

‘Destination Health’

Rehoboth McKinley Christian Hospital will hold The Community Health Fair, May 4 from 10 am-2 pm at the Rio West Mall, 300 West Maloney Avenue in Gallup, in conjunction with the University of New Mexico-Gallup, the New Mexico Cancer Center and the Rio West Mall.

This year’s theme is “Destination Health” and 2019 marks the fair’s thirty-first year. Last year it attracted more than 500 visitors who visited the Rio West Mall to explore a variety of products ranging from traditional vitamins to herbal healthcare remedies offered by vendors.

“We believe that the best way to fight for better health is to be an advocate,” says David Conejo, CEO, RMCHCS. “Through our blood screening for early detection of heart related disease such as diabetes, hypertension and high triglycerides, and having the results available at the fair, we want to help residents of McKinley County take charge of their health.”

Variety of vendors

So far this year 62 vendors have signed up. Many vendors will be offering free product samples and other booth giveaways along with free services, such as blood pressure testing. The

vendors represent a broad variety of healthcare categories such as dental organizations, home healthcare businesses, medical supply services, insurance organizations and more.

Specific organizations with booths include the New Mexico Health Department, whose members will answer questions about its WIC program, the New Mexico School for the Deaf, American Health Services, Northern Apache County Health District, Alzheimer's Association of New Mexico, Gallup Fire Department, Boys and Girls Club of Gallup, and Gallup Big Brothers and Sisters.

Navajo Organizations

Navajo Nation and other Native American organizations will address specific health concerns of constituents. A Native American organization will conduct outreach on tuberculosis and the Navajo Birth Cohort Study will be interviewing candidates for their study on environmental uranium exposure in the Navajo Nation, the first prospective epidemiologic study of pregnancy and neonatal outcomes in a uranium-exposed population. The goal of the study is to better understand the relationship between uranium exposures and birth outcomes and early developmental delays on the Navajo Nation.

The John Hopkins Center of American Indian Health, Native American Health Services and the Gallup Navajo Nation Women and Children Program will also have representatives.

Booths Still Available

"We welcome new vendors and those who exhibited previously to sign-up for a booth. The Community Health Fair is an excellent opportunity for organizations to showcase their services and to hand out brochures and information to families from Gallup, McKinley County and beyond," says Juliana Dooley, RMCH Behavioral Health Collaborative Coordinator.

Dooley welcomes vendors to sign up for a booth before the fair opens, as space is limited. She can be contacted at jdooley@rmchcs.com. Vendors are asked to offer products and services that are directly health-and-wellness-related and offer booth activity or a hands-on display, but

must be a not-for-profit organization. She notes that there will be no cost to booth vendors, but is asking them to supply their own tables and chairs.

Vendor booths will be set up throughout the mall's open areas, mixing with its 45 stores. "We welcome the vendors and participants in this year's annual event and are excited to help residents of Gallup and McKinley County improve their health," says Anita Artalejo, general manager of the Rio West Mall. "With the spring shopping season arriving in Gallup, we invite residents to check out our stores while they check out their health."

Cancer Screens

The New Mexico Cancer Center will have a booth at the fair where they will conduct cancer screen tests. "We have been affiliated with RMCHCS for a number of years for outpatient services such as diagnostics," says Mike Torres, New Mexico Cancer Center Operations Manager, Gallup Cancer Center. "We strongly believe that in a rural state like New Mexico, it is important to make every effort to bring care to patients living at significant distances from major centers."

The New Mexico Cancer Center was opened several years after its Albuquerque facility. NMCC opened a second comprehensive cancer care facility in Gallup, for the first-time bringing cancer care to western New Mexico and the Navajo Nation, saving patients many hours of difficult and often prohibitively expensive travel, that in years past had resulted in many receiving incomplete and inadequate care and poor outcomes.

Blood Sugar Tests

In addition to the New Mexico Cancer Center, the University of New Mexico's Gallup branch will have a booth at the fair attended by approximately 20 student nurses, to check blood sugar levels, to identify health risks such as diabetes. We will be administering simple pinprick tests to obtain a drop of blood for blood sugar levels testing," said Rey Jonathan Lumibao MSN, RN, nursing faculty, UNM-G. Last year, 130-140 blood tests were administered by UNM.

The UNM-Gallup branch has a reciprocal relationship with RMCHCS, in which student nurses perform their nursing clinicals each semester, and often become employed at the hospital as full-time nurses upon graduation.

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