

HMFC provides free healthcare and wellness education to uninsured people living in poverty.



Permanent Home for the Heart Mountain Free Clinic:

1735 Sheridan Avenue, Suite 205.

BY STEPH WEED
WITH DAWN GARRISON
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR AND NETTIE SITZ RN, HMFC





HMFC

Heart Mountain Free Clinic, P.O. Box 1316, Cody, WY 82414



CL: What was the catalyst for moving the clinic out of the hospital?

Dawn: "Oooh that is a good story! We had a donor that came into our office in the Blair buildings telling us that the adjacent two offices were becoming vacant. He then said I have a challenge for you. I will pay for one of these offices for one whole year if you can find a matching donor for the other and then you can move your clinic in here. I am not sure that when that challenge was made he thought we would rise to it but here we are. We did it!"

CL: Are you seeing patients all week now?

Dawn: Yes. The appointments are strictly based on when we can get our volunteer docs in during the week. Most of our medical volunteers are finding it much easier to make time for patients during the day instead of our previous Thursday or Monday evenings only.

CL: What are patients saying about the new digs?

Nettie: A lot of them like the flexibility in appointment times. Being able to come in the morning or afternoon versus 8 pm in the evening is much more convenient. The Docs and nurses have commented that it is beautiful and that they really like the setup.

Dawn: I have heard patients mention that is physically easier to get into the clinic versus walking through the hospital. I think it is also less intimidating and homier.

CODY LIVING



CL: How were you able to furnish these beautiful offices and exam rooms?

Dawn: Because of Covid the hospital was closed to the clinic for several months, which prohibited us from seeing patients, but was a blessing in disguise as it made us eligible for a Covid Grant. We used the funds from that grant to pay the rent on the second office space, and purchase supplies like our AED(Automated External Defibrillator), cleansers, and bandages.

Dr. Horton and some board members paid for the flooring, Nettie's dad and her sons Alex and Tommy, plus my husband Scott laid it, and all of the artwork and furniture were

donated by our wonderful Cody neighbors. It still amazes me how generous people can be. We are so very thankful.

CL: Because of the new hours of availability are you seeing more patients?

Dawn: We are now seeing more patients, but the amount of patients we see still depends on our healthcare professional volunteers.

CL: Are there any items still on your wish list?

Nettie: Rent for next year would be amazing!


Dawn: Just the time of doctors and funds to continue to serve the medical needs of our neighbors.

CL: What new things do you see happening for HMFC in the New Year?

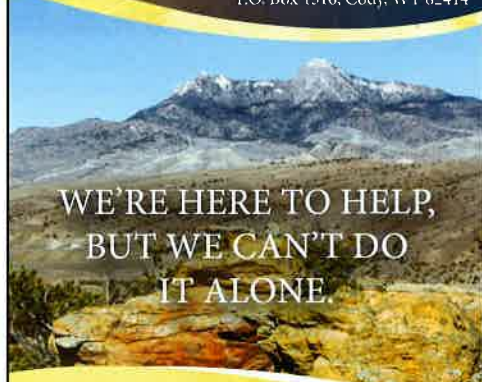
Dawn: Truly I see now that we have our own space, it gives us more credibility. We have been around for 12 years but with a brick and mortar location, I think it gives us more accessibility for the people that need us.

Last year (2020) we saw 161 unique patients with over 300 visits. If you look at people living in poverty in Park County the number is over 3,000 so we are clearly not serving everyone in need of free medical services. That said, I guess what I am seeing is HMFC serving many more patients in 2021.

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WE'RE HERE TO HELP,
BUT WE CAN'T DO
IT ALONE.

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