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The mobile medical unit brings health care to the underserved

by Kimberly Martinez

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Doctors donate all or part of their service to provide health care to the uninsured.

Utah Partners for Health, a 501c3 charitable health organization, developed a world-class model to provide health care for low-income and uninsured residents of West Valley City, Kearns and Magna. Donations are leveraged by working with for-profit medical clinics with discounted services. Now those services are reaching the underserved even more with its mobile medical unit.

The creation of the mobile unit all began with a conversation UPFH Executive Director Kurt Micka had with Alfred Murillo, president of Utah Dream Center, an outreach center for immigrants and refugees. Murillo wanted those who came into his center to also have access to health care and with a little determination and a few phone calls a trailer was donated.

The Heart 2 Home Foundation quickly got on board and within six weeks, the trailer was gutted and transformed into a medical clinic. The foundation is known for remodeling homes for families in need, making this a very unique project for the team.

“That was our first trailer or anything like it that we’ve ever remodeled,” said Greg Adamson, president.

America First Credit Union donated \$5,000 for materials. The American Fork branch offered its parking lot for Foote Homes to remove tables, benches, the refrigerator and even the kitchen sink.

“Heart 2 Home works with an awesome group of people who work for a common goal of making things better for our community,” Adamson said.

The clinic now serves an average of 130 patients a month providing education, treatment referrals and screening. Micka said the clinic travels throughout Salt Lake County in neighborhoods and community areas where trust has already been established.

“It’s designed for people who have health care disparities and a lack of transportation or access problems due to fear, lack of trust, and language and cultural barriers,” he said.

So far, more than 700 people have been provided care through the mobile unit; six women treated were newly diagnosed with breast lumps.

“That’s an amazing number,” Micka said. “Most of these women knew they had breast pain but didn’t know what it was. We were able to get these women referred right away.”

UPFH continues to make a critical difference in meeting the needs of local and low-income people in this especially difficult economy.

“We would like to give a special thank you to all the organizations, foundations, businesses and individuals that make our work possible each year,” Micka said.

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