



Community Health Services of Addison County

OPEN DOOR CLINIC

Web- <http://www.opendoormidd.org>

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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For more information:
Julie Arel, 388-0137

OPEN DOOR CLINIC MOVING TO PORTER CAMPUS

MIDDLEBURY – The Open Door Clinic is on the move. The non-profit clinic, which provides primary care services for the uninsured, has shared offices with Champlain Valley Cardiovascular Associates for the past five years. When the cardiovascular group closed, the clinic was forced to find new accommodations. Porter Hospital stepped in and provided donated space in a modular unit for the clinic.

"For many years, Porter Hospital has been a tireless supporter of the Open Door Clinic and a strong partner in the community for ensuring access to healthcare for the uninsured," states Julie Arel, Executive Director of the clinic. "We were very anxious when we learned of CVCA's closure since it is difficult to find administrative and clinical space that we could afford on a small budget." The clinic relies on limited state and federal funding as well as private donations from foundations and individuals for financial support.

The partnering of Porter and the Open Door Clinic is a perfect solution to this difficult situation. Arel states that a majority of the clinic's volunteer medical providers are Porter employees. This includes most of the physicians and nurses who volunteer each week for the clinics in Middlebury and Vergennes. Additionally, the space for Thursday clinics in Vergennes is already donated by Porter Hospital.

Being on the hospital campus brings new opportunities for closer collaboration. "Even before we moved, we began to explore new ways to collaborate with Porter Hospital," explains Arel. The clinic hopes to provide more support to the uninsured patients who may seek care in the Emergency Department because of a lack of a medical home. "We will be able to provide some of the follow up care more appropriate for a primary care office than an Emergency Room and can simultaneously work with the patients to help them become enrolled in Green Mountain Care, the state's health insurance program."

The Open Door Clinic has been serving Addison County residents who lack health insurance since its incorporation in 1991. The Clinic provides primary care for adults who are uninsured or underinsured that meet financial guidelines. Over 840 patients received medical care in 2010. Recent expansion of services include quarterly Diabetes Clinics and bi-monthly Women's Health Clinics. The Open Door Clinic operates by appointment only on Tuesday evenings in Middlebury and every other Thursday evening in Vergennes.

"We are not looking forward to the move itself," laughs Arel. "But we are excited to be settling into our new home. Inevitably as I meet with concerned individuals in Addison County, all note the strong community involvement of Porter Hospital and are particularly gratified to know of Porter's long-standing support for our clinic."

The clinic will close for the week of March 28 and will reopen for patient care by appointment in the clinical modular unit at 110 Porter Drive on Tuesday, April 5. Administrative offices will be located in the unit at 100 Porter Drive. Individuals seeking information about the Open Door Clinic should call their administrative office at 388-0137.

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