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City and County of San Francisco  
**Office of the Mayor**

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**Press Room**

**Gavin Newsom** 42nd Mayor of the City and County of San Francisco

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## Press Releases

### Mayor Newsom Opens San Francisco's New Medical Respite and Sobering Center

07/01/09 - Mayor Gavin Newsom today opened San Francisco's Medical Respite and Sobering Center, the City's newest facility providing temporary post-hospitalization care and sobering services for many of the City's most vulnerable residents. The center also celebrated becoming the new home of Community Awareness and Treatment Services (CATS), a private non-profit agency that has served this primarily homeless population for over 30 years.

"San Francisco is dedicated to providing all its citizens with exceptional healthcare," Mayor Newsom said. "This respite center ensures that our most vulnerable residents are not forgotten and have access to quality care and treatment."

The Center provides an important alternative to costly emergency care and also links individuals to longer-term residential options. Ten acute care hospitals throughout the City discharge patients directly to the Center, preventing hospital beds from becoming temporary housing for homeless patients who are well enough for hospital release, but still in need of recuperate care. At the same time, the Center has become a viable option for short term sobering and stabilization services for alcohol-dependent persons, thereby decreasing ambulance trips to emergency departments and over-use of emergency medical staff.

Providing assistance for the homeless has been a passion of Newsom's for sometime now, but this facility is groundbreaking in its efforts to help the destitute get strong and sober.

"This Center would not have happened without the political will of Mayor Newsom whose commitment to a sobering center goes back to his days as a Supervisor," noted Marc Trotz, Director of Housing and Urban Health. However, many people have worked hard, through many obstacles, to get this program up and running.

The Center evolved as a result of a successful partnership between the Department of Public Health and CATS, who have worked together for many years serving the City's homeless men and women. Kaiser Permanente also gave a generous award of \$250,000 from the Community Benefits program that supported the renovation of the facility. The St. Anthony Foundation opened its doors literally, by offering the project residence in its Mission based building.