

Overnight urgent care to return

IHC to fill hours at night; People's Health Clinic to expand service

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Of the Record staff

Overnight urgent care is making a return to Park City.

In an announcement made by Mike Andrews, chair of the People's Health Clinic board, Intermountain HealthCare (IHC) will partner with Park City Healthcare, Inc. to offer urgent health care, 24 hours a day/365 days a year.

In addition, both IHC and Park City Healthcare are working with the People's Health Clinic to expand health care services to the uninsured.

Instead of building a new 24-hour facility to provide round-the-clock urgent care, IHC decided to cover the night hours at the existing Park City Family Health and Urgent Care Clinic on Bonanza Drive, said Randall Probst, IHC representative who also heads the Summit County hospital project. The IHC Summit After Hours Clinic will operate each night from 9 p.m. to 8 a.m.

The opening date is expected to be in mid-January.

Park City Family Health will lease clinic space to IHC, according to Joe Ferriter, doctor and president of Park City Healthcare, Inc. which operates the Park City Family Health and Urgent Care Clinic. A final agreement, however, has not yet been signed.

As a part of the agreement to open the 24-hour care facility on Bonanza Drive, the 12 doctors at Park City Family Health have agreed to commit to at least one night shift a month and to cover any

Clinic to serve all in need

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other shifts not staffed by other area doctors.

IHC has been working for more than a year on the challenge of involving healthcare providers from the area in the plans for 24-hour care, said Probst. He added that IHC's focus is to use local providers and not bring in doctors from outside the community. Healthcare providers were invited by IHC and the hospital board to meet and share their interest in working on this project.

Reactions have been mixed and varied, said Probst, and the company is currently in the process of signing agreements with doctors.

The same services that are available during the day will be available overnight, including X-rays and routine laboratory work, said Probst.

IHC is also committed to working with individuals covered by most health insurance companies at the overnight clinic, as well as the uninsured. Destination visitors will also be able to use the clinic and no additional fees would be added.

"Anyone who needs care will be able to receive it," said Probst.

There are also no current

plans to have patients sign a binding arbitration agreement at the clinic site or in Summit County, said Probst.

Mandatory binding arbitration is a controversial new requirement that forces patients to forgo legal remedies against their insurance company. It is currently being implemented by IHC in Salt Lake County and Bountiful.

IHC originally agreed to invest \$150,000 to start the 24-hour urgent care service, and that will not change, said Probst. IHC is anticipating that the volume of patients would not cover the expense. Probst could not attach a dollar figure because of the changes due to the addition of the People's Health Clinic services.

Reaching out to the uninsured

PHC will begin to offer two family clinics at the overnight facility to the area's uninsured residents. The clinics will be held on Monday and Thursday nights from 9 to 11 p.m. in lieu of the current Monday-only clinics. The Wednesday prenatal clinics will still be held in the PHC van at least until mid-summer, said Donna McAleer, executive director of PHC.

PHC is still working on agree-

ments with IHC and Park City Family Health to share the expenses incurred by using the facility, said PHC's Andrews.

PHC patients will still pay the same prices as they currently pay, said McAleer. The non-profit organization also plans to expand services to four nights of family clinics and two nights of prenatal clinics as well as expand its educational mission.

PHC will continue to do the initial screening for uninsured patients at their Iron Horse Drive site, but the details are still being arranged, said McAleer. The PHC changes are expected to begin on Feb. 1.

The van where clinics are currently held would still be used for the prenatal clinics, but additional or different uses are still in discussion, said Andrews.

Putting together the details of this interim step has not held back plans for the hospital, said Probst. IHC has hired a firm with local expertise that is doing an analysis of sites. Results and a decision could come next month. IHC hopes to hold the ground breaking next year and will be prepared to begin construction as soon as the plans work through the county planning department.