

Community health clinic opens at Madison-Grant

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Nurse practitioner Michelle McDowell (left) and support associate Ashley Jackson (right) invite those in their community to visit the Madison-Grant Health Center located on the Madison-grant High School campus.

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The Madison-Grant United School Corporation has partnered with Aspire Indiana Health to open a health center on its campus at the former administration building.

Comprehensive health services will be available to students and their families, school staff and anyone from the surrounding community who needs healthcare.

“This is for the community,” said Superintendent Scott Deetz. “We’re just extremely excited to have this in an area that people feel comfortable coming to; everybody comes to school.”

Before the opening of The Madison-Grant Health Center, Deetz said there was one doctor’s office in 174 square miles of the school, posing an issue to parents and community members.

“So many of our families run into the barrier of preventative healthcare because if they don’t go to work, they don’t get paid,” Deetz said.

Though each school will continue to have a nurse on campus, the health clinic offers additional services that school nurses are not able to offer.

If a student needs care during school hours, clinic staff will contact their parents or guardians for permission to go to the onsite health center, much like the traditional school nurse model. The schools will offer transportation for students to the clinic with permission from their guardian. Guardians must fill out a permission form ahead of time, and give permission on the day of the visit.

Michelle McDowell, the clinic’s nurse practitioner, has worked in primary care for almost 22 years. McDowell said she is glad to be serving the people of Grant County after working in other communities for years.

“I like taking care of people in my home community,” McDowell said. “We’re definitely providing a very needed service to this community since we do not have a lot of healthcare providers in this part of Grant County.”

McDowell said she hopes to offer a healthcare option for locals, specifically school staff, to utilize during their lunch breaks, so they do not have to take the day off of work to travel to another clinic. The clinic’s ability to offer COVID testing should also help keep students and staff in the classrooms, McDowell said.

Syd Ehmke, Aspire Indiana Health's vice president of primary care, said the organization had been interested in opening a location in the Madison-Grant area for a while because of the lack of healthcare providers in the area.

"It was like a win-win situation for all of us," Ehmke said. "It was something that both of us felt really strongly about."

Ehmke noted that many people travel 15 to 20 minutes to the nearest pharmacy, but the clinic will have a limited supply of medication to treat acute care needs, such as antibiotics.

The Madison-Grant Health Center will be staffed with trained medical and support professionals, providing services such as family medicine, prescriptions, lab tests, pediatrics, acute and chronic care management, elder care and Hepatitis C treatment.

Parents, family members or people in the surrounding community seeking care for themselves will need to make an appointment by calling (765) 331-4775. Non-students will not enter any school buildings.

Aspire Indiana Health accepts Medicare, Medicaid and most forms of traditional insurance, as well as sliding-scale fees for those who lack insurance.

Aspire also offers Video in Person (ViP) telehealth services, so patients can have a face-to-face appointment with a healthcare professional from the privacy and convenience of a computer or mobile device.

The clinic opens Monday-Friday at 8 a.m., and closes at 4:30 p.m. on Mondays, Tuesdays and Thursdays. The clinic offers later hours on Wednesdays, closing at 8 p.m., and closes early on Fridays at noon. For more information, visit www.AspireIndiana.org.