

Silver City Clinic grows

LINDA FRIEDEL, CONTRIBUTING WRITER

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Edmee Rodriguez/Nursing News photo: Silver City Health Center nurse practitioner Eileen Amari-Vaught, RN, MSN, PhD, ARNP, BC, takes a closer look in the Kansas City, Kan. Clinic.

Silver City Health Center, Kansas City, Kan., just got a shot in the arm.

The nurse-managed clinic located in the Argentine neighborhood received a \$450,000 grant to help with everything from supplies to extended hours.

The REACH Healthcare Foundation of Merriam provided \$100,000; the Kresge Foundation of Troy, Mich., contributed \$150,000; and the Sunflower Foundation: Health Care for Kansans of Topeka gave \$200,000.

"We're so appreciative of everything that all three of those foundations do," said **Lisa Culliton**, RN, MSN, ARNP, CPNP, director of clinical services at Silver City Health Center.

Silver City Health Center is a nonprofit safety-net clinic managed by KU Health Partners, a clinical enterprise operated by the University of Kansas School of Nursing and School of Allied Health. Safety-net clinics comprise a network of health care facilities that provide primary care and chronic care services to the uninsured and underinsured.

Culliton said the funding allowed the clinic to hire an additional nurse practitioner and lengthen appointment hours.

"It's so wonderful working with all three entities because they understand the need for providing for underserved and underprivileged populations," she said. "They know what we do. They understand the need greatly."

Culliton said since hiring another nurse practitioner, patient wait time for scheduling appointments dropped from about seven weeks to under four.

"They have more ability to access care when they need it," she said. "They will have the opportunity to be placed in appointment times where they won't have to juggle their schedule."

Silver City Health Center operates with six nurse practitioners, a physical therapist, dietitian, nurse educator for diabetes, medical assistant, office staff and a collaborative physician and sees 750 to 800 patients per month, most of whom are Hispanic.

"Most of our staff is bilingual," Culliton said. "(Patients) can get mental health, they can get physical therapy, they can get their nutrition consult. They can get their diabetes education."

The facility is also a teaching clinic for KU nursing students and allied health students.

Rotating students through clinicals and the center's multidisciplinary approach, Culliton said, makes for a dynamic setting and a rare opportunity for nurse practitioners. She said Silver City Health Care, completely operated and managed by nurses, is one of the few models like it in the nation. She said it is a place for upcoming graduate nurse practitioners to consider.

"It gives you a lot more autonomy," she said. "The model is more of a nursing model. We are very much advocates. This gives you a forum to do that in. It's very unique."

Edwin Galan, ARNP, clinical associate professor with Silver City Health, said as a nurse retired from the Navy, he was excited to apply his leadership skills in a health care setting he is committed to.

"I think the mission that we have here is just tremendous," he said. "The opportunity to make a difference in a real practical sense, it's just been outstanding."

Galan said offering an opportunity for increased access to care is vital to health care in America.

"I've always advocated for that because this is a country of haves and have nots, so we need to find an equitable way to make health care affordable and accessible," he said. "I think we're doing that here for those who don't have insurance and those who do have insurance."

For more information, visit www.silvercityhealthcenter.org.