

LOVELAND REPORTER-HERALD

Open house highlights youth clinic partnership between Thompson schools and Sunrise

The Sunrise Clinic cuts the ribbon after a year of operation

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Ginger Hillyard, center left, and Kate Whitman, center, chat with Jennifer Smith, right, a Physician Assistant and Provider at the new Sunrise Thompson Health Clinic, while touring the clinic Monday, Oct. 11, 2021, during an open house at the clinic in Loveland.

Larimer County Commissioner Jody Shadduck-McNally, far left, also tours the new facility.

The Sunrise Thompson Health Clinic, the product of a partnership between Sunrise Community Health and the Thompson School District, officially opened and welcomed the public at an open house on Monday.

The clinic has been operational for about a year, but, much like Ferguson High School and the Thompson Career Campus, the COVID-19 pandemic made an official ceremony impossible at the time.

The facility, located on Monroe Avenue between Conrad Ball Middle School and Mary Blair Elementary, was built by the school district and will be staffed by Sunrise. It's staffed year-round and can serve any patient under 21 years of age. Like other Sunrise clinics, affordability is a selling point.

"We turn no one away," Sunrise Community Health CEO Mitzi Moran said at the ceremony on Monday. "Having insurance doesn't open or close a gate at Sunrise."

Funded by the federal Health Resources and Services Administration, Sunrise offers a sliding fee discount and accepts Medicaid, Colorado Health Plan Plus (CHP+), a public health insurance program for pregnant women and children who qualify, as well as the Colorado Indigent Care Program, which supports discounted health services to low-income individuals and families not eligible for Medicaid or CHP+.

The clinic has three examination rooms, a behavioral health specialist provided by SummitStone Health Partners, and a room that is slated to become a dentist's office sometime in the future.

The clinic is not currently offering COVID-19 vaccines, according to Amy Brodeur, the nurse practitioner who staffs the facility full time. The shelf life of the COVID-19 vaccine isn't long enough to justify offering it at the school clinic, and doses would likely go bad.

The clinic does offer other vaccines such as flu shots, and Sunrise offers COVID-19 vaccines at some of its other facilities, such as the Loveland Community Health Center on Third Street.

Brodeur said that access is an important part of what makes the school clinic so important.

"I've had kids come directly from school, (and) they can go right back to school. It keeps them in school as much as possible, so they're not missing as much class," she said. "There's also better coordination with the schools. We know what's going on. We can collaborate with the school district to help them get what their kids need. We can work together to make sure the students stay healthy."

"The Sunrise Thompson Health Clinic is a really strong partner for the school district," Thompson School District Superintendent Marc Schaffer said. "It's bringing together very important medical supports, student physicals, dental, social and emotional health. Community-based health services are very exciting."