

A Partnership in Wellness

OSF Medical Group begins seeing patients at Rockford community college

Improving a person's quality of life and avoiding medical disease is the goal of a new employee wellness clinic on the campus of Rock Valley College (RVC) in Rockford.

Called "RVCare" the clinic is a partnership with OSF HealthCare Medical Group. A nurse practitioner will be available several days a week for RVC employees seeking non-emergency medical care.

Leadership at RVC wanted to insure the wellness of its workforce while also managing costs - which is tied to prevention.

"So, the more that we can do to create an environment where employees have access to health care and that they can use that access to create a wellness plan or to also prevent - to get into a prevention plan, I think is critical," says Rock Valley College President Doug Jensen.

RVCare is just the latest wellness clinic OSF has established in partnership with local organizations. By providing on-site basic health and wellness services, such as the treatment of common illnesses, vaccinations, diagnostic screenings and health-risk appraisals - it's all about convenience.

"Employees don't have to do to a doctor's appointment to get things such as blood pressure checks and that type of service," says OSF HealthCare Saint Anthony Medical Center Vice President of Operations Karen Brown. "It's easier, they can access it more quickly, they have more opportunity to talk to a provider to get more information about their health and wellness."

Historically, Brown says employers with OSF-run wellness clinics have experienced health care cost savings and efficiencies with having these services near employees.

"They've seen and it's been demonstrated to have some really good quality outcomes," says Brown. "People have lower blood pressure, they're blood sugar levels have improved, they've lost weight, we're had people quit smoking as a result of the support they've received at the center."

With a recently established on-campus partnership between OSF's Saint Anthony College of Nursing the RVC's associate nursing programs, Jensen says was good fit for OSF HealthCare to run RVCare and will only help build on the relationship.

"I think when you look at the comprehensive medical needs of this community, not only from a Rock Valley College employee point of view, but how do we serve the constituents of this area, this was just a natural extension of that," says Jensen. "So, we're excited about the partnership and we're excited about where this partnership is going to lead us in the future."

Brown says the collaboration and partnership with RVC has been exceptional.

"I really applaud Rock Valley College, its leadership and the board, the Rock Valley College board for moving this project forward," says Brown. "It really, it says a lot about their commitment to their workforce and the health and wellbeing of their workforce."

Jensen has had previous experience with on-site employee medical clinics and would recommend other organizations and businesses to seriously consider it.

"By having this wellness center, where you have this personal relationship - you know the individuals, you feel comfortable, there's access - it really creates a communication flow," says Jensen. "That allows you to either have a better, closer relationship with the health care provider here on campus, but also they're going to be able to communicate that back to your primary care physician or your health care professionals that you're utilizing."

Occupational health services are available at most OSF HealthCare locations. Go to www.osfhealthcare.org to learn more.