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Bellingham Interfaith gets \$645,395 in federal stimulus funds

KIE RELYEA / THE BELLINGHAM HERALD

BELLINGHAM - Interfaith Community Health Center is getting \$645,395 in federal stimulus money, which will be used for needed maintenance on its Unity Street building and to buy new equipment for its dental clinic.

"It will be very helpful to us," said Desmond Skubi, Interfaith's executive director, of the money coming through the Capital Improvement Program.

Twenty-five community health centers in Washington state are receiving about \$26.5 million in grants through the program.

Nationwide, program dollars will go toward construction, repair and renovation of more than 1,500 health centers.

More than 650 such centers will use the money to buy new equipment or health information technology systems, and nearly 400 will use it to adapt and expand their use of electronic health records, according to a news release from U.S. Sen. Patty Murray, D-Wash., announcing the state's grant recipients.

The most recent infusion comes on top of \$200,000 in federal stimulus money Interfaith already has received to expand its services. Those dollars were distributed as "Increased Demand for Services" grants, and were to be used to help health centers add staff and increase hours as the nation's number of unemployed workers grows.

Interfaith has locations in Bellingham, Ferndale and Point Roberts.

It will use the more than \$645,000 from the most recent round of federal stimulus funding to bring in new equipment for its dental clinic in Bellingham, including X-ray equipment for dental chairs.

Two-thirds of the dollars will go to maintenance of the Unity Street building, which houses medical and dental services.

The work will include energy-efficiency projects such as putting insulating film on windows as well as resurfacing the parking lot and improving drainage.

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