

Clinics recognized for service

Health facilities get national certification

By Bill Barrow
Staff writer

More than three dozen community health clinics in the New Orleans area have achieved a new level of national certification for the way they operate, a development health officials say affirms Louisiana's push to refocus health care delivery around neighborhood facilities.

The latest accolade comes from the National Committee for Quality Assurance, a not-for-profit agency that sets standards and conducts assessments of health care providers. The organization named 37 clinics in the region as Patient-Centered Medical Homes, a distinction recognizing that a provider's service model meets certain standards of managed care.

Focus on service

The standards used to certify the clinics dealt mostly with service models — such as maintaining patient records, tracking referrals and using accepted practices to treat chronic conditions. They did not involve the health outcomes of patients.

But one of the key measures is whether a clinic can demonstrate that each patient has an ongoing relationship with a personal physician. And state and local health authorities say that is particularly important given the state's historical shortage of primary care for the uninsured, who were often routed to the Charity Hospital system for all of their health services.

Louisiana Health and Hospitals Secretary Alan Levine said the recognition is a positive step as Louisiana health providers, public and private, along with Gov. Bobby Jindal's administration, continue working to improve the health outcomes for a population that ranks among the nation's highest in obesity, diabetes, heart disease and cancer.

"Virtually every national study has affirmed that patient-centered medical homes are the

More than three dozen New Orleans area health clinics have been recognized by the National Committee on Quality Assurance for achieving national quality standards. The 37 clinics are operated by 13 public and private not-for-profit associations that have expanded primary-care options in the metropolitan region since Hurricane Katrina. Many physicians and health care policy experts say the expanded system saves money and yields a healthier population less dependent on emergency rooms and hospital care.

Common Ground Health Clinic

Algiers Clinic, 1400 Teche St., New Orleans, 504.361.9800

Children's Hospital Medical Practice Corporation Clinics

Klein Lawrence Pediatric Group, 3100 Kingman St., Suite 110, Metairie, 504.887.6356
Kids First Tiger CARE Kenner, 3321 Florida Ave., Kenner, 504.468.4437
Lakeside Children's Clinic, 4740 S I-10 Service Road, Metairie, 504.883.3703
Kids First Prytanica, 3600 Prytanica St., New Orleans, 504.899.5437
Napoleon Pediatrics (Uptown), 2820 Napoleon Ave., Suite 950, New Orleans, 504.897.4242
Napoleon Pediatrics (Metairie), 3040 33rd St., Metairie, 504.219.0880
Physicians of River Ridge, 9605 Jefferson Highway, River Ridge, 504.738.1604
Metairie Pediatrics, 2201 Veteran's Blvd., Suite 300,

CERTIFIED CLINICS

Metairie, 504.833.7374
Kids First MidCity, 4052 Ulloa St., New Orleans, 504.488.7505
Kids First New Orleans East, 14401 Chef Menteur Highway, New Orleans, 504.662.0644
Kids First Tiger CARE Canal, 1651 Canal St., Suite 1200, New Orleans, 504.289.9980

Daughters of Charity Services of New Orleans Clinics

Metairie (Causeway), 111 North Causeway Blvd., Metairie, 504.482.0084
St. Cecilia - North Rampart, 4201 N. Rampart St., New Orleans, 504.941.6041
Carrington, 3201 S. Carrington Ave., New Orleans, 504.207.3060

EXCELth, Inc.

Algiers Community Health Clinic, 1111 Newton St., New Orleans, 504.658.2550

LSU Healthcare Network

Behavioral Sciences Center, 3450 Chestnut St., New Orleans, 504.897.9558

LSU Health Sciences Center - Pediatrics - School-Based Health Clinics

Eleanor McMan Secondary School, 5812 S. Claiborne Ave., New Orleans, 504.324.7526
New Orleans Charter Science & Math, 5625 Loyola Ave., New Orleans, 504.324.7072

Sisters of Mercy Ministries Clinics

Mercy Family Center (behavioral health), 4001 General de Gaulle Drive, Suite H, Algiers, 504.376.2690
Mercy Family Center (behavioral health), 110 Veterans Blvd., Suite 425, Metairie, 504.838.8283

Medical Center of Louisiana at New Orleans Clinics

Frederick Douglass Community Clinic, 3815 Bur-

gundy St., New Orleans, 504.942.5950
MCL Medicine Clinic, 1450 Poydras St., New Orleans, 504.903.2373
Jackson Barracks Community Clinic, 6450 N. Claiborne Ave., New Orleans, 504.278.7330
Martin Behrman Community Clinic, 725 Vallette St., New Orleans, 504.361.6440
Murray Henderson Community Clinic, 1911 Hande St., New Orleans, 504.361.6300
New Orleans East Community Clinic, 5501 Read Blvd., New Orleans, 504.245.7951
HIV Outpatient Program, 136 S. Roman St., New Orleans, 504.903.6959

NO, AIDS Task Force

NO, AIDS Task Force Clinic, 2601 Tulane Ave., Suite 500, New Orleans, 504.821.2601

St. Bernard Health Center Inc.

St. Bernard Health Center, 8101 W. Judge Perez Drive, Chalmette, 504.281.2800

St. Charles Community Health Center

St. Charles Community Health Center, 200 W. Esplanade Ave., Suites 305, 310 and 413, Kenner, 504.712.7800

St. Thomas Community Health Center

St. Thomas Community Health Center, 1020 St. Andrew St., New Orleans, 504.529.5555

Tulane University Clinics

Tulane Community Health Center at Covenant House, 611 N. Rampart St., New Orleans, 504.988.3000
New Orleans Children's Health Project, mobile unit, New Orleans, 504.988.0545
Drop-In Center, 1428 N. Rampart St., New Orleans, 504.948.6701
Tulane University Community Health Center on the Road, mobile unit, New Orleans, 504.984.0054
Drop-In Clinic at Covenant House, 611 N. Rampart St., New Orleans, 504.584.1112

bedrock for any sustainable improvement in our health care delivery system," Levine said.

Many of the clinics participating in the Public Health Institute grant accept self-pay patients, but the system is focused on expanding primary care to the Medicaid population and the uninsured. Clayton Williams, who directs the program for the Public Health Institute, estimated that the clinics' target population includes 120,000 uninsured people in Orleans, Jefferson, St. Bernard and Plaquemines parishes, with at least two-thirds coming from households that earn less than 200 percent of the federal poverty level.

The certified clinics are operated by 13 public and private not-for-profits. They are among the 25 organizations and more than 50 clinics that are recipients of a \$100 million federal grant administered by the Louisiana Public Health Institute to

primary-care clinics. Of that grant, \$3.8 million has been set aside as incentive money for clinics to achieve varying levels of the NCQA certification.

Money for medical homes

Williams said recently that the institute will spread the first \$1.28 million of that incentive money among the clinics recognized as medical homes.

Williams cast the distinction as a key outside validation for what Louisiana is trying to accomplish.

"We'd like to prove that this is the way to deliver care," he said.

Dr. Karen DeSalvo, a Tulane physician who runs multiple clinics for Covenant House, said recently that the "medical home" model is a productive way to ensure that patients, particularly those with chronic conditions, have a coordinated system of care anchored by a personal physician.

DeSalvo was among the area physicians pushing primary care and medical home models before Hurricane Katrina and as part of the many commissions and study groups that Govs. Kathleen Blanco and Bobby Jindal have assembled to discuss Louisiana's health care system.

Louisiana's old model, she said, left poor patients feeling they had no options for preventive care or maintenance care. That circumstance, she said, eventually would lead to worsening conditions, emergency room visits and hospital stays that ultimately are more expensive than it would be to expand primary-care options.

"The better primary-care system we have, the healthier the population will be," DeSalvo said.

Bill Barrow can be reached at bbarrow@timespicayune.com or 504.826.3452.