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Health providers move to new Astoria clinic

Five years ago, Columbia Memorial Hospital opened its primary care center and then added an urgent care center in Warrenton.

On Oct. 1, CMH Primary Care opened the doors of its new Astoria location.

Three providers have moved practices from the Warrenton clinic to the new clinic in Astoria. They are Dr. Kevin Baxter, Dr. Anisa Richardson and Mary Rizzo, family nurse practitioner. They are joined by three new providers, Rachel Flescher, a physician's assistant; Dr. Elizabeth Erikson, an osteopath; and Wendy Hovden, a nurse practitioner.

Demand for primary medical care has grown across



Flescher



Erikson



Hovden

the country, hospital officials said. Since the Warrenton clinic opened, it has grown from one provider serving 2,000 patients to six providers serving 11,500 patients.

"Even after two expansions, we had outgrown the original clinic," said Nicole Williams, CMH's chief operating officer. "So rather than expand again, we made the decision to open a second location that would be more convenient for our patients in Astoria, Knappa and Pacific County."

And last week, the Clatsop County Board of Commissioners agreed to sell 7.73 acres at the North Coast Business Park to the hospital for an ex-

panded clinic and lab. Sales price was \$463,200.

Once it's built, the clinic in Warrenton Highlands Shopping Center will move to the new location near Costco.

NEW ASTORIA STAFF

Flescher is interested in family medicine, pediatrics, women's health and diabetes management. She graduated from Oregon Health & Science University.

Erikson focuses on the whole person and whole family care, and uses osteopathic manipulations and myofascial release techniques with patients. She earned her medical degree from A.T. Still University's School of Osteopathic Medicine in Mesa, Ariz.

Hovden has a master's degree from Walden University in Minnesota.

Astoria Primary Care is in the Park Medical Building.

Arnie's: Diner to move near Warrenton City Hall

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near Warrenton High School. Their agreement with Newton allows them to rent his building adjacent to City Hall for 5 to 10 years, at which point they may choose to purchase it.

"As a commissioner, one of my duties is to do what I think will drive the most people to downtown Warrenton," Newton said. "I've had four people vying to rent my building ... but a restaurant, I believe, will drive business downtown. It will make the businesses downtown more valuable."

Other prospective tenants were a construction company, a church and a day-care center, he said. But the restaurant meshes well with nearby senior housing projects, the city park, the library and City Hall.

The building currently



The former Napa Auto Parts store in downtown Warrenton.

housing Arnie's needs some long-term repairs, Green said, and she faced the prospect of closing for up to eight weeks to make them. Moving made more sense.

"We'll get a little bit of breathing room and flexibility with how many we can seat and how we configure things," she said. "The kitchen can run much more efficiently because we can design it to do so. Right now, equipment is where it fits,

not where it's most efficient."

Her first year managing Arnie's had ups and downs, Green said. "I learned the hard way to be more considerate of all the staff that she (Garrett) had carried."

But once Green got her bearings, business boomed.

"We have been so blessed by our following," she said. "We just keep growing. Warrenton is really important to us and we want to enhance downtown."