

Holmes fitting in well at Coast Community Health Center



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BANDON — Moving to Bandon was like coming home for Dr. Hank Holmes.

Holmes joined Coast Community Health Center's staff full time Oct. 1 as its medical director in the clinic's new facility in the Bandon Professional Center, but he has been seeing patients there since mid-August.

Holmes, 66, replaces former director and founder of the clinic, Dr. Gail McClave, who has started a private practice in the former facility.

Holmes and his family, including three now-grown children, have visited Bandon regularly over the past 35 years, even building two homes on the South Jetty. After obtaining his undergraduate

degree at UC Berkeley and his medical degree at UC San Francisco School of Medicine, Holmes worked in California and Arizona before moving to Oregon in 1979. He cofounded the Oregon Pain Center in Eugene and most recently worked as an urgent care provider and family practitioner in Albany for the past 15 years.

"It's always been a goal to get back here," Holmes said recently. "I figured I'd live out my life here."

Growing up in a small town in Arizona the size of Bandon, Holmes came to his career naturally — his father was the only physician in town, a Harvard-educated surgeon who practiced primary care for 40 years. Two of his brothers out of six siblings also are family physicians, one of them with a federally qualified health center in Susanville, Calif. similar to CCHC, that has grown to address the needs of the community there, something Holmes envisions for this area.

"Right now we need to concentrate on getting this clinic in ship-shape," Holmes said, adding that CCHC has also just hired a community outreach worker, Bandon native Steve Eggert, who will educate the public on how to best access healthcare services in the area. A mental health care worker also will be added in the coming months.

Holmes is currently taking new patients.

"Our mission is to serve all the unmet needs of the community," Holmes said. For example, he said, "There is a huge mental health need here and people who show up at the clinic for whatever reason who might have a mental health need can be seen right here. We will try to give people care in one place, rather than fragmented."

CCHC has already partnered with others in the area for a coordinated care approach. Holmes is grateful for the professional staff at CCHC who all are committed to helping the community.

“There’s not a weak link in the clinic,” he said.

Holmes believes in universal healthcare and that people shouldn’t live their lives in fear of getting sick.

“Political parties may not agree about how to get that done, but I think everyone should have it,” Holmes said. “It would benefit everyone in many ways.”

In his spare time, Holmes enjoys writing poetry and walking the beaches collecting rocks, which he then tumbles and polishes. With his Eagle Scout background, he hopes to possibly start a rock club for local youth.

“I’m always happy on the beach,” he said.