

HeraldTimesOnline.com

VIM clinic to offer orthopedic, mental health services, pharmacy

Volunteers in Medicine expects volume of patients to increase

H-T Report

June 14, 2007

The Volunteers in Medicine clinic has seen an average of 26 patients per day for medical care during its first five weeks of operation, eight patients a day for dental care and 15 patients per day to discuss eligibility for ongoing care.

Since the clinic opened, 549 people have qualified for care, 769 patients have received medical care, 36 have received dental care and 333 have had eligibility appointments, administrators there report.

Clinic officials say they expect to see the number of patients visiting the clinic each day increase to 52 per day within the coming months as a result of an increase in follow-up visits, the utilization of specialized clinics and two medical volunteers staffing the evening shift rather than one.

Specialized clinics

The clinic has established a new orthopedic clinic on Thursday afternoons and a spine clinic on Fridays that are staffed by specialized physicians to help patients with joint, back and neck pain. The clinics help diagnose and treat patients who might otherwise need to be referred to specialists outside of the clinic.

A mental health clinic on Thursdays and a behavioral health clinic on Wednesdays will be established on a gradual basis, with a behavioral health counselor on site at the clinic one day a week. A mental health counselor soon will be added to see patients in the evening hours. The clinic is open until 8 p.m. on Mondays and Thursdays.

Pharmacy update

The clinic pharmacy will become a medication room by early July. Thanks to volunteers who are working to enroll patients in patient assistance programs that provide free medications, the clinic has seen an increase in the number of prescriptions being filled, clinic officials said.

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