

North Olympic Healthcare Network

Clallam County's Community Health Center



North Olympic Healthcare Network's new Eastside Health Center at 1026 E. First Street



*Growing Responsively to Community Need for
Comprehensive, Integrated, Whole-Person Care*

A message from the CEO



PHOTO BY NOHN

Dr. Maxwell earned his Bachelor of Science in Biology at Seattle University, received his Medical Degree with honors from the University of Washington School of Medicine and completed a family medicine residency through the University of Washington in Spokane. He began his career in 1991 as a partner in Family Medicine of Port Angeles. Maxwell was instrumental in FMPA's transformation to a community health center model in 2015 and was selected as Chief Executive Officer for the newly renamed North Olympic Healthcare Network shortly thereafter. He stepped away from his clinical practice in late 2021 to focus on his responsibilities as CEO. Under his leadership, NOHN has opened three new sites and a Mobile Health Clinic, allowing it to expand access to primary care, behavioral health services and dental care for more than 11,000 new patients.

By Michael S. Maxwell, MD

After nearly two and a half years of planning and nine months of construction, North Olympic Healthcare Network (NOHN) is pleased and excited to announce the opening of our new Eastside Health Center in Port Angeles. As part of a community board-governed not-for-profit Community Health Center, this new service site reflects our continued growth and expansion and furthers our mission "to provide patient-centered, quality-driven, whole-person healthcare services that are accessible to everyone in the community."

As Clallam County's only full-scope Federally Qualified Community Health Center, NOHN is dedicated to providing high-quality health care that is available to anyone regardless of their financial or insurance status. Fees are reduced on a sliding scale based upon household size and income to ensure cost is never a barrier to accessing care, even for the uninsured.

We offer comprehensive health care services within an NCQA-Recognized Patient-Centered Medical Home. This includes full-spectrum Primary Care with family-focused Maternity/OB care, Pediatrics, Adult Medicine, Preventive Care, and minor procedures. We provide dental and oral health care for adults and children through our Family Dental Clinic and counseling services with our licensed Behavioral Health specialists. Care teams include our Clinical Pharmacist and Nurse Care Managers, who provide care and follow up between office visits. We know the best care and outcomes result from coordinated care between these various providers using an integrated clinical care model and a shared health record that facilitates and emphasizes communication.

We also bring care to people where they are with

our Mobile Health Clinic serving PASD students and our Community Health Workers, partnering with PAFD Community Paramedics to reach high-risk patients in their homes or on the streets.

In addition to creating new space to accommodate more Primary Care and Behavioral Health providers, our Eastside Health Center allows us to further expand our range of services to include Eyecare Services for our patients. By adding an exceptional Optometrist to the care team, we expect to improve access to vision screening, enhance detection and management of medical eye disorders and facilitate timely diabetic eye care.

Our new clinic is strategically located on First Street across the street from our Expanded Services Building and conveniently close to nearby hospital lab and diagnostic services. Locating our clinics in the downtown and main commercial corridors near bus routes and primary highways improves transportation access and reflects our desire to be part of the community, literally and figuratively.

The new Eastside Health Center reflects our commitment to grow responsively with the needs of the community. We will continue to work collaboratively with our excellent health care partners to assess the needs of our patients and the community and respond to those needs.

You are invited to tour the new Eastside Health Center and learn more about us during our Open House planned in March. We hope you will see that every one of us at NOHN remains committed to caring for you and caring about you...all of you.

Your partner in good health,

Michael S. Maxwell, MD

Building History

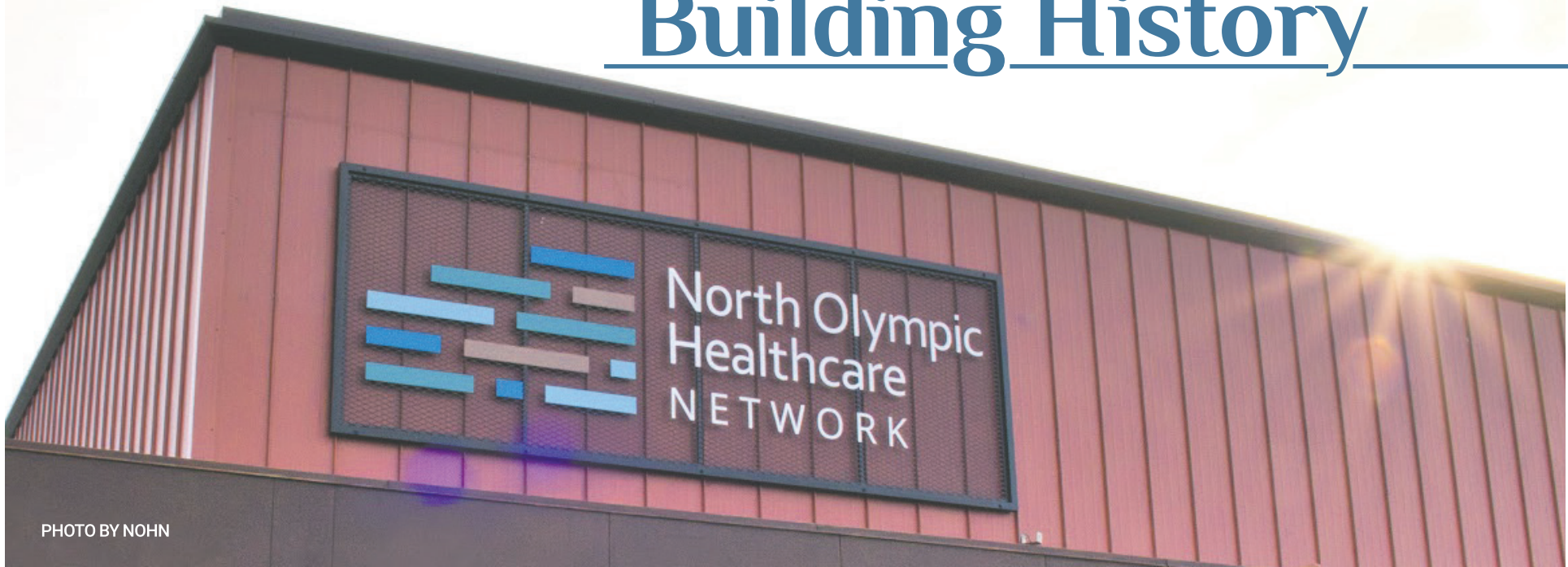


PHOTO BY NOHN

By NOHN Staff

North Olympic Healthcare Network's new Eastside Health Center is located at 1026 E. First Street in Port Angeles. It is the result of an extensive renovation of a long-standing local structure that has lived many lives.

The building was first constructed in the early 1940s as a storage facility, but over the decades has had many different uses and tenants including a real estate office, administrative office, medical supply store, restaurant and most recently an event center fondly known as "Edna's Place."

When NOHN was looking at space options to accommodate their planned expansion in 2020, the 13,000 square foot commercial property was available for purchase and met their needs.

NOHN chose the location due to its proximity to its Expanded Services Building just across the street, nearby access to OMC's lab and diagnostic services and convenient location on a major transportation corridor and bus line.

The renovation project to convert the former restaurant and event space into a state-of-the-art clinical space was extensive, and costly. NOHN engaged Insight Architecture to assist with the design.

While retaining all of the structural posts, the layout accommodated reception and waiting areas, 11 exam rooms, clinical workspaces and

offices, behavioral health and navigation staff spaces and a separate reception area for the Eyecare Center with 3 exam rooms on the first floor.

The second floor, which was used previously for storage, was converted to open office space, a call center, two conference rooms and dedicated Telehealth space.

Neeley Construction, with offices in Sequim, using primarily local subcontractors and workers, was selected as the general contractor, having recently completed high-profile local projects including William Shore Aquatic Center, The Boys & Girls Club and the Port Angeles Food Bank.

The property acquisition was financed through a HRSA Loan Guarantee Program in partnership with Kitsap Bank. The \$3.5 million renovation project nearly doubled from original projected cost due to pandemic-related supply chain impacts, and was funded in part through HRSA grants.

Construction began in May of 2022 and was completed efficiently in just under 9 months to accommodate a February 1 opening date. While the exterior modifications were minimal, the interior was dramatically and beautifully transformed into high quality clinic

space that bears no resemblance to its earlier self.

The pizza oven is indeed gone, although the barrel ceiling and beautiful old tight-grain fir floors of the second floor were preserved and refinished. Trisa & Co. provided consultation on interior surfaces and design to tie things together.

NOHN is thrilled with the end result that will serve as a highly functional and aesthetically pleasing place for both patients and staff. It is also pleased to give this long-storied building a gratifying and impactful ultimate purpose. ■

What is a Community Health Center?

Health Center Program Fundamentals



Serve High Need Areas

- Must serve a high need community or population (e.g., HPSA, MUA/P)



Patient Directed

- Private non-profit or public agency that is governed by a patient-majority community board



Comprehensive

- Provide comprehensive primary care and enabling services (e.g., education, outreach, and transportation services)



No One is Turned Away

- Services are available to all, with fees adjusted based upon ability to pay



Collaborative

- Collaborate with other community providers to maximize resources and efficiencies in service delivery



Accountable

- Meet performance and accountability requirements regarding administrative, clinical, and financial operations



The Health Center Program is authorized under Section 330 of the Public Health Service (PHS) Act.



5. CHCs collaborate with other providers and organizations to maximize resources and efficiencies.

6. And lastly, they are accountable to HRSA for their performance on meeting needs, efficient operations and clinical outcomes.

North Olympic Healthcare Network (NOHN) was founded in 2015 after transforming a longtime private clinic, Family Medicine of Port Angeles, into the CHC model in an attempt to address the community's longstanding health care access needs more effectively. NOHN is the newest of Washington State's 27 CHCs and the only one on the North Olympic Peninsula. Under the CHC model, NOHN has been successful in attracting over 20 new medical providers to the community and has expanded the range of services available to include dental care, behavioral health, and now eye care. It has been able to provide medical home access for an additional 11,500 patients since 2016, now caring for more than 16,000 patients and adding another 100-200 patients each month.

Ensuring community access to high-quality and comprehensive health care is NOHN's primary goal and underlies its mission "to provide patient-centered, quality-driven, whole-person healthcare services that are accessible to everyone in the community." ■

By NOHN Staff

In a nutshell, a Community Health Center (CHC) is a non-profit, community-based and patient-directed organization that serves those with limited access to healthcare. CHCs are sometimes referred to as "Federally Qualified Health Centers" because being a CHC requires a federal designation from the Health Services Resources Administration (HRSA), given only after a rigorous and competitive evaluation process. CHCs retain this special designated status by meeting high quality, service, compliance, and accountability standards on an ongoing basis.

The health center program started in 1964 as part of the Civil Rights Act to help bring health services to medically underserved areas in rural and urban America. The program began with two health centers – in rural Mississippi and inner-city Boston – and has since grown to over 1,400 health centers nationwide. Collectively, health centers serve 30 million people, including 8 million children and 350,000 veterans, and comprise one of the country's largest health systems.

Every CHC is unique and reflects the particular needs of the communities they serve. However, there are six fundamental elements common to all health centers:

- 1.** They all serve communities with high medical needs.
- 2.** Health Centers must provide a comprehensive scope of services that are delivered in a coordinated and integrated manner.
- 3.** They are non-profits governed by a board comprised primarily by patients — so patients have an active role in directing those services.
- 4.** A core requirement and value is that no one is turned away from care and services are available to all, with fees adjusted based upon ability to pay.

The Addition of Eye Care Services to NOHN

By John Huard, OD

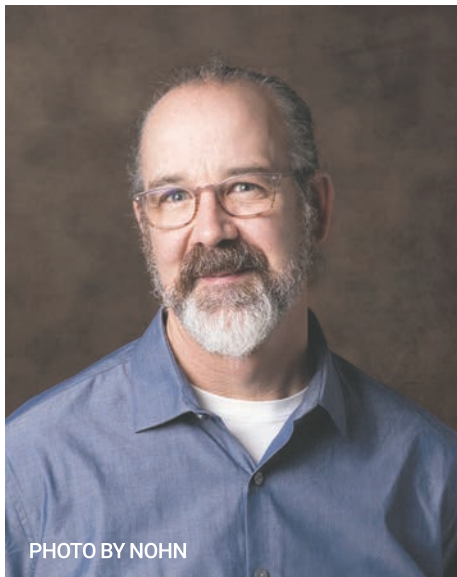


PHOTO BY NOHN

John Huard, OD is North Olympic Healthcare Network's new Eyecare provider, helping to broaden their services for the community.

After 26 years of private practice in Port Angeles, I am incredibly honored and excited to join NOHN and help launch their new eyecare service at the Eastside Health Center.

There is indeed an unmet need for eyecare within their patient population. With NOHN's unique status as a Federally Qualified Health Center (FQHC), it allows them to reach patients in our community that have historically struggled with access to medical, dental, behavioral health and now eyecare services.

Case in point, even within the FQHC model of coordinated care nationally, the vision component has lagged dramatically. For example, in 2021 FQHC offices across America provided 25 million

medical visits, 5 million dental visits, 3 million behavioral health visits, but only a paltry half million eyecare encounters.

Despite the best efforts of the entire local optometry community here on the Olympic Peninsula, we have all noticed an uptick in a lack of access, especially for those patients insured by Medicaid. This gap in shrinking supply and growing demand for eye care has become more acute in the past several years, and we hope to address this problem at the new Eastside Health Center.

Making the move to NOHN along with a support staff of two full time employees, it is my expectation that our team will really be able to make a difference for people who have delayed or avoided eye care thus far, due to lack of access or cost barriers. NOHN specifically focuses on providing services regardless of insurance status or the ability to pay out of pocket if uninsured.

Including eyecare services under one roof in collaboration with a patient's primary care team will also improve outcomes in the management of systemic conditions that manifest in the visual system.

We also will be able to accommodate acute care patients at EHC: such as those suffering eye injuries, infections, sudden vision changes or loss, in addition to many more complex ocular issues — a list of conditions too exhaustive to cover here.



Furthermore, I have a long 25+ year history of referral relationships with a spectrum of subspecialty ophthalmologists for advanced surgical intervention, when needed — both in Clallam County, as well as further afield in Kitsap and

King counties when that travel is warranted.

It is with great enthusiasm that I am joining NOHN in early 2023 and look forward to many years of working in the wonderful new facility they have built. ■

A sneak peek into the future eyecare center.

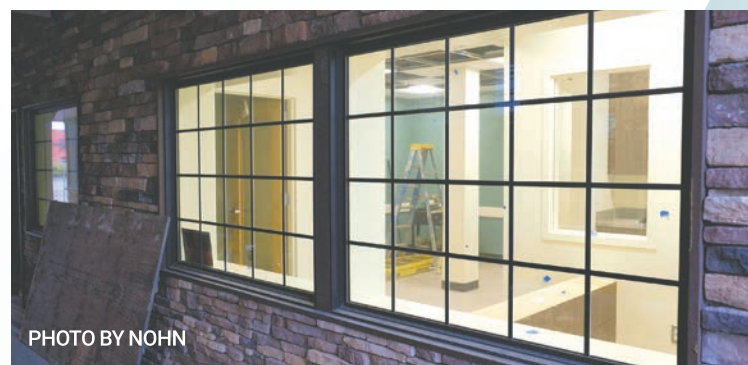


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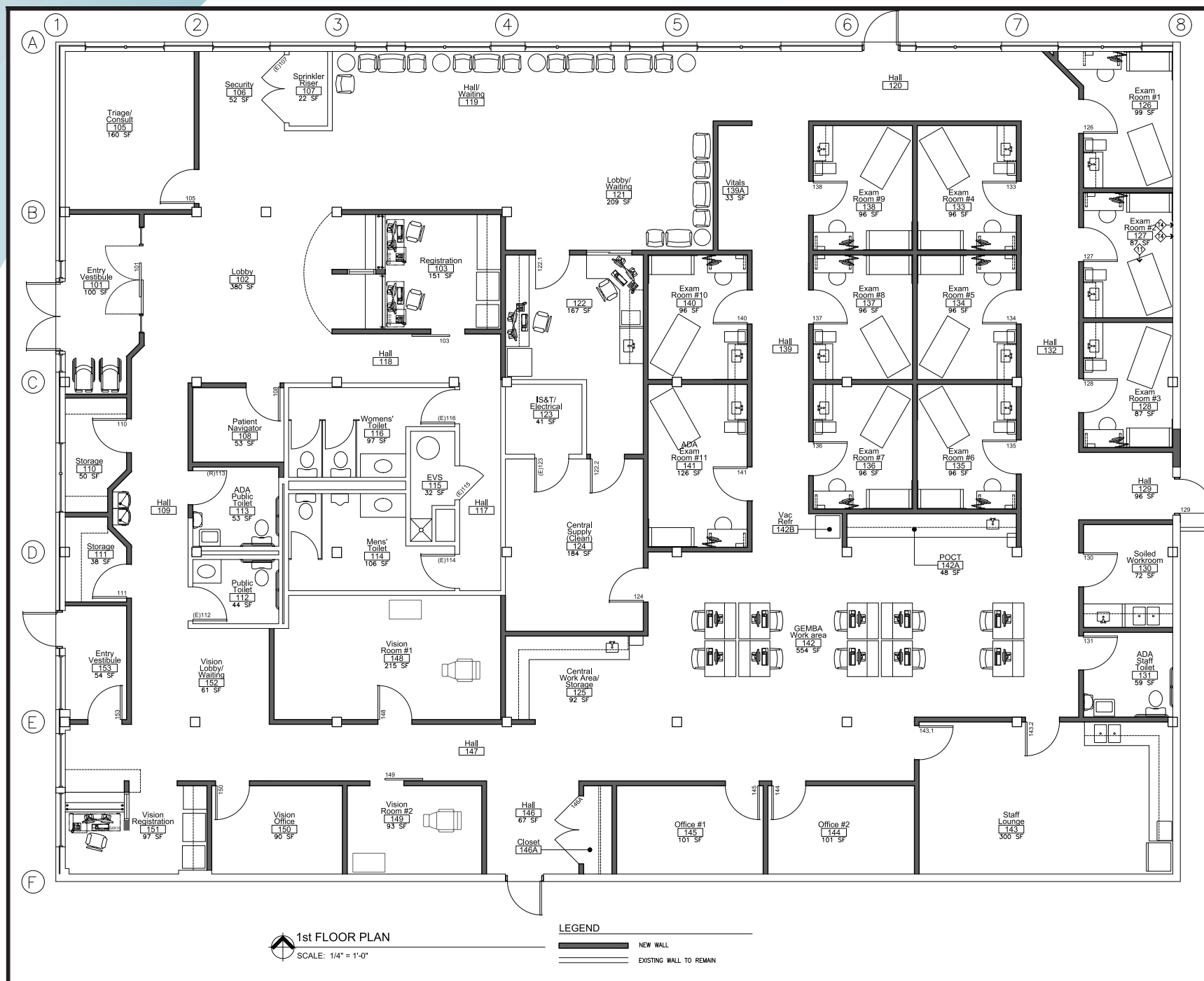


Network
Solutions

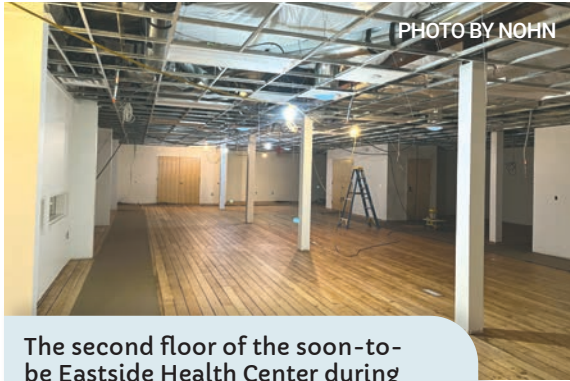


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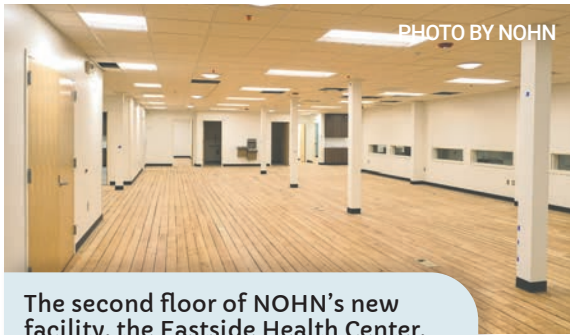
North Olympic Healthcare Network saw potential in the big red building on First Street. Previously home to restaurants, offices and an event center throughout its life, the building has proven to be adaptable in fulfilling the needs of local businesses. NOHN has spent a tremendous amount of time and money renovating the space in order to fit the needs of a community health center. Walls were knocked down and new ones have been put in place to create a layout with room for five healthcare providers, meeting spaces and offices.



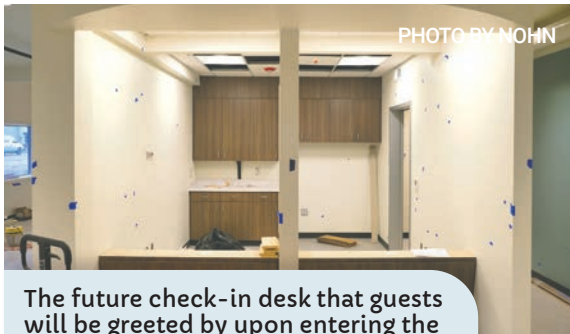
A space for community care



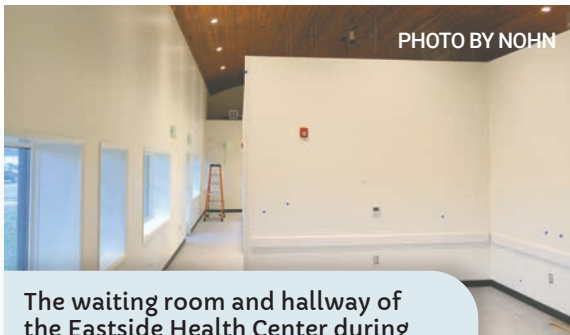
The second floor of the soon-to-be Eastside Health Center during renovations.



The second floor of NOHN's new facility, the Eastside Health Center, nearing completion of renovations.



The future check-in desk that guests will be greeted by upon entering the Eastside Health Center.



The waiting room and hallway of the Eastside Health Center during renovations.



The NOHN team kicks off construction with a ceremonial demolition of an interior wall.



The monument sign goes up outside of NOHN's new clinical facility, Eastside Health Center.

A network of whole-person care



By Alyssa Brown

With more than 20 medical providers ready to assist patients and plans to expand services in 2023, Port Angeles-based North Olympic Healthcare Network (NOHN) is fulfilling its vision of creating a healthy, thriving and inclusive community.

The latest addition, the Eastside Health Center (EHC), will expand on vital services offered through NOHN and open the doors to new practices, furthering the organization's mission to bring patient-centered and accessible healthcare to everyone in the community.



“While many of our providers will rotate through seeing patients at the EHC, in order to respond to the continued community need for primary care access we needed to recruit additional primary care providers,” says Dr. Kate Weller, NOHN’s chief medical officer.

“The EHC is designed to accommodate up to five new primary care providers who will help create the capacity for NOHN to see thousands of new patients over the next few years,” says Chief Medical Officer Kate Weller, MD.

Services at the Eastside Health Center will include: full-spectrum primary care with adult medicine and preventive care, family-focused maternity and obstetrics with prenatal and postpartum care, deliveries, high-risk obstetrics and C-sections, newborn and pediatric care with immunizations, behavioral health services with short-term counseling and problem focused therapy; and, psychiatric consultation for diagnostic assessments and medication management and newly added Vision/Eyecare services.

“Making the move to NOHN along with a support staff of two full time employees, it is my expectation that our team will really be able to make a difference for people who have delayed or avoided eyecare thus far, due to lack of access or cost barriers,” eyecare provider Dr. John Huard says.



The healthcare coverage doesn't stop here: NOHN offers many more services at its Downtown Health Center and Expanded Services Building. Services in these facilities also include full-spectrum primary care, family-focused maternity/obstetrics and behavioral health.



“The behavioral health (BH) team includes therapists and psychiatric providers who have ‘home base’ offices at our Expanded Services Building, across the street from the new clinic site. That will remain the primary location for most scheduled behavioral health care. We will have a dedicated BH office at the new clinic to enable the therapists to be onsite at times to coordinate with primary care and offer support to patients.” says Dr. Kristine Johnson, clinical psychologist and director of behavioral health services at NOHN.

Pediatric and Adult Dentistry is offered exclusively through the Expanded Services Building, covering dental hygiene, fillings, restorations and crowns.



“I have been practicing dentistry for 15 years and have been at the NOHN dental clinic for the last year and a half. We have another part time dentist here and a part time hygienist as well. We offer comprehensive general dentistry services at our clinic for patients of all ages.” says Stephen Canale, DMD.

In all facilities, registered nurse care managers triage and perform proactive follow up outreach to high-risk patients between official visits, and clinical pharmacists aid patients with medication and anticoagulation management.

With the understanding that non-medical factors influence a person's health, NOHN created the Outreach and Patient Navigation team to help identify the non-medical barriers and connect people to the social services and insurance coverages they need.

To address some of these barriers, the team works to provide transportation assistance and translation services. Community Health Workers (CHWs) are also available, providing peer support, education and assistance to at-risk, underserved and vulnerable populations wherever they are in the community – be it at home, a local shelter or other community settings.

To further increase accessibility to healthcare, NOHN created a mobile health clinic bringing behavioral health and primary care services to K-12 students in the Port Angeles School District.



Telehealth is an online service through NOHN that allows patients to have real-time visits with their providers from the comfort of their home. These take place on a scheduled basis, assessing appropriate health issues.

Some visit types that may be eligible for telehealth visits include: review of lab test results or x-rays, therapy sessions, follow ups on diagnose and learning condition management, some pre-procedure and post-surgery sessions and potentially discussion of medications. (Eligibility varies, so communicate with your provider about your options.)

All services are available to registered patients at NOHN, which will treat anyone regardless of ability to pay or insurance status and will reduce fees on a sliding scale for those eligible based upon household size and income.

Dental and Eyecare service access is prioritized for those who lack commercial insurance and otherwise struggle to find an accepting provider. ■

For more information on available services, visit nohn-pa.org.

Evolving with community wellness in mind

North Olympic Healthcare Network (NOHN) strives to provide patient-centered and quality-driven healthcare services to everyone in the Olympic Peninsula community. NOHN evolved from a private primary care practice of more than 30 years, originally named Family Medicine of Port Angeles.

The transition to a community health center was made possible by being awarded a highly-competitive Federal grant called “New Access Point.” NOHN is the first and only Federally Qualified Health Center in Clallam County, embracing the Community Health Center model in September 2015. NOHN now has more than 11,179 active patients and provides over 135 living wage jobs.

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NOHN Mobile Health Clinic

By Paula Hunt

The 38-foot-long blue and white motorhome pulling into school district parking lots during the new school year is on a different kind of road trip.

The journey is short, the stops are frequent and the view out the window doesn't change all that much. But it's the healthcare the motorhome delivers directly to students that makes it special.

The mobile clinic is a partnership between North Olympic Healthcare Network (NOHN) and the Port Angeles School District to bring medical and behavioral healthcare to all five of the district's elementary schools, Stevens Middle School and Port Angeles High School and Lincoln High School on a regular, often weekly, basis.

Students enrolled in the school district's online Seaview Academy and other distance-learning programs can visit any of the in-person sites.

This is the first full school year in which NOHN will operate the mobile clinic after it was delivered in November 2021.

Built on a Winnebago chassis, the \$400,000 mobile clinic was designed with privacy and an economical use of space in mind. It is outfitted with an examination room at the rear of the vehicle and a small room near the front for behavioral health visits.

“It will be just like walking into a doctor's office,” said Kate Weller, chief medical officer at NOHN who oversees the mobile clinic program.

“We may not be able to do all of the things that a clinic can do. We're not able to stock every single medicine or all supplies or treat a fracture, but we can make referrals and bring care to the student where they're at.”

Primary care is provided by nurse practitioners and physician assistants, while licensed clinical social workers, psychologists, and mental health counselors offer behavioral health support.

From treating a sinus infection to caring for problems with bullying, the mobile clinic offers a range of basic services, including:



North Olympic Healthcare Network's Mobile Health Clinic visits schools in the Port Angeles School District bringing care to the students. Photo by NOHN.

- Primary care
- Sport physicals
- Care for chronic health conditions like asthma
- Immunizations
- Behavioral/mental health care

As the sign on the side of the mobile clinic indicates, it will soon begin to offer dental screenings at schools. Students who need full-service dental care, such as surgery or fillings, will be referred to local providers, including NOHN's own Family Dental Clinic.

Getting care

To be able to visit the mobile clinic, students must have a signed consent form from a parent or guardian on file with NOHN or bring it with them to their appointment. A new, signed consent form must be submitted every year.

The consent form can be found online at tinyurl.com/2tupk8ek and emailed to Becca Larsen, the school district's family navigator, at: rlarsen@portangelesschools.org.

NOHN would prefer students make appointments to visit the mobile clinic by contacting Larsen, however once a student is registered, drop-ins are welcome on a space-available basis. However, once a student is registered, drop-ins are welcome on a space-available basis.

Both parents and primary healthcare providers will be informed whenever a child visits the mobile clinic except in specific circumstances which under state law allow minors to receive confidential health services, such as:

- Alcohol/drug abuse treatment (13 and older)
- Outpatient mental health treatment (13 and older)
- Birth control (any age)
- Pregnancy care (any age)
- STD/HIV diagnosis and testing (14 and older)

The mobile clinic is not free. NOHN will bill medical insurance providers for students who are covered by their parent or guardian's plan and will work with families who are uninsured to help students get the care they need.

"No one will be turned away," said Michael Maxwell, CEO of NOHN.

Students and families who need help paying for services can apply to NOHN's financial assistance program, which has a sliding fee scale based on family size and income.

Partnership

A need for enhanced school health services was brought to NOHN's attention by the Port Angeles Citizen Action Network (PA CAN) in 2016, said Jeff Anderson, marketing and communications director at NOHN, in an email. As a result, NOHN, PA CAN and the school district developed a concept for a school-based healthcare center.

A room at the high school was used as a clinic for part of the 2017 school year to gauge what kinds of health services might be in demand.

"What we found was the need went beyond high school and what we had anticipated, particularly behavior health," Maxwell said.

Based on feedback from students, teachers, counselors and staff, creating a mobile health service was proposed in 2019 to the school board, which supported the idea. Coincidentally, 87 percent of those who participated in a Community Health Needs Assessment conducted by NOHN the same year also identified developing mobile health services as a priority.

The mobile clinic operations are supported through a \$3.3 million grant NOHN received from the United Health Foundation that is funding a broader community



The Mobile Health Clinic is a modified recreational vehicle designated to providing on site care for students in the Port Angeles School District. Photo by NOHN.

health project. It does not use taxpayer dollars.

The grant is also helping to cover NOHN's payment to the school district of \$162,000 a year to pay for two full-time family navigators who assist students and parents in finding, accessing and paying for a range of medical, behavioral and social services.

The agreement between NOHN and the school district, signed by superintendent Marty Brewer, began July 1, 2021, and will run through June 30, 2024.

Brewer said in an interview in June that the mobile clinic deepens and expands the district's dedication to providing students with health, emotional and social support.

"This goes beyond academics," Brewer said in June. "We are providing more resources and working with our community partners to help students."

In addition to NOHN, those partnerships include Peninsula Behavioral Health.

Weller said one of the most

pressing tasks for NOHN has been trying to get the word out about the mobile clinic.

"We know what we can do," Weller said. "We need to let people know what it is and how to use it." ■

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