

Closing county public health clinics will save \$1.2M, Feb. 2013

By Joanne Huist Smith, Staff Writer

Feb. 23, 2013

Public Health: Dayton & Montgomery County's seven primary care clinics all will be closed by summer and 14 employees laid-off, for a \$1.2 million a year savings.

More than 4,500 patients who rely on the clinics for their primary care are being transferred to the non-profit **Community Health Centers of Greater Dayton** network, or they may choose to find a new medical home on their own.

The clinics primarily serve women, adolescents, and children. Five of the facilities recently closed, including two on Feb. 15.

Facing an 11 percent cut in Human Services Levy funding because of falling property values, County Health Commissioner Jim Gross, who also serves as president of the board of the community health centers network, said public health, and all levy funded agencies had to identify budget reductions.

Public Health's Human Services Levy allocation for 2008 to 2011 was \$18.4 million per year. The allocation is currently \$15.8 million annually, so the "savings" from closing the clinics accounts for almost 50 percent of the shortfall, Gross said.

Public Health clinics that are preventative in nature such as the Sexually Transmitted Disease Clinic and its Immunization Clinic, both located in the Reibold Building at 117 South Main Street, will remain open.

Gross said Public Health is transitioning its focus from primary care to preventative care, because there are other organizations in the community that offer those services that are not dependent on local funds for support.

"It's a good business model," Gross said. "Why spend local dollars, if you can get taxpayers across the nation to pay for the service?"

The **community health centers network** received a federal qualified health center designation in March 2009, which means they get enhanced reimbursements for Medicaid and Medicare services plus \$717,500 a year for operations delivered in monthly installments.

The network also receives about \$900,000 a year from the human services levy, money that formerly went to area hospitals that once owned and operated four clinics now under the **Community Health Centers of Greater Dayton** umbrella.

The network serves nearly 11,000 patients a year. The bulk are on Medicaid. About 34 percent are uninsured and 6 percent have commercial or private insurance. Uninsured patient fees are based on ability to pay, with a minimum fee of \$20 per office visit.

The health centers also can offer discounts on prescriptions, because of the designation.

Executive Director **Gregg Hopkins** said the transition from Public Health to Community Health Centers will be seamless for many patients.

Two Public Health clinics located in the Southview Center at 25 Thorpe Drive in Dayton will become part of the health centers network by late April. The non-profit also will open a clinic in Miamisburg at 5 South Alex this May to meet a growing need in southern Montgomery County.

Hopkins said his staff of 69 is growing. Three additional physicians have been hired, including Dr. Bruce Pasch, who currently works for Public Health. Hopkins said he made a presentation to Public Health staff about employment opportunities with the network.

With 70 percent of Public Health's budget absorbed by personnel costs, Gross said there was no way for the budget cuts not to impact staff. Public health planned 28.5 layoffs during the transition, but due to attrition was able to cut that number in half.

"This is a bitter sweet situation, because our employees will lose their jobs," Gross said. "These are people I have known for years."

The number of employees at Public Health has fallen from 400 in 2004 to 280 this year.

Community Health Centers of Greater Dayton

Dr. Charles R. Drew Health Center, operates half the facility

1323 W. Third Street, Dayton
Telephone: 461-4336

Corwin Nixon Health Center
2351 Stanley Avenue, Dayton

Telephone: 228-0990

East Dayton Health Center

2132 E. Third Street, Dayton
Telephone: 528-6850

Victor Cassano Health Center, operates half the facility

165 S. Edwin C. Moses Blvd., Dayton
Telephone: 558-0180

Public Health: Dayton & Montgomery County clinics to be closed or recently closed

Adolescent Wellness Center

YWCA, 141 W. Third Street, Dayton
Closed April, 2012

Community Child Health Clinics

Southview Center (will reopen as a community health center in late April.)

25 Thorpe Drive, Dayton
Closing Summer 2013

Community Child Health Clinic, 2166 N. Gettysburg Avenue, Dayton

Closed November 2012

Community Child Health Clinic, 31 N. Locus, West Carrollton

Closing Summer 2013

Prenatal Clinics

Southview Center

25 Thrope Drive, Dayton (will reopen as a community health center by late April.)

Closed Feb. 15

Prenatal Clinic, 113 Central Avenue, West Carrollton

Closed Sept. 2012

Drew Health Center (Community Health Center already operates at this

location and will remain open.)

1323 W. Third Street, Dayton
Closed Feb. 15

**Public Health: Dayton & Montgomery County
Clinic transition financial summary**

Clinic type Annual revenue Annual spending Annual savings to Human Service
Levy

Adolescent Wellness Center \$22,000 \$177,800 \$155,800

Community Child Health Clinics \$878,020 \$1,517,000 \$638,980
Prenatal Clinics \$338,000 \$755,000 \$417,000
Total \$1,238,020 \$2,449,800 \$1,211,780

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