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NEW BRITAIN

Health Center Gets Continuing Federal Grant

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NEW BRITAIN — The Community Health Center has been awarded a continuing federal grant to expand medical services for uninsured and underinsured patients in the area, officials said Tuesday.

"This designation by the Bureau of Primary Care as a 330-funded site is an important designation for the community," said Rob Dudley, medical director at the health center in Washington Square. "It will provide

us with long-term resources to cope with the serious health needs of this community."

The center, which has served 10,000 area residents since opening in July 1996, will receive \$400,000 a year through the "330 grant" awarded by the Bureau of Primary Care of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. The bureau will review funding periodically. The department may renew funding indefinitely.

"It's exciting news," said Mark Masselli, president and chief execu-

tive officer of Community Health Center Inc. in Middletown. "It really provides some long-term structural support for us to serve the uninsured and underinsured populations."

The city center now employs six physicians, including two pediatricians. Center officials plan to use the grant money to expand existing medical services and develop new state-of-the-art dental facility, with two full-time dentists and a dental hygienist, in the spring.

Center officials applied for the 330 grant last year. Their Middletown location already is designated a 330-funded site.

Masselli said the grant will help the New Britain site reach more patients.

"Access to health care continues to be difficult for many poor and working families in New Britain and across Connecticut," Masselli said. "The health center is proud of the role it has played in New Britain in developing primary-care services."