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## Innecare files to build Valley's first PACE Center

STAFF REPORT

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Innecare, has reached an agreement with an investor group led by Gafcon, Inc. to develop Imperial Valley's first PACE center and a healthcare clinic in the City of Imperial.

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IMPERIAL — Local healthcare provider, Innecare, has reached an agreement with an investor group led by Gafcon, Inc. to develop Imperial Valley's first PACE center and a healthcare clinic in the City of Imperial.

"Innecare's new facility will be a great addition not only to our city but our county," said Mayor Geoff Dale, City of Imperial. "With us being in the center of the Valley, we are the best location and will be easily accessible to patients in both the north and south areas of the Valley. We are

especially excited about the senior health PACE center, as resources for elderly care are a priority and lacking in our region.”

The center would provide medical, social, and wellness services to senior citizens. Innecare filed its application with the California Department of Health Care Services seeking authorization to build the PACE facility on July 29.

In addition to providing services for the elderly, the 20,000-square-foot PACE center would be coupled with an equally sized medical clinic to serve healthcare patients of all ages.

“This project will be pivotal in expanding healthcare for our seniors who currently lack access to PACE services – providing support in leading healthier, happier, and more independent lives,” said Innecare President and CEO Yvonne Bell.

The facility, 40,000 square feet in total, would be located on the northeast corner of the 22-acre site at the corner of Neckel Road and Highway 86. A portion of the site is currently under construction by Gafcon, Inc. with a 108-room Cambria Hotel.

“One of our core values is ensuring that our projects benefit local communities and this development demonstrates our commitment to the Imperial Valley,” said Paul Najar, Senior Vice President of Gafcon, Inc. “We are honored to be a part of a transformative project to provide healthcare to seniors and other community members through our partnership with Innecare and the City of Imperial.”

PACE stands for Program of All-inclusive Care for the Elderly. PACE serves certain vulnerable seniors with chronic care needs who want to successfully age in place rather than in a nursing home.

“We are delighted by the overwhelming support that we have received from the community for our PACE application. We understand how to improve the health and well-being of the communities we serve through providing access to excellent care, available to all” stated Rusty Garcia, Chairman of the Board for Innecare.

According to a press release, most of the participants who are in PACE are dually eligible for both Medicare and Medicaid. PACE centers provide physicians, social workers, nurses, nutritionists, and physical and occupational therapists.

The PACE model of person-centered care has been shown to reduce rates of emergency room visits, unnecessary hospital admissions, and long-term nursing home placements, and reduce the cost of care and the strain on family caregivers.

Over 95 percent of PACE participants can successfully remain in their homes and communities. Many live longer, are more socially engaged, and have a better quality of life than those in nursing homes or other institutional settings.