

Migrant health center opens in Eau Claire



NEW CENTER — The Dolores Solis Migrant Health Center recently opened in Eau Claire and will be staffed by doctors from two different areas.

EAU CLAIRE — "As a relatively new member of the Eau Claire Community, MARCHA looks forward to developing a closer link to the village of Eau Claire and working with them to better meet the health needs of the migrant and residential population," said Bobbi Ryder, executive director of MARCHA, about the Dolores Solis Migrant Health Center which recently opened on Main Street in Eau Claire.

MARCHA, the Migrant and Rural Community Health Association, previously known as Berrien, Cass and Van Buren Health Services, opened the health center on June 1.

The health center is a private/non-profit organization and is funded by the Bureau of Community Health Services, a division of the Department of Health and Human Services.

Ryder said the clinic is seasonal and its primary function is to serve the needs of area migrants.

She said the center is designed

to provide physicians on a seasonal basis because of the influx of people during the harvest season, offer a bi-lingual staff, and to aid with financial difficulties of migrants.

Some of the services provided by the health center include primary health care, limited medication and drugs, social work services, W.I.C. programs, nursing outreach teams and referrals to other care providers.

Ryder said the health center operates on a fee for service basis. There is a minimum charge for all services offered. The health center also uses a sliding fee scale on the assessed income of migrants to use grant funds based on migrant eligibility.

Ryder said the health center has the intention of opening on a year-round basis and anticipates offering emergency services for residents, but have not yet implemented any plans.

Doctors are provided on a rotating schedule from the University of Michigan and from

the Southwestern Michigan Physicians Corporation on a part-time basis.

Ryder listed one of the center's limitations as not having the same doctor on a day-in, day-out basis. She said that was one reason for being slow to open services for residents.

The clinic is open Monday and Wednesday from 10 a.m. to 9 p.m. and Tuesday, Thursday, and Friday from 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. Clinic supervisor is Zully Westrate, RN.

The center serves approximately 75 patients a day and employs seven full-time positions and five part-time positions.

The Dolores Solis Migrant Health Center in Eau Claire is one of three facilities in the state operated by MARCHA. The Holland Migrant Health Center, Holland, is open year-round and serves only migrants.

The Bangor Health Center, Bangor, also operates on a yearly basis and serves both residents and migrants.

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