



## **Southeast Health Group is at home in Rocky Ford**

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By Nancy King

Last spring, Southeast Health Group purchased, rehabilitated and remodeled the building at 404 N. Main Street in an effort to expand services to the Rocky Ford community. An Open House was held on June 6, 2014, and over the past six months, Rocky Ford residents have enjoyed easier access to mental health, substance use disorder and wellness services.

“We are very pleased with our decision to invest in the Rocky Ford community and we feel right at home there,” said JC Carrica, Chief Operating Officer for Southeast Health Group. “We are working every day to improve the health and wellbeing of Rocky Ford’s citizens.”



*Southeast Health Group is “at home” at 404 N. Main Street, Rocky Ford*

Gerry Neugebauer of Rocky Ford provides customer service at the 404 N. Main office, and greets every visitor with a welcoming smile. A host of providers spend time in the Rocky Ford office throughout the week. Substance use disorder groups and individual counseling is provided by Steve Vigil, and Theresa Bauer provides domestic violence offender services. Mental Health counseling is provided by Bill Aardsma on Tuesdays and Wednesdays, and Lauren Meyer offers after-hours counseling on Mondays and Thursdays. Sandy Miller, Family Nurse Practitioner, and Kali Mae Mendoza, Physician Assistant, provide primary care services on Tuesdays and Wednesdays for individuals living with severe and persistent mental illnesses, who also live with co-occurring chronic health conditions.

Youth services are also expanding in Rocky Ford. Ginger Ray, who provides school-based services in Rocky Ford schools, comes to the office late afternoon on Wednesdays to provide services to youth. Sarah Voigts is planning a Youth Vocational Group, which should be up and running by February.

Kristi Roe, who now supervises Peer Services for Southeast Health Group, is in Rocky Ford on Thursdays to provide advocacy services. The peers will be holding Money Management Groups on Thursday afternoons and Individual Money Management on Friday afternoons. Additionally, Rocky Ford residents can access peer-run crisis services at 613 Barnes Avenue in La Junta, Monday through Friday, 8-5. “Peer 613” is a new concept in crisis support for people who would otherwise end up in the emergency room because of anxiety, depression or other overwhelming feelings. Peer 613 is set up just like your living room at home, with a few comfy chairs, soothing music and a warm mug of coffee or tea. Guests visit during the day to regain a sense of balance. The house is staffed by “peers”—people who have recovered from crises of their own and understand what it’s like to feel overwhelmed.

The T-shirt Palace, a long-standing Rocky Ford business, is also owned by Southeast Health Group and managed by Heath Adler. The business is used for vocational training and run as a social enterprise. The T-shirt Palace has moved to the Love's building at the corner of Main Street and Hwy 50 West.

“Overall, we have felt very welcome in Rocky Ford and we are listening to the community as we grow and expand our programs,” said Carrica. Southeast Health Group also has offices in Ordway, La Junta, Las Animas, Eads, Lamar, and Springfield. For more information about how to access services in Rocky Ford, or any office, call 1-800-511-5446.