



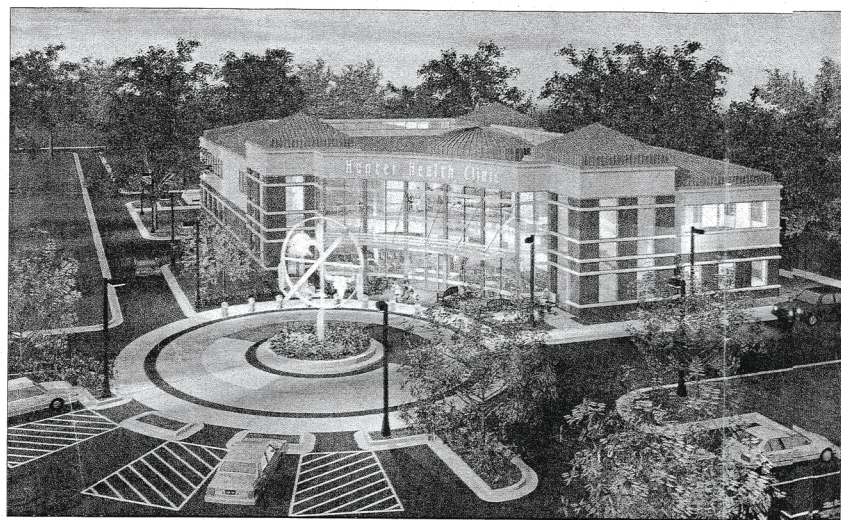
The Wichita Eagle

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FRIDAY
MARCH 18, 2005 ■ 50 CENTS

HUNTER HEALTH CLINIC PLANS NEW BUILDING

No room at the clinic



Courtesy photo

A new building, shown in this artist's rendering, will triple Hunter Health Clinic's space. It will cost about \$5.5 million and be completed in 2007.

Map area WICHITA

New location for Hunter Health Clinic

Current location of clinic

Central

The Wichita Eagle

Thousands more patients seeking care

BY KAREN SHIDLER
The Wichita Eagle

Hunter Health Clinic will kick off a \$5.5 million building project with a ground-blessing ceremony early next month.

The new building, expected to be completed in June 2007, will triple the medical clinic's space and be just north of the existing building at 2318

E. Central.

That 67-year-old building will be demolished and turned into a parking lot when the new one is finished, Hunter Health chief executive Susie Schwartz said Thursday.

The project is necessary because of an increased demand for care, she said. In its most recent fiscal year, Hunter Health — a nonprofit community health cen-

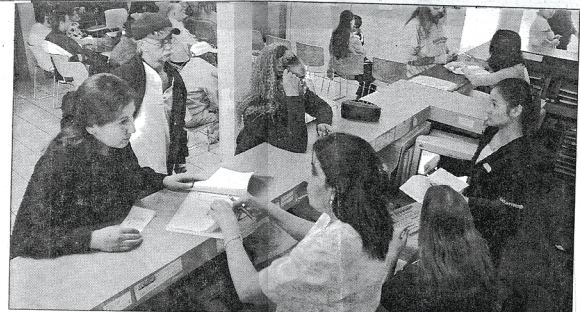
ter — had 51,721 patient visits, up from 35,311 over a five-year period.

That's about the maximum the current building can accommodate, she said, which is why some Hunter Health services — such as its diabetes care clinic — have been moved to satellite locations. Those sites will remain open after the new building opens.

EAGLE EXCLUSIVE
FIRST WITH THE NEWS

The ground-blessing will begin at 3:30 p.m. April 8. In a reflection of

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Hunter Health Clinic gives primary care to anyone and specializes in care for those who are uninsured or underinsured. Over a five-year period, its patient visits increased from 35,311 to 51,721.

CLINIC

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Hunter Health's beginnings as an Indian health center and its diverse patient population, the ceremony will start with a blessing by Native American spiritual leaders who will come to Wichita from the four compass directions.

The ceremony will also feature Native American drumming, a Hindu dance, a Bahá'í song, a Buddhist chant and song, and two Protestant ministers.

Hunter Health provides primary care to anyone and specializes in care for those who are uninsured or underinsured. It's also an urban Indian health program.

The federal government provides almost half of its funding under those two programs, but the clinic also relies on private donations, fees and insurance reimbursements. Its total budget for fiscal year 2003 was about \$5 million.

Some of the money for the new building is coming from the federal government; donations and naming grants are being sought.

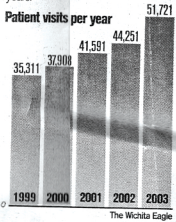
For example, the mental health wing will be named for the Forrest C. Lutzner Foundation.

The new building, designed by Law Kingdon, will have 45,000 square feet, with 10,000 of it unfinished space in the basement. The clinic currently has 11,400 square feet.

Staffing won't increase at first, but the extra space will provide much-needed room. For example, in a medical setting, a doctor typically has three exam rooms;

Growing demand

The number of visits to Hunter Health Clinic has increased steadily in recent years.



at Hunter Health, it's closer to one now.

More room — so that one patient can be in one room while another patient is being seen — will allow for more efficiency, Schwartz said.

The building will include a Native American teaching circle on the second floor, designed "kind of like a sweat lodge," Schwartz said. A more typical education room also will be part of the new building.

Sometime in 2008, Hunter Health hopes to increase its doctors from two to four, dentists from one to two, and mid-level practitioners from three to six.

Hunter Health also has satellite operations at Brookside United Methodist Church, Inter-Faith Ministries, Wichita Child Guidance Center and next to Central Church of Christ.

Now you know HUNTER HEALTH FACTS

- Hunter Health Clinic is the only urban Indian health program in Kansas and the only federally funded community health center in Wichita.

- About 73 percent of its patients don't have insurance. It had 51,721 patient visits in its most recent fiscal year.

- Its main clinic is staffed by two doctors, one dentist and three mid-level practitioners. Students in registered nurse, advanced registered nurse practitioner, dental hygiene and physician assistant programs provide services, as do medical residents.

- About 80 women are seen in the obstetrics clinic each Friday.

- Thirty interpreters are on staff. They speak Spanish, Cambodian, Laotian, Vietnamese and Thai.

- In addition to primary care, Hunter Health provides dental, mental health, substance abuse and social services.

- Hunter Health moved into its current location in 1976. It was named in honor of Jay and Vera Hunter in 1985.

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