

Gallup to get new medical clinic

Written by By Beth Blakeman Associate Editor
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Two phase project for 2021

University of New Mexico Health Sciences Center is opening a medical clinic in Gallup with the first phase focused largely on women's specialties.

The clinic will be located at 205 E. Nizhoni Ave., Suite 3 in the same building as HME Specialists LLC.

Cynde Tagg, the executive director of Ambulatory Care Services at University of New Mexico Hospitals, who has been at UNM for 31 years, described it as a "cavernous office space with a cement floor."

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She told the *Gallup Sun* Oct. 27 that this “first clinic of its kind in the state” will have its ceiling lowered and flooring added before the New Mexico Department of Health does its inspection. Paperwork is set to be submitted within the next few days.

The clinic will have four exam rooms, a procedure room and a telemedicine room.

The anchor clinic, which is expected to open in mid-January, is called an mfm clinic, for maternal fetal medicine, specializing in complicated pregnancies.

Tagg says mfm is a sub-specialty of obstetrics-gynecology and this clinic will include adult cardiology, pediatric cardiology, and pediatric gastrointestinal services, as well as uro-gynecology and gyn-oncology, but there will be no chemo given at the clinic.

“We come to Gallup already, one to two times a week. So we know that there’s a need there,” she said.

“We have a person who is our business development officer. We knew there was an mfm need. We had this officer look at data to see what other specialty areas [we might address],” she explained.

Tagg said the clinic will use the same COVID-safe practices and guidelines as other medical establishments.

“All of our employees are screened every day before coming through the doors,” she said.

The only visitors will be people offering ambulatory or cognitive help to patients.

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As for the hospitals in the area, Tagg said UNM is not looking to poach employees, but is interested in working together.

“Last week we contacted radiology [departments] of both hospitals and discussed how they do referrals. That’s one collaboration I can think of,” she said.

Phase two of the clinic is on the calendar to open in July, at the start of the hospital’s fiscal year. It will offer treatment of dermatology, adult nephrology and vascular conditions.

Tagg says the clinic is not coming to the area to compete with other health facilities, but to offer specialties and provide services that will offset the need for driving from Gallup to Albuquerque.

The clinic will bring its own physicians over from the Albuquerque area, and will create eight Gallup area positions from entry level clerk to nurses and medical assistants.

Already hired are a nursing supervisor, and an office supervisor who is fluent in Navajo.

“We are looking forward to this being an improvement of healthcare services for the people of Gallup,” Tagg stated.

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Associate Editor