

Blackfoot News, Tuesday, June 30, 2009 – by Daniel Iverson

Urgent care off to good start

BLACKFOOT – Blackfoot’s newest medical facility is striving to get patients from their door to the doctor within 20 minutes, and administrators say the first week is going smoothly. First Choice Urgent Care and Medical Clinic, affiliated with Bingham Memorial Hospital, opened last Thursday. The new building, located at Riverside Plaza, houses the urgent care as well as the medical clinic where internal medicine physician and infectious disease expert Dr. Thomas Faber will now call home.

The urgent care includes three health care providers: Stacy Cooper, M.P.A.-C; Charles Garcia, Mx., P.A.-C; and Brenda C. Wilmore, MSN, FNP-BC. The three providers are practicing under the direction of Dr. Jack Davis, who is board certified for disaster, emergency and family medicine.

Faber comes to the clinic from the Physicians and Surgeons Clinic of Shelley.

The urgent care treats patients for minor emergencies such as breaks, sprains and accidents requiring stitches during hours other medical centers are closed.

Each side of the clinic features three exam rooms, including one larger room for procedures requiring extra space.

The clinic is equipped with a CT scanner, small lab and X-ray machine. More complicated tests are referred to the hospital.

Cooper said visiting urgent care for minor emergencies is much cheaper and faster than visiting the hospital’s emergency room and reduces overcrowding. Cooper was involved with setting up the clinic and now helps to manage it. “We started from nothing,” she said. “A lot goes into starting a medical clinic.”

About 30 employees were hired to staff the new clinic through extended hours.

Paul Kotter, BMH director of marketing and public relations, said the 20-minute standard is designed to echo the 10-minute average waiting time advertised at Idaho Physicians Clinic. “We are focusing on serving you in a timely manner,” he said.

According to Cooper, the urgent care maintains its 20-minute standard due to training its staff to learn a variety of jobs and to multitask. If a receptionist is too busy, one of the providers may check in a patient instead.

“We’re keeping the 20 minutes as far as we can,” she said.