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New Grant Winner to Expand Primary Care in Wyoming

Grants from the United States Health Resources and Service Administration will create a new health center in Powell

The Powell Health Care Coalition was notified earlier this week that they are a recipient of a New Access Point Grant from the United States Health Resources and Service Administration (HRSA). This grant allows the coalition to open a federally-qualified health center (FQHC) in Powell to serve Park County.

“We’ve been working on this since 2011, when a small group of people came together in Powell who were interested in the health center model of care,” said the coalition’s project director, Bill Baker.

Two years ago the Powell Health Care Coalition received a state grant under Wyoming’s Primary Support Act. This grant provided the necessary funds to conduct research and prepare the application for HRSA’s nationally-competitive New Access Point Grant. The findings from the research demonstrated the need for a new health center.

“We were able to identify between 8,000-9,000 people in Park County who lack access to primary care to meet basic health needs,” explained Baker.

Baker credits the Wyoming Department of Health Office of Rural Health, the state legislature and Governor Matt Mead for making the new health center possible.

“If we wouldn’t have gotten the state grant, we wouldn’t be talking about a new health center today. I have to keep pinching myself to make sure it’s real.”

The new health center will open on or before September 1 in its downtown Powell location at 128 North Bent Street. It will offer primary care to start, dental and behavioral health services added in the coming months.

FQHCs act as part of Wyoming’s safety net for health care. This means that FQHCs provide services to patients who do not have access to health care. Many of these patients include the uninsured who would otherwise resort to using the emergency room.

Currently there are seven federally-qualified health centers in Wyoming that operate in nine locations. For more information on Wyoming FQHCs and the services they provide, visit www.wypca.org.

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