

GIFT OF SURGERY PROGRAM GIVES PATIENTS LIFE-CHANGING MOMENTS

SACRAMENTO, Calif.—Blanca Calderon has always worked with her hands. For the last several years, she’s used them at a Sacramento bakery, mixing and measuring ingredients, and kneading, cutting and shaping dough.

The repetitive work took its toll, causing numbness, tingling and swelling in her hands and wrists. It was incredibly painful—especially at night—and made it hard for her to work, do household chores, or even sleep.

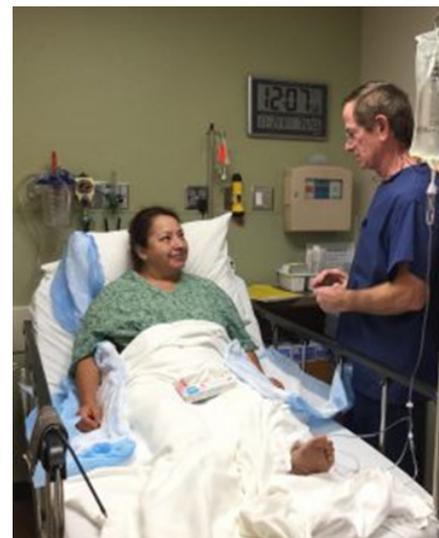
Calderon’s children helped when they could—with errands, laundry and dishes—but she missed being able to do normal, everyday things. Most of all, she missed being able to carry her grandchildren.

Like many people who don’t have health insurance, Calderon could not afford medical treatment. She suffered through the pain for 15 years.

SOLUTION AT A SURGERY CENTER

This fall, Sutter Health and the Sacramento Physicians’ Initiative to Reach out, Innovate and Teach (SPIRIT) partnered to find Blanca a surgeon to alleviate her pain. Orthopedic surgeon Michael Leathers, M.D., performed carpal tunnel surgery on both of Calderon’s hands at Sacramento’s Sutter Alhambra Surgery Center on Nov. 2. John McCall, M.D., a Central Anesthesia Service Exchange (CASE) Medical Group doctor, administered anesthesiology during the procedure.

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Blanca Calderon and Michael W. Leathers, M.D., consult before her carpal tunnel surgery at Sutter Alhambra Surgery Center on Nov. 2, 2018.



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Michael Leathers, M.D.

GIFT OF SURGERY Continued

“Surgery can be life changing,” Dr. Leathers said. “It’s incredibly meaningful to be able to help people who would otherwise continue to live in pain.”

At her follow-up appointment, Calderon came into the office with a huge smile, minimal pain from the surgical sites, and normal feeling in her fingers.

ABOUT SUTTER HEALTH’S GIFT OF SURGERY PROGRAM

Each year, Sutter Health works with community organizations like SPIRIT, as well as Operation Access in the Bay Area, to provide surgeries to patients without health insurance. The organizations identify patients based on their medical condition, health status and financial need, and work with the physicians and care teams at Sutter Health’s outpatient surgery centers to schedule procedures.

Teams from 18 Sutter ambulatory surgery centers volunteered their time and expertise to perform 60 life-changing procedures during the 2018 Gift of Surgery program. Surgeries included hernia repair, cataract repair and gallbladder removal; procedures were all completed in the outpatient setting and did not require overnight hospitalization.

As a not-for-profit organization, Sutter Health believes in giving back. Sutter Health’s total community benefit investment was \$612 million in 2017. These funds supported traditional charity care, unreimbursed Medi-Cal costs, health education and community clinics.



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