

Clinics get emergency loans amid budget impasse

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National Health Services, a local group of clinics that provides health care to Kern's poor and uninsured residents, received a loan Tuesday from a state health plan to help get it through the state budget impasse.

Health Net of California is providing up to \$5 million in emergency loans to safety-net clinics threatened with temporary closure due to the delay in payments from the state. National Health Services received \$550,000, said Brad Kieffer, Health Net spokesman.

Health Net is working with clinics belonging to the Central Valley Health Network, a consortium of 13 health center corporations that provide primary care to low-income and medically underserved families, but will consider applications from other clinics, Kieffer said.

Applications are available by e-mailing dave.meadows@healthnet.com.

Health Net's emergency loan program began last year when it provided loans to three clinics to help them meet expenses when their payments were cut off by the last late state budget.