

## **Cigna Foundation Gives World of Difference Grant to El Centro de Corazón, Addressing Health Disparities for Women in Houston's East End**

BLOOMFIELD, Conn. & HOUSTON, 11 May, 2016 - [The Cigna Foundation](#) has awarded a \$100,000 World of Difference grant to [El Centro de Corazón](#) to help improve health for Latino women living in the East End of Houston, where medical, dental and mental health professionals are in short supply. The East End, also known as the Ripley Medically Underserved Area, is a neighborhood whose residents are predominately Hispanic, low-income and uninsured, and who suffer from increased rates of diabetes, obesity, high blood pressure and depression, late-entry into prenatal care, and a lack of timely immunizations. The grant will be announced at El Centro's community baby shower this morning.

"We're excited to have found a strong partner in El Centro as we work together to improve women's health for underserved women in need of primary care, women's health, dental care, and behavioral health services," said Mike Koehler, market president for Cigna in South Texas. "The Cigna Foundation grant will enable El Centro to provide breast and cervical cancer screenings, screening and treatment for high blood pressure and diabetes, and prenatal medical services."

According to El Centro, a community-based health center, their female patients report one or more barriers in accessing health care. These obstacles include not having a personal doctor, relying on emergency rooms for most care, and difficulties in obtaining medical, dental care and prescriptions due to cost or lack of insurance.

"Through our collaboration, El Centro will offer prenatal classes for low-income women, as well as other women's health education, to prevent illness and disease. Together, El Centro and Cigna will help women in the East End community navigate the health system and lead healthier lives," said David Figliuzzi, executive director of the Cigna Foundation.

"El Centro de Corazón is appreciative of the opportunity to partner with Cigna to address the health care needs of women in Houston's East End. Cigna's commitment to support El Centro's Women's Health Program indicates its recognition of the benefit to deliver high quality healthcare in the community to improve maternal and child health outcomes," said Marcie Mir, CEO for El Centro de Corazón.

For more information on the World of Difference grant program and Community Health Navigation, go to [www.Cigna.com/Foundation](http://www.Cigna.com/Foundation).

### **About the Cigna Foundation**

The Cigna Foundation, founded in 1962, is a private foundation funded by contributions from Cigna Corporation (NYSE: CI) and its subsidiaries. The Cigna Foundation supports organizations sharing its commitment to enhancing the health of individuals and families, and the well-being of their communities, with a special focus on those communities where Cigna employees live and work.

### **About Cigna**

Cigna Corporation (NYSE: CI) is a global health service company dedicated to helping people improve their health, well-being and sense of security. All products and services are provided exclusively by or through operating subsidiaries of Cigna Corporation, including Connecticut General Life Insurance Company, Cigna Health and Life Insurance Company, Life Insurance Company of North America and Cigna Life Insurance Company of New York. Such products and services include an integrated suite of health services, such as medical, dental, behavioral health, pharmacy, vision, supplemental benefits, and other related products including group life, accident and disability insurance. Cigna maintains sales capability in 30 countries and jurisdictions, and has more than 90 million customer relationships throughout the world. To learn more about Cigna®, including links to follow us on Facebook or Twitter, visit [www.cigna.com](http://www.cigna.com).

### **About El Centro de Corazón**

El Centro de Corazón is a community-based Federally Qualified Health Center (FQHC) which provides comprehensive health care services for Houston's East End community, one of the poorest areas in the city. The predominantly Hispanic population in the East End is impoverished, with 97% of El Centro's patient living at/or below 200% of the Federal Poverty Level. Since being deemed a Federally Qualified Health Center (FQHC) in 2003, El Centro has provided over 250,000 patient visits. El Centro provides adult and pediatric primary care, women's health care, dental and behavioral health services through its three health centers. El Centro's mission is to promote the individual, community, and social health of the East End and the greater Houston area. To learn more about El Centro de Corazón, please visit <http://www.elcentrodecorazon.org/>.