Free medical clinic to open in Fostoria

By Morgan Manna - April 23, 2019

Area health care providers are working together to meet the health care needs of the underserved in the Fostoria region.

Under the direction of Jeanne Bohm, M.D., "Just in Time Clinic" will open in July, providing health care services free of charge to anyone who does not have health insurance in the designated zip codes.

Designed to address immediate healthcare needs and provide primary care until the patient can establish with a primary care provider, the clinic will offer blood pressure screenings, medication management, pregnancy tests, basic vitals, COPD, asthma, allergies, sore throat, flu, rash and urinary tract infections. Prescriptions will be written when medically appropriate, and prescription assistance programs will be utilized.

The clinic, which will be located inside ProMedica Fostoria Community Hospital Specialty Clinic on the first floor of the hospital, 501 Van Buren St., will be open for half days — 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. — on Saturday per month for uninsured Fostoria area residents. Bohm said there will be designated zip codes, including 44830, where patients must reside to be seen. Other zip codes have not yet been established and the open dates have not yet been determined.

The first two clinics will serve as open houses, inviting the community and potential patients to come in and learn a little more about the clinic through Q&A and tours. Potential patients will fill out a survey,
informing officials about their socioeconomic characteristics and healthcare history while learning about
the clinic's mission.

After those introductory clinics, Just in Time Clinic will start offering screenings. Once that is established,
it will become a full clinic. Scheduled appointments as well as walk-in patients will be accepted. There is
no charge to be seen in the clinic.

"I've always wanted to give back to the community and when I went to medical school in my forties, I
knew then this is the way I wanted to give back," Bohm said. "I wanted to be somewhere where we could
give them access again to healthcare and try to reintegrate them into the healthcare system and it turns
out, this is where a need is. I'm very happy and humbled to be able to help."

Community Health Services, a federally qualified health center, has a regional office in Fostoria directly
across from the hospital. Patients who are seen at the Just in Time Clinic will be scheduled for follow-up
care at CHS, which accepts everyone, regardless of insurance or ability to pay. CHS offers both medical
and dental services at 502 Van Buren St.

Any identified emergencies will be referred to the emergency department for immediate management.

The goal, according to Bohm, is to establish patients who need access to medical care with a provider in
their community.

"Most importantly we're trying to get them in with a primary care doctor that can see them on a regular
basis once they have insurance," she said.

The clinic will be staffed by volunteers, including Dr. Bohm and other local healthcare providers as well as
students in healthcare professions.

Officials are seeking volunteers to help run the clinic, including nurses, who must be board certified with a
state license to practice medicine in Ohio. Healthcare volunteers will go through a credentialing process.

Student volunteers, pursuing a career in the healthcare field, will also be accepted. Bohm said she plans
to work closely with local universities to give students experience.

Other volunteers, who must have a background check, will help with patient intake and registration,
programs, etc. and, as the clinic expands, with fundraising and other specialized skill sets.

The Just in Time Clinic is designed to model the Volunteers In Medicine Model. Based on "The Culture of
Caring," VIM affiliated clinics recognize the strengths of those in need, provide quality primary care
services free of charge, and is community owned and supported.

The national organization helps set up free healthcare clinics around the country, with 88 in 26 states
thus far.

Sasha K. Bianchi, MPH, executive director of VIM, met with key community partners and providers earlier
this month, working with them to start the free clinic using a proven process that VIM has honed over the
last 25 years.
Free medical clinic to open in Fostoria | Review Times

“We want to be sure the clinic has a really strong infrastructure and can be sustained for the long haul,” she said. “We have a rigorous process that takes more time but, at the end of it, I think you come out with a much better product.”

VIM ensures clinic officials are prepared with medical malpractice insurance, all of their clinical protocols, fundraising efforts, etc. before allowing them to open.

Once the clinic opens, it stays a part of the VIM network, which continues to provide ongoing services such as grant opportunities, group purchasing products, professional development and more.

A Cincinnati native, Bohm began her free clinic ventures in Toledo while she was a medical student at the University of Toledo. A friend of hers introduced her to his father, who was a pastor in Toledo. The duo had multiple discussions about opening up a free clinic in the church.

However, before she finished her residency and become board certified, the pastor moved to a church in Fostoria. They continued their discussions, but before they could get their idea off the ground, the pastor left the church.

“He said he was leaving this church and didn’t have another church to go to so I didn’t have a home for my clinic,” Bohm said. “I told Tom Borer (chief operating officer at PFCH) that I lost my clinic and he immediately said, ‘You haven’t lost this clinic. You’re going to have it here in the hospital.’ I didn’t expect that, which I think is a testimony and tells me a lot about the people here.”

Just in Time Clinic has start-up funding to help get it off the ground. However, officials said they are going to be seeking other funding opportunities in the future to keep the clinic open and thriving. Bohm said they would apply for various grants and host fundraisers as well as seek community partnerships with local businesses and organizations.

To inquire about helping financially or through volunteerism or for more information about the clinic, visit www.facebook.com/justintimemedicalclinic/ or contact Bohm at justintimeclinic@gmail.com.

Comments

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