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WELLONE EXPANDING PASCOAG MEDICAL FACILITY

100-year old Community Health Center to construct 2,700 sq. ft. addition to serve more local residents

PASCOAG, RI – WellOne Primary Medical and Dental Care (formerly Northwest Community Health Care and Bayside Family Healthcare) directors and staff joined today with U.S. Senators Jack Reed and Sheldon Whitehouse as well as other local officials and invited guests to celebrate the groundbreaking of the medical facility expansion in Pascoag. The project is due in part to the extraordinary efforts by Senators Reed and Whitehouse to secure a federal earmark of \$200,000 as part of the Fiscal Year 2010 Consolidated Appropriations Act, over \$300,000 in federal economic stimulus money from the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 (ARRA), a \$35,000 grant from the June Rockwell Levy Foundation, and a low-interest ARRA loan from the United States Department of Agriculture.



*photo caption: Jonathan L. Healy, USDA; Sen .Whitehou;, Sen. Reed;
Kimberly Deschamps, WellOne Staff; Peter J. Bancroft*

“Community health centers continue to play a vital role in our health care delivery system, and this federal funding will enable WellOne to accommodate increased demand, while improving quality and comprehensive care for patients,” said Whitehouse.

The original WellOne medical building was constructed during the 1950’s. An “L” shaped addition was constructed during the early 1990’s and the entire interior of the facility was renovated and modernized. Upon completion of the 1990’s renovations, the facility served approximately 2,500 patients per annum. More than 9,500 patients will receive services at WellOne during 2010.

The existing facility is inadequate to accommodate either present primary care operations and related support services, or the increasing number of patients WellOne serves each year. Additional medical exam rooms are needed in order to address the unmet demand in the community for services. This project will renovate existing space in the medical facility and create four additional medical exam rooms, a modernized patient check-in/checkout area, and additional staff and storage space through the construction of a 2,700 square foot addition.

The project will also include an elevator, which will create handicap access to the existing second level of the dental facility.

The current economy has challenged individual and families to afford quality health care. In 2009, WellOne provided approximately \$836,000 of charity care to low-income patients of the health center, which represents an increase of 31% over the prior year. In addition, the number of uninsured patients that WellOne has treated increased by 88% in comparison to the previous calendar year. Eighteen percent of WellOne's patients have no health insurance while 26% have Medicaid coverage. Many residents would forego healthcare were it not for WellOne, and as the only facility in the area that accepts any patient, regardless of ability to pay, and an unlimited number of uninsured, underinsured, and Medicaid patients, this expansion/renovation would allow WellOne to better accommodate need in the community. "As the needs of the local community have evolved over the last century, WellOne has adapted our focus to best serve the citizens at any given time", explained Peter J. Bancroft, WellOne's President and CEO. "In the last year alone, we have provided high quality primary medical and dental care as well as behavioral health services to over 13,000 patients of all ages and incomes for a total of nearly 50,000 visits. The planned physical expansion of our Pascoag site is critical to our ability to remain the Provider of Choice for thousands of Rhode Islanders for years to come."

"This smart federal investment will help WellOne expand its Pascoag facility to meet growing demand from patients in need of quality, affordable health care. I commend the doctors, nurses, and staff at WellOne for providing outstanding care for every patient who comes through their doors," said Reed, a member of the Appropriations and Health committees.

Commemorative Brick Fundraising Campaign Announced

Be a part of history! In celebration of a century of serving the residents of Burrillville, WellOne is kicking off a commemorative brick fundraising campaign in conjunction with the medical facility expansion. Purchase a brick in the name of a past or present patient or citizen and claim your place in WellOne's and the town's next 100 years. Look for upcoming details on how to get your brick on our website (www.welloneri.org) or contact Katie Franklin at 401-285-5153 for further information.

About WellOne Primary Medical and Dental Care

Established in 1909, WellOne is the oldest nonprofit community health center in Rhode Island, was the first rural health clinic in the nation, and historically has served as a pioneer in public health initiatives including its groundbreaking immunization and chronic disease management programs as well as a commitment to oral health care that dates back to the establishment of dental clinics in the 1920s.

WellOne's mission is to provide high quality primary medical and dental care to the residents of the communities that it serves. WellOne operates sites in Pascoag, Foster, and North Kingstown serving more than 13,000 patients and treating residents from every city/town in the state but one. In addition to primary medical and dental care, the organization provides behavioral health, mammography, and bone density scanning services. The organization offers services on a sliding fee scale to qualifying uninsured patients and operates a discount pharmacy program in collaboration with CVS.