



Southeast Health Group Invests in Rocky Ford; Open House planned for June 4th

La Junta, CO—May 7, 2014—Southeast Health Group

Mayor Randy Hamilton will be on hand to cut the ribbon at Southeast Health Group's newest facility in Rocky Ford on Wednesday, June 4th. The public is invited to join in the festivities, which will be held from 4:00 to 6:00 PM at 404 N. Main Street. The ribbon-cutting will take place at 5:00 PM, and light refreshments will be served.

Southeast Health Group purchased the building on North Main Street several months ago and recently completed a full remodel of the facility. "We realized there is an enormous unmet need in Rocky Ford," said JC Carrica, Chief Operating Officer at Southeast Health Group. "We have had a counselor embedded at the Valley Wide Clinic in Rocky Ford for many years, and that won't change. This new facility gives us the opportunity to provide vocational and primary care services for people living with severe and persistent mental illnesses, as well as allowing us to increase services for youth."



"Since the Boys and Girls Club closed in Rocky Ford, we noticed an opportunity to help provide safe activities for kids," said Carrica. "We will be offering an after-school program for youth in the new facility, and replicating our successful 'Summer Jam' program there, as well."

"Transportation is a real obstacle that keeps people from accessing services," said Carrica. "Even though La Junta and Rocky Ford are 10 miles apart, if you don't have transportation, 10 miles is a long way to go! Our counselors will be able to offer substance use disorder services in the new Rocky Ford facility, so that people with court-ordered treatment will have access to services in their own community, and be more likely to complete legal requirements."

Southeast Health Group provides integrated mental health, substance use disorder and primary care services to the six counties that make up the extreme southeast corner of Colorado. "We

thought carefully about where we wanted to invest next,” said Barry Shioshita, Chief Financial Officer for Southeast Health Group. “In the past, our investments for Otero County have been in La Junta, where our main offices are located. The management team took a long, hard look at where the need was, and we decided it was time to do more for the Rocky Ford community.”

Bill Aardsma is the licensed professional counselor that will serve the Rocky Ford clinic, and Steve Vigil will provide substance use disorder services. Vocational services will be provided by Joni Stevens with practicum training taking place at the T-shirt Palace. The Youth and Family Services team is in the process of designing youth services, which will complement what they already do at the Rocky Ford schools. The North Main facility opened for business on Monday, May 5th.

“We took a ‘build it and they will come’ approach to this newest project,” said Carrica. “When I talk to other professionals in Rocky Ford, it seems that everyone is concerned about the recent drug arrests and the lack of services for youth. This is a pivotal moment for Rocky Ford; anything we can do to prevent substance use and make treatment available is good for Rocky Ford’s future. We hope the community will take advantage of these new resources.”

Southeast Health Group accepts Medicaid and most private insurances, as well as offering a sliding fee scale. For more information about how to access any of the services mentioned in Rocky Ford, call Southeast Health Group at 1-800-511-5446, or visit www.southeasthealthgroup.org.