

PRINT-Consumers Embrace New Urgent Care Option: OSF Urgo Celebrates Successful First Year

Sharon Russell of Normal, Illinois is an amateur actor who had just finished up a performance at Heartland Theater when she took a dramatic fall and rolled her foot as it caught the edge between the pavement and grass after a Saturday night performance last month. The painful grimace that quickly crossed her face was no acting job.

Russell knew a trip to a busy emergency department was not how she wanted to spend the next few hours but when the morning came, even before her morning coffee, Russell grabbed her smart phone, made the first available appointment and headed to the [OSF Urgo urgent care clinic](#) in a shopping center along Veterans Parkway in Normal.

In pain, and hobbling on crutches she already had at home, Russell was greeted at the door and quickly whisked into an exam room.

“To be able to get just right in there, get the diagnosis right away and get the help that I needed and told what to do: ‘Go home, do this, don’t do this, take this, don’t take that,’ I think it helped my overall recovery process because I’m doing really well, Russell shared.

“The doctor even said, ‘You’ve healed this really well. What you did when it originally happened and the fact you got to see somebody right away probably really helped.” –OSF Urgo Patient Sharon Russell

Russell was so impressed with her experience, she gave a Facebook shout out to her OSF Urgo caregivers.

“They were so good and so kind and quick! I think the key thing is it was so quick to be able to get in to see somebody so easily,” she gushed.

Consumers demanding care where and when they want it is driving the new quick-care model and OSF Urgo has managed to achieve an average visit time of 32 minutes in its first year which saw more than 51,000 people being treated at one of the 11 locations that have opened.

Reflecting on the one year anniversary of the launch of the first OSF Urgo in East Peoria, Director of OSF Urgo Operations Sheila Mercer said many Ministry leaders were surprised by the explosive growth of patients choosing the new clinics -- 31% more people than predicted, including 7,000 who were not current OSF HealthCare patients.

Mercer says feedback surveys indicate they like the convenience, including the ability of common medications and medical devices for purchase on site so they can skip a trip to the pharmacy plus they’ve embraced the ability to schedule their visit.

“There’s been a great attraction to that online reservation, especially people that work, getting kids from school, they know what their day looks like and they know that that time is set aside from them.”

Care guides greet visitors or meet them at their car with a wheelchair and provide coffee, cocoa, and blankets – memorable little touches – which Mercer says resulted in nearly 91 percent of patients indicating they would recommend OSF Urgo to their friends and family.

Services also include employment exams, drug-testing and sports physicals.

“We had a patient come in, told mom at 6 o’clock at night after school, ‘hey I didn’t get my sports physical and I can’t run track tomorrow if I don’t have it,’” Mercer recalled. “So she was able to come right over, get that physical done and get that kid in sports the next day so it worked out very well.”

The national [Urgent Care Association](#) says a third of patients visiting urgent care centers have no primary care physicians and that reality is reflected in the more than 1,700 referrals made to primary care physicians for OSF Urgo visitors. Mercer says urgent care centers can be a great way to connect visitors to better prevention and disease management through primary care services.

Given its success, OSF HealthCare is preparing to open additional locations by early next year.

Top 5 Reasons for a Visit to OSF Urgo in 2019

- **Cough**
- **Sore Throat**
- **Upper Respiratory complaints**
- **Urinary Tract Infection**
- **Sinus Infection**

[OSF Urgo clinics](#) are open from 8 a.m.-8 p.m. 365 days a year. Appointments can be made online but walk-ins are welcome.

Other immediate care options include [OSF PromptCare](#) or for access 24/7, [OSF OnCall](#).