



NORTHWEST
Community Health Care

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**NORTHWEST COMMUNITY HEALTH CARE
EXPANDS ACCESS TO QUALITY DENTAL CARE FOR WESTERN RI
AND ANNOUNCES NEW ORGANIZATION NAME**

National Health Center week celebrated in ribbon-cutting ceremony



FOSTER, RI – In conjunction with National Health Center week, Northwest Community Health Care directors and staff joined with U.S. Senator Jack Reed and Lieutenant Governor Elizabeth Roberts as well as other local officials to celebrate the opening of their new dental facility in Foster, the only one in the area. The Foster office, the third location operated by Northwest, first opened for primary care services in 2008.

“I commend Northwest Community Health Center’s dedicated staff for providing quality dental care to more families, enabling them to live healthier lives. When dental problems go untreated, they can develop into more severe, and more expensive problems. Northwest provides quality, preventative care,” said U.S. Senator Jack Reed, a member of the Appropriations Committee who secured \$100,000 in federal funding for the program. “This new facility will help expand access to dental health care for those who need it most.”

Lieutenant Governor Elizabeth Roberts added, “Oral health has been a leading issue for me since I was a state legislator, and today as lieutenant governor is something I care deeply about. Dental health is an important facet of overall health but, unfortunately, is often overlooked. The opening of this facility will bring much-needed oral health care to the community and I commend Northwest Community Health for continuing to make quality health care accessible to all regardless of the ability to pay.”

“The opening of this clinic represents the culmination of a tremendous amount of hard work, dedication and collaboration of so many people in our community,” said Congressman Jim Langevin, who helped secure

federal funding for the facility, in a statement. “For 100 years, Northwest has played an enormously important role in providing health care to the uninsured and underserved of our communities. And I can’t think of a more appropriate time to expand the reach of these critical services in our state. It is crucial, now more than ever, that we reaffirm our commitment to providing everyone with access to health care that they both require and deserve.”

Responding to Community Need

Recognizing that many Foster-area patients were unable to travel to their Pascoag location to obtain care, Northwest took proactive steps to research the needs of the community by conducting comprehensive surveys of Foster-area residents in 2005. The surveys concluded that many residents either do not seek preventive primary and dental care or need to travel significant distances to obtain these services. Surveys indicated more than 55 percent of Foster residents would seek services at the health center were one to be established in the community. Northwest began the search for a location in order to respond to the need.

In September 2008, Northwest’s Foster facility opened at 142A Danielson Pike on Route 6 to provide primary medical care and other support services. As of August 17th, Northwest will officially welcome dental patients to this location. This site has five dental chairs, two dentists, and a dental hygienist. Appointments are available Mondays & Wednesdays, 8:30 am – 5:00 pm and Tuesdays & Thursday, 9:30 am – 6:00 pm. The practice will open completely paperless with full digital x-ray. This will be Northwest’s first foray into the world of electronic health records.

A Dedicated Servant to the Community Honored

At the ceremony, Northwest honored the late Tom J. Wachtel, M.D. a beloved local physician, a member of Northwest’s staff and a committed community member. Dr. Wachtel participated in the launching of Northwest’s Foster facility last fall and treated thousands of patients with wit and compassion before his recent passing in June.



Northwest is now WellOne!

Northwest also announced its new organization name, WellOne.

“In our 100 years of serving Rhode Islanders, Northwest has continuously evolved in response to the changing needs of our community as reflected in our mission and our name,” said Peter Bancroft, President and CEO of Northwest Community Health Care. “WellOne denotes our commitment to achieving the highest attainable

level of physical, psychological and social well-being by providing preventive care for all - the individual and family as well as the community - through health and wellness in addition to treatment.”

The name change also represents a unifying of the organization under a common banner. Along with Northwest’s recent expansion into Foster, in 2008 it also merged with Bayside Family Healthcare, a nonprofit community health center serving the North Kingstown vicinity since 1977. These actions expanded the organization’s service area to encompass nine Rhode Island communities.

About Northwest Community Health Care

Northwest Community Health Care, established in 1909, 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 ground-breaking immunization and chronic disease management programs. Northwest’s mission is to provide high quality primary medical and dental care to the residents of the communities that it serves. Northwest operates sites in Pascoag, Foster and North Kingstown and serves more than 13,000 patients of these communities and the surrounding towns of Glocester, Smithfield, Scituate, West Greenwich, East Greenwich, and Exeter. 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.