

## Coast Community Health Center grows to meet community need



SEPTEMBER 03, 2015 6:00 AM

**BANDON** — With the many changes it's undergone, it's time to take a fresh look at Coast Community Health Center.

Coast Community Health Center opened its doors as Bandon Community Health Center in 2010 and earned a Federally Qualified Health Center grant in 2013 to expand services for patients in south Coos and north Curry counties. Moving to the larger facility at the Bandon Professional Center in 2014 was the first step.

In the last two years, the health center has recruited new staff to round out its health team and bring additional services to north Curry County residents. The group cut the ribbon at their new community outreach office in downtown Port Orford in August.

Health center visitors will meet new staff in every department: patient services at the front desk, administrative staff, nurse and medical assistants in the exam rooms. Richard Standiford, Licensed Clinical Social Worker, now works with the primary providers to bring education, counseling and skills

training so patients can manage their mental well-being.

Helen Thompson is one of four new community outreach workers.

Thompson has worked with a variety of public and nonprofit organizations, including the Women's Safety Resource Center for Coos County. As part of the health team, Thomson helps patients make the most of local health resources and goes the extra mile so patients can be well and stay well, according to CCHC.

"As a community health outreach worker, it's my job to identify essential services for each patient, especially those living with or recovering from illness. We're here to help, whether you need a core service such as senior nutrition, housing, or a temporary dog walker for the furry extension of your family," Thompson said. "It's my job, and I love it!"

### **A timely mission**

In 2009, 65 volunteer community members organized to create a health center committed to high-quality primary health care for everyone, whether privately or publicly insured, or without

insurance.

The idea was to involve more residents in preventative health care, explained John Logan. Logan was one of the first health center volunteers. He recently retired as the center's board chairman.

The group's action was timely. While the number of health care and social assistance businesses in Oregon has steadily increased in the last decade, the number in Coos and Curry counties has dropped.

Since 2010, the health center has welcomed new patients. And, staff members work together with patients to remove obstacles that may limit their access to preventative care.

Logan notes that household income isn't the only potential barrier. Working adults may only be able to schedule appointments after work, so the health center offers evening appointments. The health center coordinates with local transit companies for those who need transportation to appointments at the health center or with a referred specialist.

Residents in north Curry County have two options to connect with the Coast Community Health Center team close to home. Port Orford/Langlois School District students and families can schedule appointments at Pacific High School during the school year. Staff at the new outreach office in Port Orford provide health insurance enrollment and wellness resources year-round.

### **Open house Sept. 19**

Everyone's invited to the Coast Community Health Center Open House from 11 a.m.-2 p.m. Saturday, Sept. 19.

Drop by the open house to see Bandon's local community health center in action. Tour the facility, enjoy refreshments and live music. The health center will give away three bikes — sign up for free to win either a child's, woman's or man's bike from South Coast Bicycles.

The event is free and open to the public. For more information, call 541-347-2529, or visit [coastcommunityhealth.org](http://coastcommunityhealth.org).