

The Union

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Western Sierra Medical to open Kings Beach clinic

Nonprofit organization took over Placer County center July 1, starts seeing patients July 5

KINGS BEACH, Calif. – Western Sierra Medical Clinic will begin operating the Placer County health center in Kings Beach-Tahoe in July, ensuring continuing accessible and quality health care for the thousands of residents in the North Lake Tahoe community.

The health center, located at 8665 Salmon Ave., will open as a Western Sierra health center to patients on July 5. The health center, about 20 miles east of Truckee, will provide medical and dental care 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. Tuesdays through Thursdays.

Western Sierra executives and Placer County officials have been working on the transfer of the health center and its patients for several months. The county will operate the health center until June 30. Many of the current county clinic's medical staff have joined Western Sierra and several Placer County nurses will remain on-site.

“We appreciate the opportunity to provide quality care and serve the residents of the Kings Beach community,” said Western Sierra CEO Scott McFarland. “Many of the patients will see the same providers they have known in recent years.”

Western Sierra, the largest outpatient provider in Nevada County, emphasizes preventive care, education and empowering patients to make informed decisions regarding their health.

“We are looking forward to learning more about the community and meeting the needs of our community members,” McFarland said.

Western Sierra, which will treat patients from Nevada and Placer counties, will initially offer primary care and dental services for newborns to seniors at the Kings Beach health center. But additional services, including pediatrics and women's health, could be added, said Dr. Heather Lucas-Ross, Chief Medical Officer for Western Sierra.

“We're always evaluating and looking at services at our health centers,” Lucas-Ross said. “We know there are many health care needs in the community, and we want to provide as many as possible.” With the addition of the Kings Beach health center, Western Sierra will have seven centers in the region, including three in Placer County. The nonprofit opened two Auburn health centers in fall 2016.

“Western Sierra and Placer County have made a major commitment to eastern Placer County and to its residents,” said Placer County Supervisor Jennifer Montgomery, who represents the 5th District. “It's critical that eastern Placer County residents have accessible, quality care, especially during the winter months when driving over the summit can be extremely difficult. Our alliance with Western Sierra Medical Clinic will be a benefit to us all.”

Western Sierra and county officials have been meeting for months to ensure a smooth transition for patients and staff.

“We want to thank the Placer County Board of Supervisors, staff at the county’s Health and Human Services department and the community members for their input and support,” said McFarland.

Local organizations have assisted by providing information on community needs during the expansion to Kings Beach – Community Collaborative of Tahoe Truckee, Community Recovery Resources (CoRR), Placer/Nevada Counties Health and Human Services Agency, Family Resource Centers (North Tahoe and Truckee), Sierra Mental Wellness, Tahoe Forest Hospital and Tahoe Safe Alliance.

“Community organizations have come together to help Western Sierra determine the health care needs and how to best serve residents,” said Jeffrey Brown, Director of the Placer County Health and Human Services Department. “We are pleased that Western Sierra is taking over the health center and will continue to provide accessible, quality care.”

About Western Sierra Medical Clinic

Western Sierra Medical Clinic provides comprehensive medical, dental and behavioral health care in Nevada and Sierra counties, and recently expanded to Placer County with two Auburn health centers and a soon-to-open health center in Kings Beach in the North shore area of Lake Tahoe. Founded in 1975, Western Sierra emphasizes preventive care, education and empowering patients to make informed decisions. You can learn more about Western Sierra Medical Clinic at www.wsmcmed.org and on Facebook at www.facebook.com/WesternSierraMedicalClinic.