bringing curbside literacy home and sharing millions of books annually.”—<https://littlefreelibrary.org/>

About HPSJ

HPSJ, a not-for-profit health plan, has been serving members and the community since 1996. Located in the heart of California’s multicultural Central Valley, HPSJ is the leading Medi-Cal Managed Care provider in San Joaquin and Stanislaus counties. HPSJ offers a broad network of providers and works closely with physicians to develop programs and services to ensure quality health care for over 340,000 members.

HPSJ is currently one of only 12 health plans in California with NCQA Accreditation for a managed care Medi-Cal program. Medicaid is known as Medi-Cal in California. Only 160 Medicaid/HMO plans in the U.S. had this NCQA seal at the time of HPSJ’s 2015 Accreditation.

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