

Shasta Community Health Center Brings Advanced and Compassionate Care to Northern California Families

The new C. Dean Germano Women's, Babies' & Children's Center at Shasta Community Health Center in Redding offers support for low-income families and mothers braving high-risk pregnancies and provides health care for children facing physical, emotional or mental hurdles in one easy-to-access location.

J. Brandon Thornock, chief executive officer of Shasta Community Health Center, explained how this new center is transforming the lives of families by providing much needed low-cost maternity and postpartum services in the North State community. "At our center we follow the mother through her pregnancy and postpartum period. We can then also provide newborn care in our Pediatric department in the same building," he says. "A mother might come in for her postpartum appointment and then also have a newborn appointment for her child on the same day." The center does not currently have birthing facilities.

WOMEN'S, BABIES' & CHILDREN'S CENTER ADDRESSES SHASTA COUNTY'S GROWTH

The new center, which opened March 25, was created to streamline health care services, making it easier for families to get the support they need in one space. The former facility faced challenges in meeting the increasing demand for services, hindered by the physical limitations of the former locations. "Our maternity services were originally located at 1900 Railroad Avenue. Our pediatric services were located at our main location and our vision services were offered at our Enterprise location," says Brandon.

The new center, located on the main campus of Shasta Community Health on 1000 Placer Street in Redding, is equipped with a lab draw station for necessary lab work throughout pregnancy and ultrasound imaging facilities and is conveniently located across the street from an in-house CVS pharmacy, ensuring easy access 9▶

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All photos by Betsy Walton



to prescriptions and health care products. The establishment of this dedicated space is a strategic move, according to Brandon, to address and fulfill the growing health care needs of the community and is part of a broader initiative to recruit and develop the workforce required to effectively provide these essential health care services.

DESIGNED TO SUPPORT FAMILIES IN NEED

The center is especially tailored to support low-income families. “Shasta Community Health Center is a Federally Qualified Health Center (FQHC) which means we receive federal funding to provide discounts to low-income families and those who are uninsured,” Brandon says. “These discounts are offered on a sliding fee scale with eligibility based on income and family size. We also have Certified Enrollment Counselors on-site who can help with enrollment in Covered California or Medi-Cal. There are several income-based programs available for pregnant women or women needing reproductive health services.”

Along with serving low-income families, the center offers a comprehensive approach to care that acknowledges underlying issues that affect well-being, such as helping patients grappling with food insecurity, facing addiction challenges or dealing with mental, behavioral or emotional issues. Brandon says, “We try to address as many challenges as possible - including socioeconomic - that a patient may be experiencing when they are present for care with us. This holistic approach helps our patients feel better supported and to experience better outcomes.”

ONGOING PROFESSIONAL TRAINING PROVIDES EXPERT CARE

At the maternity center, every clinician has undergone specialized training tailored to their specific area of expertise, a standard that extends to pediatric providers at the pediatric center and the optometrist at the vision center. These dedicated professionals engage in ongoing education to stay at the forefront of the latest practices and advancements within their respective fields. This commitment ensures that patients receive not only expert care but also the most current and effective treatments available.

“The core mission of the new center is to provide high-quality health care to the members of our community with compassion and understanding,” 10 ►

Jan Snodgrass, LVN puts young patients at ease with her friendly smile.



Hayley Walker, medical scribe and Dr. Thomas Perry, MD work as a team to provide professional care to maternity patients.



Elena Morrissey, visit coordinator and Jessica Conlin, lead visit coordinator in pediatrics work together to make children feel welcome.

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Shasta Community Health Center

says Brandon. The facility is proud to offer comprehensive maternity services, including pregnancy testing, prenatal and postpartum care and specialized support for high-risk pregnancies. To assist expecting and new mothers, the center provides breastfeeding support through a Certified Lactation Consultant RN and nutrition guidance from a registered dietitian (RD). A diabetes support program is available for managing gestational, Type 1 and Type 2 diabetes.

A HOLISTIC APPROACH TO FAMILY MEDICAL CARE

The center also offers prenatal and childbirth education classes, behavioral health services, medication-assisted treatment (MAT) and on-site lab and ultrasound imaging to ensure a holistic approach to maternity care. Additionally, vision services are accessible to everyone, featuring routine and comprehensive eye exams alongside affordable frame and lens packages. For younger family members, pediatric services cover primary and preventative care for children aged 0-18, including well child exams, immunizations, behavioral health services and specialty clinics to ensure comprehensive health care for the entire family from the earliest stages of life.

“While we primarily serve those with Partnership Healthplan of California as their primary insurance, if you are prone to a high-risk pregnancy, please know that we have all the resources available to help support you through your pregnancy and beyond,” Brandon says.

Go to shastahealth.org to find out more about the center. ■



Sarah Kirby is a mother and educator who believes that affordable and high-quality health care are cornerstones of vibrant communities.



Kristin Burks, lead visit coordinator and Angela de la Cruz, center manager in Maternity welcome expectant moms to the new maternity center at Shasta Community Health.