

# Health Highlights



Community Newsletter  
Summer 2024



Doug McCoy, CEO EPHC, Sue McIlravy, Loyalton City Council, Darlene Riede, Loyalton Mayor, Christina Potter, FNP EPHC, Tracy Studer, RN, Director of Clinics, Joy Markum, Loyalton City Council, Breyden Coma, Field Representative for California State Senator Brian Dahle, and Paul Swanson, MD EPHC

## EPHC CELEBRATES GRAND OPENING OF NEW LOYALTON MEDICAL CLINIC

The new Loyalton Medical Clinic celebrated its grand opening and ribbon cutting ceremony on May 15th with an exuberant crowd of residents, local dignitaries, and staff. The afternoon was filled with clinic tours, opportunities to connect with community members and raffle prizes from Sierra Valley Home Center and lunch vouchers and snack packs from participating Loyalton merchants: The Corner, The Frogs-Ty, White's Sierra Station, and Leonard's Market.

"After much anticipation, we are excited to announce the grand opening of our new Loyalton Medical Clinic," said Doug McCoy, CEO of Eastern Plumas Health Care. "The new medical facility represents our commitment to expanding accessible, high-quality healthcare services in Sierra and Plumas Counties."

The clinic will offer a wide range of primary care services including adult and pediatric care, women's health, hearing and vision screening, sports medicine, and sports, school, and

employment physicals.

The clinic décor features soft sage hues and walls adored with local photography that hangs throughout the lobby and medical exam rooms. Open and inviting, the lobby is expansive with a fireplace as the focal point of the room. Patient registration is conveniently located near the access to the exam rooms and restrooms are also easily accessible for use.

Christina Potter, FNP will continue her role as a primary care provider for the

facility along with additional support staff. "A healthcare facility that serves both Lassen and Plumas County is an important part of the fabric of our community," said McCoy.

"This is a big win for both communities."

The Loyalton Medical Clinic has already begun full-time operations and is open Monday – Thursday from 8:00 am until 5:00 pm. The clinic is located at 701 Main Street, Loyalton and appointments can be made by calling 530-993-4857.



Christina Potter, FNP with patient.

## SKILLED NURSING FACILITIES RECEIVE 5-STAR RATING



We are proud to announce that Eastern Plumas Health Care's Skilled Nursing Facilities in Portola and Loyalton have been recognized by the Centers for Medicaid and Medicare Services (CMS) as 5-Star Overall Rated facilities.

Nursing homes are rated from 1-5 stars based on health inspections, staffing, and quality measures. According to CMS, a rating of five stars means that quality is "much above average." Only 15% of Skilled Nursing Facilities nationwide rank as 5-Star. Of the twelve Skilled Nursing Facilities within 50 miles of EPHC only three (including EPHC), rank as 5-Star.

### What is the Medicare 5-Star System?

The 5-Star System is a quality rating designed by the Centers for Medicaid and Medicare Services (CMS) to help consumers compare and evaluate skilled nursing facilities. These ratings provide a snapshot of three considerations when choosing a skilled nursing facility: health inspection history, staffing, and select quality measures.

**Health Inspections** — This rating contains information from the last three years of onsite inspections, including both standard surveys and complaints.

**Staffing** — This rating measures the hours of care given to each resident per day by RNs, LVNs, and CNAs.

**Quality Measures** — This rating reports the facility's performance on 17 different physical and clinical measures.

### How it works

The system rates a facility's quality between one and five stars in each category, with one star indicating well below average performance and five stars showing well above average marks. These three ratings are then combined to calculate a facility's overall rating of up to five stars encompassing all three sources. The ratings are updated at regular intervals.

## AWARD-WINNING SKILLED NURSING FACILITIES



Some of EPHC's Skilled Nursing Staff

Eastern Plumas Health Care operates two Skilled Nursing Facilities, one in Portola and the other in Loyalton. Together we provide care for up to 66 residents in a loving environment. When it comes to caring for residents, EPHC's nursing staff believes that every person is unique. They get to know patients' families as well as their personal histories to give them the personalized care they deserve.

A licensed physician supervises all of our residents' care. We provide 24-hour expert nursing care as well as assistance with everyday tasks and physical and occupational therapy. Our experienced staff delivers exceptionally high-quality medical care that has earned both facilities a 5-Star rating from the Centers for Medicaid and Medicare Services (CMS). Many have worked in our facilities for years and are long-time residents of Plumas and Sierra counties.

Our standby emergency room, lab, and radiology are just down the hall at our Portola campus. We have an ambulance service on-site 24/7 at our Loyalton facility that can transport residents when necessary.

Residents are encouraged to participate in a variety of social activities, such as morning exercises,

games, and religious services. They also enjoy a wide range of entertainment and off-site excursions.

Residents live in individual or double rooms. We encourage residents and their families to bring in personal items to decorate their rooms, and we hope that family and friends will visit often. We do everything we can to help our residents feel at home.

We accept Medicare and Medi-Cal, as well as most other insurance plans.

## CALIFORNIA ADVANCING AND INNOVATING MEDI-CAL (CALAIM)

Eastern Plumas Health Care's CalAIM department offers Enhanced Care Management (ECM) services for Partnership HealthPlan of California managed Medi-Cal members. Currently serving populations including patients who are at risk of avoidable hospital use, at risk for long term care, and/or pregnant or postpartum, EPHC's CalAIM team continues to expand services to additional populations. Care Managers visit community members where they live to complete assessments and coordinate care. Services provided by EPHC's CalAIM team include connecting with health and social services, scheduling health visits, getting rides to health visits, connection to programs and services, and more. EPHC's CalAIM office is located down the hall from Hair Faire at 703 Main Street in Loyalton, office hours vary. For more information, reach out to CalAIM at 530-832-6622.

# THERAPY & WELLNESS CENTER FOR KIDS OPENS IN LOYALTON



Therapy and Wellness Center for Kids

Since its opening in June, the Therapy & Wellness Center for Kids in Loyalton has been a light in the lives of children and families by supporting the overall growth and development of the child. Located in the picturesque Sierra Valley in Loyalton, the Therapy & Wellness Center for Kids features one large therapy room equipped with two different kinds of swings, a magnetic chalk wall, a bean bag chair and cushy therapy flooring to facilitate effective therapy sessions. This is a sensory-friendly space designed with the needs of our young patients in mind.

Pediatric Occupational Therapist (OT) Jennifer Weissensee MS, OTRL believes working with the whole family ensures their child has every advantage possible to enable them to reach their potential. "With this dedicated space for Pediatric Occupational Therapy we



Jennifer Weissensee, MS, OTRL with Patient

will be able to offer comprehensive services for children," said Weissensee.

Pediatric Occupational Therapy plays a crucial role in supporting children's development and independence. For children with conditions such as autism, sensory processing difficulties, developmental delays, and cerebral palsy, early intervention can significantly enhance their quality of life and enable them to live life to the fullest.

It takes a referral from the child's primary care provider to receive services from the Therapy & Wellness Center for Kids but once that happens there is a wide range of services



Jennifer Weissensee, MS, OTRL with Patient

available to meet the unique needs of each child like Sensory Integration Therapy, Parent Education and Training, Motor Skills Development, Gross Motor Skills Training and Cognitive Interventions.

Clinic hours are Tuesdays and Wednesdays from 2-5pm, and Jennifer Weissensee is now taking new clients. The center is conveniently located at 700 Third Street, Loyalton, CA 96118, first door on the right.

For more information about the Therapy & Wellness for Kids or to schedule an appointment, call 530-832-6502 or visit [ephc.org](http://ephc.org).

## SUMMER PROJECTS HEAT UP



Summer is here and along with our area temperatures projects continue to heat up at EPHC! Fresh off of our ribbon cutting event for the new Loyalton clinic, we are moving directly into our refurbishment plan for the Loyalton Skilled Nursing campus. Beginning in mid-July, we will begin removal of 30,000 square feet of flooring throughout the facility and replace it with brand new tile. This will be the final step in our main corridor areas with the new wall treatments and handrails already having been installed. The process will take approximately 45-60 days to complete so we look forward to our bright new look to be done by September 15th. We will also be repainting the building at the same time to give the campus and our residents a much-needed upgrade.

After receiving wonderful support from our community including Plumas Bank, Portola Rotary, Firetrucks Unlimited, Ace Hardware of Portola, The Common Good Community Foundation, and the EPHC Foundation, our new ambulance arrived and will be on the road this month. I'd like to recognize our EMS team for their participation and presence at area events to ensure immediate availability for community members and visitors if the need arises.

Summer temps and outdoor activities often can lead to medical issues, so we want you to stay safe and be confident that if you do need us, we are ready to serve!

**Doug McCoy, CEO**  
Eastern Plumas Health Care District

# Invitation to Ribbon Cutting Event

Now that the Test to Treat Equity grant from the California Department of Public Health has been awarded and three shelter systems have been purchased, EPHC will be hosting a ribbon cutting event on Wednesday, July 31 at 9 am. The public, local dignitaries and organizations like County Public Health, County Sheriffs, Beckworth Fire, Care Flight, and California Highway Patrol will be invited to attend a ceremony featuring tours and refreshments. With 91% of these purchases funded, EPHC only required a small contribution toward the staggering award of over \$506,000. The grant not only covered the purchase

of three shelters but included trailers and a half ton pickup truck for transportation of these large structures. The portable structures are multipurpose; from disaster response to health emergencies, these central command centers will serve Plumas and Sierra Counties should a controlled environment be required in addition to or outside of medical facilities.

Mark your calendar and plan to join the celebration. For more information about the ribbon cutting event or the shelters, contact EPHC Program Manager, Joanna Garneau at 530-832-6632.



**Western Shelter GateKeeper Shelter**



**GateKeeper Shelter Interior**