IN THE NEWS

Providence VA Expands Services in Renovated Outpatient Clinic in New Bedford

NEW BEDFORD, MASS – The New Bedford mayor cut the ribbon for the Providence VA Medical Center’s newly-renovated Community-Based Outpatient Clinic here during an event Monday, December 22, 2014.

Located at 175 Elm Street, the clinic provides a local primary health care option for Veterans in southeastern Massachusetts and nearby areas of Rhode Island.

“The improvements here are excellent examples of the VA's commitment to provide high-quality, accessible health care to Veterans in our community,” said DR. SUSAN MACKENZIE, director of the Providence VA Medical Center.

The facility was renovated beginning in September 2013 to expand services and improve patient access. Improvements to the facility included adding a physical therapy clinic, women’s health exam rooms, additional exam rooms and restrooms, renovated space for home-based primary care support, and an enhanced reception area where customer service can assist up to four Veterans at once. Climate control and security systems were also upgraded, as were information technology services, enhancing telemedicine capabilities. In all, the $3.5 million project added 2,000 square feet to the building, for a new total of 11,965 square feet.

HEALTH Accepting Applications for Health Professional Loan Repayment Program

PROVIDENCE – The Rhode Island Department of Health [HEALTH] has announced that the 2015 Rhode Island Health Professional Loan Repayment Program application cycle is open through February 13, 2015. The program offers health education loan repayments to eligible health professionals who serve in a variety of disciplines, including primary care, dentistry, and mental health, that have made a commitment to practice in under-served communities in Rhode Island.

The Health Professional Loan Repayment Board will review and evaluate all applications received from healthcare professionals and sites to determine program eligibility based on regulations and the availability of funding. A total of $350,000 has been allocated to the State of Rhode Island for eight to 10 awards, which are expected to be announced by the end of April 2015.

“This program is designed to address health disparities by improving access to care in under-served communities,” said JANE A. HAYWARD, president and CEO of the Rhode Island Health Center Association.

Information about how to apply for loan repayment assistance, individual and site eligibility requirements, and designations of under-served areas (as defined by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Health Resources and Services Administration) can be found at http://www.health.ri.gov/grants/healthprofessionalloanrepayment.

From left, Dr. Heather Mackey-Fowler, Dr. Mark Zullo, Dr. Gloria Sun, and Dr. Hana Hagos participate in a ribbon-cutting ceremony to celebrate the opening of the South County Primary Care Family and Internal Medicine office at South County Hospital in November. The facility officially opened in September.