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Mexican consulate partners with St. Luke's

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BOISE — Local and international officials gathered at the Consulate of Mexico in Boise Monday afternoon to announce the creation of a Health Window program.

Mexico's Secretary of Health Jose Angel Cordova Villalobos traveled to Boise for the inauguration of the program, which will help improve access to medical services for the Hispanic community.

The Health Window is an information desk which will provide both the Mexican community and other community members with information regarding health institutions and programs in Idaho that any person can use, regardless of place of origin or socioeconomic status.

Villalobos said the window is of great importance and he was grateful for the support of St. Luke's in the venture.

Consul of Mexico in Boise Ricardo Pineda praised the partnership between St Luke's and the consulate.

"We also look forward to strengthening our social ties with communities," he said.

Boise/Meridian St. Luke's CEO Gary Fletcher commemorated the beginning of the health organization's relationship with the government of Mexico.

"It provides a pathway, a facilitated pathway, that gets people quicker to the care they need," he said.

He praised the program "that takes care of our citizens no matter what their need might be, no matter what their background might be or what their socioeconomic status might be."

"For us at St. Luke's this is right up our alley," he said. "We look forward to a long and prosperous relationship."

Boise Mayor David Bieter also participated in the inauguration and thanked the staff of the Consulate of Mexico, the visitors from Mexico and St. Luke's.

"This is a great, great day," he said.

Drew Hall, deputy director for the Idaho Department of Health and Welfare, also spoke at the inauguration and said his department was in support of the program.

Partnership provides benefits

The Consulate of Mexico in Boise and St. Luke's Hospital signed a memorandum of understanding to establish the Health Window program at the consulate's facilities in the Treasure Valley and at the St. Luke's Center for Community Health in Hailey.

Officials said the close, direct partnership allows for the linkage of client referral and health education among the local Mexican Consulate local health departments, community health organizations, and the major health institutions in Mexico.

The Health Window provides an opportunity for anyone who would like access to health services to get information that will help them prevent diseases.

Each Health Window is managed by a bilingual, bicultural and highly trained health promoter whose responsibility is to provide referrals to available health services.