



PRESS RELEASE: Ferris to Open Pharmacy Care Clinic on Big Rapids Campus

Sandy C Gholston to: Archive

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Included below is a press release regarding the upcoming opening of the Ferris Pharmacy Care Clinic on the Big Rapids Ferris State University campus inside of the College of Pharmacy building, located at 220 Ferris Drive in Big Rapids, Mich. Any questions about this release, or requests for interviews, can be directed to Sandy Gholston, News Services and Social Media Manager.

To read the online version of this story, visit:

<http://www.ferris.edu/HTMLS/news/archive/2013/march/pharmacy.htm>

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Ferris to Open Pharmacy Care Clinic on Big Rapids Campus

BIG RAPIDS – Ferris State University’s College of Pharmacy will be opening its Pharmacy Care Clinic on Wednesday, April 3 – its first day of operation.

The Pharmacy Care Clinic will be open on Tuesdays and Thursdays from 3 to 5 p.m. and on Wednesday from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. Ferris’ clinic will complement services offered by the Hope House Free Medical Clinic, which has served local patients with no health insurance for a little more than six years. Hope House will move to a new location on the east side of Big Rapids, near Arby’s. The free clinic will then be open every Tuesday and Wednesday instead of previously being open just three hours each week. As a result, Ferris officials anticipate an increase in patient prescription needs.

Jeff Bates, an associate professor in the College of Pharmacy, noted that “the Ferris Pharmacy Care Clinic will, for the foreseeable future, only be serving free clinic patients.” He added that, on a typical Wednesday, the clinic would anticipate 100 prescriptions filled during the five to six hours it will be in operation that day. During the course of a typical week, Bates envisions approximately 150 prescriptions being filled.

“The opening of the Ferris Pharmacy Care Clinic is the culmination of years-worth of dreams, discussions and persistence by many within the College of Pharmacy,” Bates said. “It is, personally and professionally, very rewarding to see this pharmacy become a reality. For many

years, the faculty has taught pharmacy concepts in the classroom, but opportunities – especially early in the program – for students to apply these concepts were often limited. The Ferris Pharmacy Care Clinic will allow students to quite literally leave the classroom and immediately begin applying their knowledge in a care setting that helps meet patients’ needs.”

Previously, free clinic patients received pharmacy services during a three-to four-hour window, one day each week. Ferris’ clinic extends the window of opportunity for patients from the free clinic to have prescriptions filled to three days a week.

Bates anticipates staffing the clinic with university personnel who are licensed pharmacists, both tenure-track and adjunct faculty. He also sees an educational value for students primarily through internship opportunities. The College of Pharmacy team believes that repurposing existing space within the current facility will provide greater opportunities to train students and serve the community.

“Since the Ferris Pharmacy Care Clinic will be staffed predominantly by faculty, many opportunities will be afforded to highlight concepts discussed in didactic courses,” Bates said. “Students will be able to immediately observe and practice the skills that are introduced in classrooms literally just a few steps down the hallway. Since the College of Pharmacy is building a ‘culture of caring,’ this clinic will allow students, faculty, and administration all to serve real patients on a day-to-day basis.”

Stephen Durst, dean of the College of Pharmacy, sees the Ferris Pharmacy Care Clinic as a complement to what already exists in the community.

“It’s important to recognize that the services provided through the Pharmacy Care Clinic will not compete with existing services in the community, but rather, complement them by directly serving a segment of the population that did not have access to existing pharmacies,” Durst said. “Thus, we see the opening of the Pharmacy Care Clinic as a resource for the entire community and a needed element of health care delivery.”

Bates added that the pharmacy will continue to impact patient wellness through ongoing smoking cessation coaching, as well as with over-the-counter products such as nicotine patches, gum, lozenges, etc. He said that all diabetes patients will have access to much needed testing supplies, enabling them to better manage their own care.

“In the next year, the Ferris Pharmacy Care Clinic will supply diabetes patients with more than 15 cases (180 boxes) of glucometer test strips, and will offer routine A1C blood testing, all of which will result in much improved diabetes control,” Bates said. “Taken together, all of these efforts will prevent dozens of hospitalizations each year and assure that patients in the greater Mecosta County area have access to life saving medications as well as sound medical advice.”

Bates noted that Blue Cross Blue Shield has awarded a \$15,000 grant “to help assure patients can receive much-needed medication services.” He explained that local grants from the Broomfield Fund, the Shaw and Betty Walker Foundation, a Tri-County Grant, the Mecosta County Community Foundation, and the Michigan Department of Community Health have

helped to subsidize the free clinic in recent years.

Bates added that the opening of the Ferris Pharmacy Care Clinic could spark future grant and research opportunities at the university.

To learn more about Ferris' College of Pharmacy, visit:

<http://www.ferris.edu/HTMLS/colleges/pharmacy/homepage.htm>

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