



APRIL 2026

Central California Pediatrics

Specialty information for physicians who treat children and expectant mothers.



Expanding Access to Specialty Care

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Across the Central Valley, the need for timely, high quality pediatric specialty care continues to grow. As the region's only comprehensive children's hospital, Valley Children's has made it a strategic priority to meet this demand head on—strengthening access, reducing wait times and investing in the people and systems that ensure children receive the specialized care they need, when they need it.

Over the past several years, Valley Children's has made measurable progress in improving access to specialty services. From fiscal year 2023 to fiscal year 2025, multiple high demand specialties have seen significant reductions in the average number of days patients wait for care.

- Cardiology reduced wait times by 20.5%
- Endocrinology saw an even more dramatic improvement, decreasing wait times by 47.9%.
- Gastroenterology also achieved meaningful gains, improving access by 25%.
- Across the organization, there has been a 20% improvement over the past three fiscal years.

These reductions represent more than operational success—they translate directly into earlier diagnoses, faster treatment, and peace of mind for families navigating complex health concerns.

Achieving these improvements required intentional effort across the organization. Valley Children's has focused on optimizing clinic workflows, expanding appointment availability and enhancing coordination across care teams. At the same time, leadership recognized that sustainable access improvements depend on growing the pediatric specialty workforce. To meet this need, Valley Children's has recruited additional providers across many specialties, strengthening capacity to better meet both current and future demand.

This commitment to recruitment is especially critical in a region where access to pediatric subspecialists can be limited. By investing in highly trained physicians and advanced practice providers, Valley Children's is expanding its ability to see patients sooner while maintaining the high standard of care families expect. These efforts also help ensure that referring providers across the region can connect their patients to specialty services in a timely and reliable manner.

The progress made to date is not viewed as an endpoint, but as a foundation. Demand for pediatric specialty care continues to rise, driven by population growth, increased medical complexity, and greater awareness of specialized treatment options. Valley Children's remains focused on continuous improvement—monitoring access metrics,

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identifying opportunities to streamline care delivery and planning strategically to align resources with community needs.

Through measurable reductions in wait times and ongoing investment in specialty providers, Valley Children's is demonstrating what it means to lead with purpose. By meeting families where they are and responding proactively to regional demand, the organization continues to make meaningful strides in ensuring that children across the Central Valley can access the specialized care they deserve—without unnecessary delays, closer to home.

We Value Your Feedback

We are dedicated to delivering outstanding service and compassionate care to your patients and their families and value your feedback and insights. Please help us continue to grow and provide you and your team with the best referral experience by taking our survey.

We Value Your Feedback! 2026



Medical Staff News

The following pediatric specialists recently joined Valley Children's:

Cardiology

Laxmi Ghimire, MD
Manish Malkar, MD

Critical Care

Zack Barbara, DO
Jacquelyn Benner, MD
Douglas Jones, DO

Emergency Medicine

Danielle Checky, MD
Mehmet Karliyil, MD
Holly Rose, MD

Endocrinology

Saima Hanif, MD

Gastroenterology

Rafael Gonzalez, MD

Hematology/Oncology

Rajat Sharma, MD

Hospitalist

Miriam Ahmad, MD
Anahita Emamian, MD
Charlotte Hobbs, MD
Elena Pal-Wal, MD

Infectious Disease

Sayonara Mató, MD

Neonatology

Shadi Alsmadi, MD
Sameh Elshahawy, MD
Sanket Jani, MD
Alok Kumar, MD
Prabjot Parmar, DO
Katy Ruch, MD
Kultar Singh, MD
Brandon Worth, DO

Ophthalmology

Timothy Winter, MD

Primary Care

Christina Nguyen, MD

Pulmonology

Dhakshitha Pedisetty, MD