

MEET ABIGAIL: A STORY OF HOPE THROUGH SOUTH CENTRAL HEALS

By Lauren Walters

Abigail lives in the Florence-Graham neighborhood of South Los Angeles. When a neighbor referred her to South Central Heals, her family was facing one of the hardest moments of their lives. Her husband had been diagnosed with chronic kidney disease and required dialysis three times a week, along with frequent doctor visits. Without reliable transportation, every appointment meant hours on public transit and constant worry.

Food insecurity also compounded their challenges. Abigail struggled to afford and find the specific foods her husband needed for his renal diet. With her husband unable to work and bills piling up, the family's stress grew unbearable. After another medical crisis, Abigail realized she needed help—and she called South Central Heals. Recognizing the urgency of Abigail's situation, the South Central Heals team acted immediately. After the first phone call, they arranged free Uber rides for her husband to get safely to and from his dialysis and doctor appointments.



Soon after, Abigail and her family completed the South Central Heals Household Assessment with two of our dedicated and extensively trained Esperanza Housing Corporation Community Health Promoters, Claribel and Angeles. Based on the in-depth analysis provided by the Household Assessment, the team determined the family's need for mental health support and connected Abigail's family to mental health counseling tailored for families caring for loved ones with chronic illnesses. Claribel and Angeles also helped Abigail apply for utility bill assistance and enrolled the family in a nutrition support program. Through our partnership with the FEAST Food Bank, they began receiving weekly deliveries of diet-specific groceries—a lifeline that eased both financial and emotional strain.

Abigail also joined our community convenings, where neighbors come together to share resources, support one another, and collaborate on local solutions. She says these gatherings have helped her rebuild a sense of connection and hope, "I appreciate the community South Central Heals has created. We share our struggles and find ways to lift each other up." When asked about the program's impact, Abigail's response was immediate and heartfelt, "South Central Heals saved my husband's life." She credits Claribel and Angeles for restoring her trust and confidence during an overwhelming time. "If this program were discontinued, so many families like mine would suffer. We wouldn't know where to turn for help."

Stories like Abigail's remind us why South Central Heals exists—to meet people where they are, respond with compassion and speed, and deliver comprehensive support when it matters most. But as federal and state funding reductions threaten community health programs, the future of initiatives like ours is at risk. Without this critical support, countless families could lose access to the vital services that keep them healthy, stable, and hopeful.



South Central Heals saved my husband's life... If this program were discontinued, so many families like mine would suffer. We wouldn't know where to turn for help.

