

Update on TMC's comprehensive medical care

By Ray Gibbons • TMC Administrator

Why does Teton Medical Center require 24-hours-a-day, seven-days-a-week medical provider coverage?

Since the beginning of the hospital and emergency room, 24/7 medical provider coverage has been required.

In the mid-1990s, when TMC converted the hospital to become a Medical Assistance Facility, the TMC Board required continuation of the 24/7 medical provider coverage.

In 1999, when TMC converted the Medical Assistance Facility to a Critical Access Hospital, the federal regulations and the TMC Board required 24/7 medical provider coverage.

Why do medical providers at TMC have different privileges?

TMC is required to have a medical provider on call 24/7 in the TMC emergency room and hospital. Each physician assistant and family nurse practitioner who does the emergency and hospital coverage must have a physician who agrees to co-sign all orders in the emergency room and hospital.

The TMC Community Clinic medical staff has privileges to provide health care in all TMC departments: from the clinic to the emergency room to inpatient and nursing home. During the time that TMC is recruiting for permanent medical providers, a weekly list of rotating providers is posted in the local newspapers. This group includes Dr. Robert Cale; Dr. Terry Jones; Stephanie Catron, FNP; Tim Thornton, PA-C, and Carla Brook, FNP.

Independent medical providers, by their choice, have limited privileges to provide TMC health care: in TMC's nursing home and outpatient services only. Currently this group includes Caralynn Moore, FNP; Tim Sinton, PA-C; and Kelley Price, PA-C.

Does TMC charge different prices for outpatient laboratory, X-ray, or physical

therapy services, depending on which provider orders the test?

No. TMC has one price for each of the outpatient services.

How could two people, insured with different companies, pay different co-pay amounts?

Each insurance company plan makes payments based on the plan signed with their subscriber. This could mean different co-payments for different people. However, the TMC charge is the same to all insurance companies, and self-pay people.

What are the discounts on my explanation of benefits from my insurance company?

All insurance companies negotiate discounts on prices with TMC. The TMC discount on charges varies from the most common 0 percent, to 5 percent.

Why did TMC ask for a \$500,000 loan?

TMC has a very low amount of debt, which means that during the last eight years we have been very careful when asking to incur debt.

However, starting up a new business, i.e. the TMC Community Clinic, does require cash to get the Community Clinic into operation. The reason for the need for start-up cash is that it takes 30 to 60 days to finalize clinic operating agreements with all the different insurance companies, Medicare, and Medicaid. Then, once we can start billing these companies, there could be an additional 30 to 120 days' wait before TMC receives cash payments from the insurance companies and the federal and/or state governments. The TMC Community Clinic, outpatient laboratory, X-ray, and physical therapy services all are now ways to contribute to cash collections to offset the high cost of covering the 24-hours-a-day, seven-days-a-week TMC emergency and hospital services.



Teton Medical Center Community Clinic is sponsoring the

FALL HEALTH FAIR

October 20 - 24
7:30 a.m. to Noon

Laboratory tests at significantly discounted costs. Some tests include:

**Cholesterol • Thyroid
Blood • PSA**

FLU SHOTS available daily at a substantially discounted cost.

FREE blood pressure checks.

LUCKY Test Tube daily prizes!

Available at both locations:

Teton Medical Center
Campus
915 4th St. N.W. • Choteau
(406) 466-6085

TMC Benchmark
Physical Therapy
15 6th St. S. • Fairfield
7:30 to 10:00 a.m.
(406) 467-3800


Teton Medical Center
Community Clinic
Hometown Quality Care
www.tetonmedicalcenter.net

Shadows of the Past

The Teton Medical Center Foundation Sends A Special Thank You To:

Businesses sponsoring the door prize:

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- Wings and Wild Things
- Country Hallmark
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- Mountain Front Market
- Rex's Market
- K's Auto Parts
- Kelly's Service
- PDL's Performance and Repair
- Beeline Honey, Embroidery and Quilting
- Days Gone By Antiques
- Ace Hardware

Event staff:

- Mark Lacher and Jaxson Allen of L.A. Auction Co.
- Stan Rasmussen
- Elk Country Grill
- Participating Artists
- CHS Cheerleaders and advisor Julie Shepherd
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- Danaca Bowers
- Danae Barlow
- Jessica Bach
- Trisha Christensen
- Shelly and Lloyd Walker
- Peggy Guthrie
- Judy Gollehon
- Corlene Martin
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19th Annual Fine Art Auction

- National Laundry
- North Central Montana Healthcare
- Northern Montana Insurance Services
- Stan and Mary Rathman Rex's Market
- Gene and Linda Sentz
- Mary Sexton and Rich Clough
- Stage Stop Inn
- Teton County Abstract
- 3 Rivers Communications

We look forward to 2009!

Thank you to the community for its support of this event, and to the wonderful art lovers who purchased art work and made it a very successful event!


Teton Medical Center FOUNDATION

Building a Future for Hometown Quality Care