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Community Care Clinic Week celebrates strong statewide network

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TOPEKA – Even as repeated surges of COVID-19 infections continue testing the resilience and capacities of healthcare systems in Kansas and across the globe, the desire for some sense of return to normalcy is stronger than ever.

Increasing vaccination rates offer hope that eventually we will beat this pandemic, but not fast enough to bring certainty about when “normal” will return – or even what it will look like.

Still, the presence of familiar events and traditions remind us the coronavirus has not turned everything on its ear. They might be celebrated virtually in some situations, but they continue. As they should.

Governor Laura Kelly recently signed a proclamation designating August 8-14, 2021, as Community Care Clinic Week. The commemoration, held annually in conjunction with National Health Center Week, is a time to recognize the incredible work being performed by passionate professionals throughout the year. The 33 health centers and community-based clinics across the Sunflower State that comprise the Community Care Network of Kansas well deserve the annual recognition.

Entrusted with providing services that are accessible to all Kansans, regardless of ability to pay, the network is the state’s largest source of comprehensive care for medically underserved populations. As the Governor noted in the proclamation: “Community Care clinics are leaders in providing whole-person care – integrating medical, behavioral and oral health services; thereby increasing patient choice and expanding the spectrum of behavioral and oral health providers.”

Such responsibility has been readily and regularly accepted by the dedicated staff at each clinic. Fighting on the front lines of COVID-19 to keep Kansas communities healthy and safe with reimagined modalities of care and service delivery simply has been added to the clinics' charge for the past year-and-a-half. Providing care to the Kansans most disproportionately affected by the pandemic makes this recognition even more meaningful.

The network of Federally Qualified Health Centers (FQHCs), Look-Alikes (LALs), Rural Health Clinics (RHCs) as well as public and private nonprofit primary care clinics is the backbone of the state's healthcare system. That hasn't been altered by the pandemic. Neither has the innovative, cost-efficient and consistent approaches taken by staff to improve individual and community health throughout Kansas.

Whatever the new normal will be after we get through this public health emergency, it is gratifying to know some things haven't changed. Kansans everywhere are encouraged to join Governor Kelly, this organization and many others in celebrating Community Care Clinic Week 2021.

To find a Community Care clinic near you, visit communitycareks.org. To read Governor Kelly's proclamation, click [here](#).

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About Community Care Clinic of Kansas: Community Care exists to achieve equitable access to high-quality, whole-person care for all Kansans, regardless of ability to pay. As the Primary Care Association (PCA) for Kansas, Community Care supports and strengthens its members through advocacy, education and communication. Community Care's diverse membership includes Federally Qualified Health Centers (FQHCs), and Look-Alikes (LALs), as well as public and private nonprofit Community-Based Primary Care Clinics (CBPCCs) and Rural Health Clinics (RHCs).