

Berks Community Health Center debuts in former Giant supermarket

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READING EAGLE



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Enjoying a lighter moment Monday during the ribbon-cutting ceremony for the new Berks Community Health Center location in Reading are, from left, Pat Giles, health center board chairwoman; Mary Kargbo, center CEO; Mary Kelleher, center chief medical officer; state Sen. Judy Schwank, a Ruscombmanor Township Democrat.

The Berks Community Health Center's latest location made its debut Monday.

Staff members from the federally qualified health center were joined by officials and a representative from the Health Resources and Services Administration to mark the opening of the center at 1110 Rockland St.

The 37,500-square-foot facility is a former Giant supermarket that closed in 2015. Starting today, the facility will open for primary care visits.

The primary care side of the new health center will feature 40 rooms for medical and pediatric exams. The other portion of the building will house optometry, podiatry and other speciality care.

“It has been a wonderful transition,” health center CEO Mary Kargbo said in an interview. “It’s been great to see the excitement of the community.”

The health center has three other locations in Reading: on Penn Street, Liggett Avenue and North Second Street.

The specialty care portion of the new building will open in two weeks. The site’s dental exam rooms will open in early December, officials said.

Portions of the building will be leased for lab services, physical therapy and the Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants and Children.

With its federally qualified designation, the health center must take care of all patients, regardless of their ability to pay.

The center receives federal funding and other incentives that help it care for those living near poverty.

The health center also benefited from a \$500,000 grant from Pennsylvania’s Redevelopment Assistance Capital Program. Local legislators helped secure the funding that supported the supersized health center.

In the early stages, the Rockland Street health center will be open Monday through Friday from 8 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.

To make an appointment: 610-988-4838.

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