

Holland health fair aimed at Hispanics

By Rick Muniz

Sentinel staff writer

A health fair aimed at reaching the adult Hispanic population of Holland will be held Sunday, March 6, at St. Francis de Sales Catholic Church.

Participants will receive free medical screening from 2 to 5 p.m. in the parish hall, 290 Maple Ave.

Virginia Moralez, a registered nurse with the Ottawa County Health Department, said response to the Sunday program by physicians and health specialists has been tremendous.

"This will be a first," Moralez said.

Offering their services free of charge for the day will be P. Piero, D.D.S., providing dental screening; audiologist Jim Walsh of Holland Community Hospital, testing hearing and eyesight; White and White Pharmacy, screening for blood sugar content; the Migrant Health Clinic, measuring blood pressure; and podiatrist Jeff Rewitzer, giving foot examinations.

The results of the tests will be reviewed by Dr. Carmen Soto of the Migrant Health Clinic.

"If we find any problem, we will refer them to their private physician," Moralez said. Those without private physicians can see Soto at the Migrant Health Clinic free of charge.

All adults are invited to take advantage of the free health screening.

Moralez said the fair is targeting Hispanic adults, because many in this population "do not use a physician unless they have a serious illness."

Moralez said "as people get older, many don't realize" they have a problem with loss of hearing or vision.

Many are not aware of the dangers of hypertension and high blood pressure until they result in

major health problems, she said.

Participants can expect to spend an hour at the fair, should they choose to visit every health screening station available.

The tests in themselves take very little time, Moralez said.

For instance, the blood test for blood sugar content lasts about 60 seconds. Screening of urine samples takes 30 seconds to a minute.

Blood pressure, teeth checkups and foot exams also are finished quickly.

Participants need not bring anything "but themselves," said Moralez. Participants will be asked to sign a consent form to have the tests conducted.

El Centro Latino of Holland will offer information on counseling services and assistance for the elderly. More information on counseling will be made available by Child and Family Services of Holland.

Holland Community Hospital staff also will offer a booth describing hospital services, including an interpretation program.

The brochures, information and forms provided at the fair will be printed in English and Spanish.

Students in the Hope College Upward Bound program have volunteered to look after children while parents go through the health screening process. The children will be treated to films and cartoons demonstrating proper health techniques.

The Guadalupanas of St. Francis will provide punch and cookies during the event.

Adult Health Fair '83 is sponsored by the Ottawa County Health Department and the Migrant and Rural Community Health Association, in conjunction with St. Francis de Sales Catholic Church.

For more information, contact the Migrant Health Clinic, 399-0200, or El Centro Latino, 396-3391.