Written by By William Madaras For the Sun
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Tests kick off the Community Health Fair May 4

GALLUP - Rehoboth McKinley Christian Hospital will offer low cost blood screening tests for cholesterol, triglycerides, HDL/LDL, fasting glucose level and TSH to the public for only $25 from April 8-13 and April 15-20 from 7 am - 9 am, including Saturdays, in the hospital's main lobby at 1901 Red Rock Drive. Confidential test results can be mailed or picked up at the Community Health Fair on May 4.

Area residents can save up to $400 with additional tests for Hepatitis C, HIV, A1c Prostate Specific Antigen, vitamins D and B12, by calling for an appointment at the RMCH information desk (505) 863-7325. Hepatitis C and HIV tests are available for $25 each, or both for $15, the vitamin D test is $25 and all remaining tests are $20 each. Participants are urged to drink plenty of water and ingest no caffeine for up to 8 hours before taking the tests.

"We offer these low-cost tests to the community to make residents aware of the dangers of hypertension, cholesterol, diabetes, and other illnesses to enable them to recognize their own numbers, so they can address health issues before they progress," RMCHCS CEO David Canejo said. "Our mission is to improve the health of New Mexicans by implementing and evaluating effective strategies for cardiovascular disease prevention and management, and encourage families to participate."

City of Gallup and McKinley County Employees Covered by Employers

The City of Gallup and McKinley County employees will have their basic blood tests covered by their employers by showing an employee ID when the test is given.

“This is such a great opportunity and value for the city’s employees that we wanted to take advantage of it,” said Maryann Ustick, City Manager, Gallup. “These tests pay for themselves by promoting a healthy workforce, which saves the city and its employees money with lower health costs. We look forward to our employees making an appointment for the blood test.”

“The health and wellbeing of our employees is something that is truly important to us and we hope that many of them take advantage of the opportunity to screen for diseases that have such a terrible, devastating impact on our community, such as diabetes, high cholesterol and others,” said Brian Money, Deputy County Manager, McKinley County.

Community Health Fair set for May 4

RMCH, in conjunction with the University of New Mexico’s-Gallup Branch and the Gallup Cancer Center, will hold The Community Health Fair, Saturday, May 4th from 10 am-2 pm at the Rio West Mall, 300 West Maloney Avenue in Gallup. This year’s event is themed “Destination Health” and is being offered to all residents as it has in the past. Last year it attracted more than 500 visitors who stopped by the Rio West Mall to explore 55 vendors’ booths. So far this year 39 vendors have signed up.

“We encourage new vendors and those who exhibited previously to sign-up for a booth. The Community Health Fair is an excellent opportunity to hand out brochures and information to families from Gallup, McKinley County and beyond,” says Juliana Dooley, RMCH Behavioral Health Collaborative Coordinator. Dooley welcomes vendors to offer healthcare booth activity or a hands-on display but must be a not-for profit organization. She notes there will be no cost for booth vendors, but is asking that they supply their own table and chairs.

McKinley County ranked 31 out of 32 unhealthiest counties in U.S.

In their survey of 32 of the unhealthiest counties in the U.S., the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation and the University of Wisconsin Population Health Institute in Madison, ranked McKinley County 31 out of 32. The rankings use state and national data to compare U.S. counties on more than 30 measures across four areas, including health behaviors, clinical care, physical environment, and social and environmental factors.

“When you consider these health statistics, residents can see how important healthcare is and to be able to detect medical issues before they become life impacting,” Dooley said. “Many of these issues can be detected with simple blood tests.”

For more information, contact: William Madaras at William@Glasslanternpr.com

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