

# DEPARTMENTAL MATTERS

## INDIAN RIVER COUNTY MEMORANDUM

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TO: Honorable Board of County Commissioners

THROUGH: John A. Titkanich, Jr., County Administrator

FROM: Suzanne Boyll, Human Resources Director

Date: May 28, 2024

Subject: Indian River County Everside Health Center – 6 Month Update & Request for Approval of Additional Staffing and Direct Contract for Radiology Services

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### **BACKGROUND**

On February 21, 2023, the Indian River County Board of County Commissioners approved a five (5) year agreement with Everside Health and authorized staff to proceed with implementation of the Indian River County Everside Health Center. Staff worked with Everside to select the location, negotiate and execute the lease, complete the buildout, and recruit the authorized health center staff of a Nurse Practitioner and two (2) Medical Assistants with the understanding that additional staffing may be required as utilization increased.

The following guiding principles were identified as important to consider during the implementation of the health center:

- Establish a high-quality health center to attract and retain employees
- Location for care needs to be convenient and easily accessible
- Clinic should be financially sound, producing plan savings over time

On October 30, 2023, the Indian River County Everside Health Center opened and began serving eligible employees, retirees and dependents over 2 years of age of the Indian River County BOCC, Sheriff's Office, Clerk of Court, Tax Collector, Property Appraiser and Supervisor of Elections.

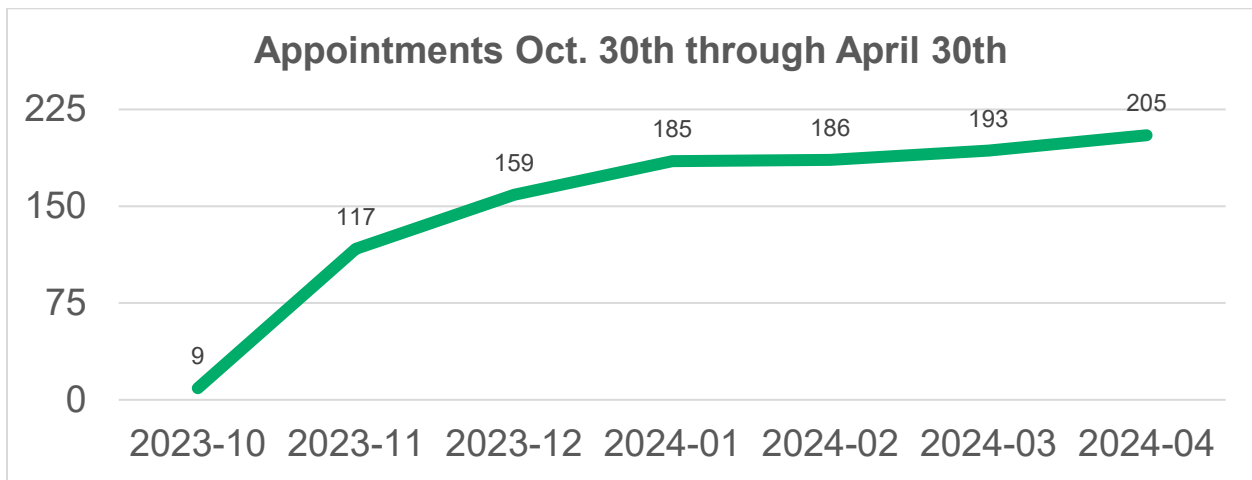
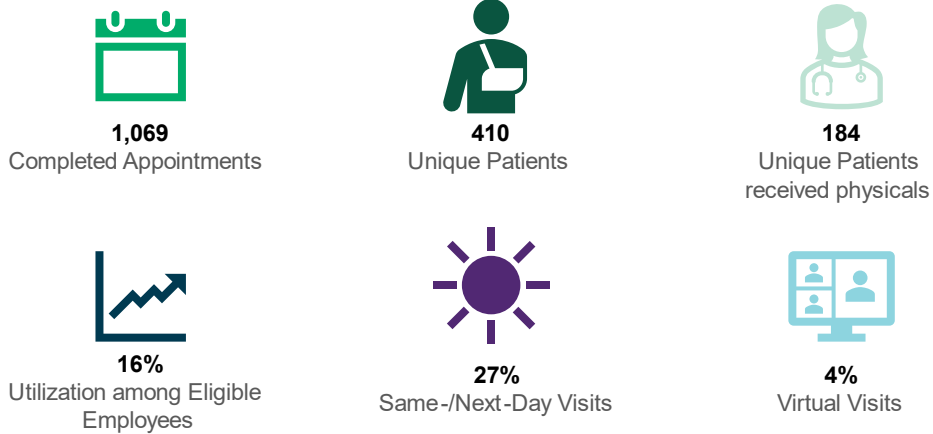
- **Location:** 960 37<sup>th</sup> Place, Suite 101, Vero Beach, FL 32960
- **Clinic Staff:** 1 Nurse Practitioner and 2 Medical Assistants
- **Operating Hours:** 40 hours per week
  - Monday 7:30 am – 4:30 pm
  - Tuesday 9 am – 6 pm
  - Wednesday 7:30 am – 4:30 pm
  - Thursday 9 am – 6 pm
  - Friday 7:30 am – 4:30 pm

The services offered in the Indian River County Everside Health Center include:

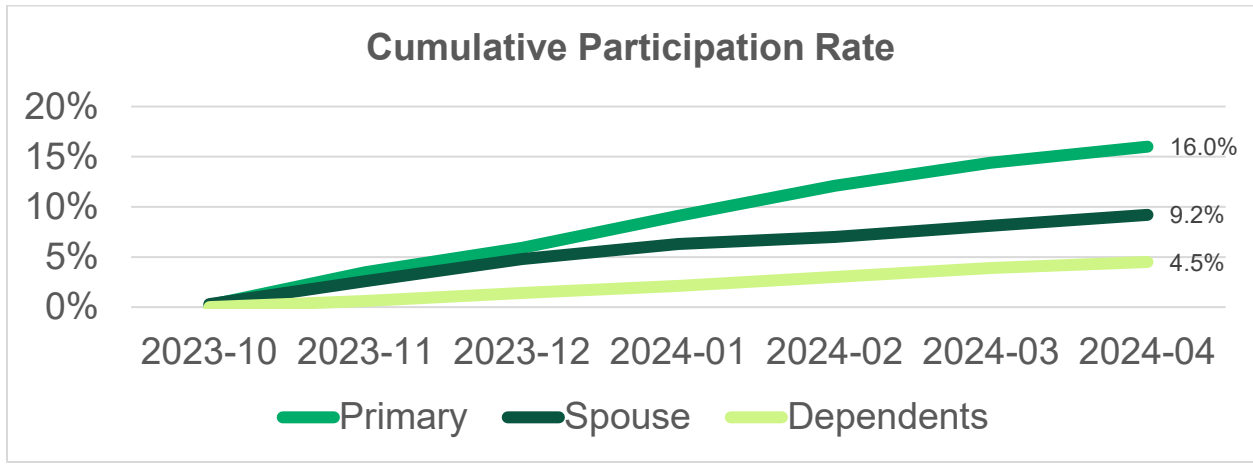
- **Preventive care:** biometric screening, preventive screening and counseling, physical exams, wellness exams
- **Lifestyle and disease management:** health education and promotion, chronic condition coaching
- **Chronic care counseling:** cardiac, cancer, diabetes, depression, musculoskeletal
- **Acute or personal care:** ear, nose and throat conditions, respiratory infections, gastrointestinal disorders, sprains and strains, urinary problems, rashes, and lesions
- **Ancillary services:** immunizations, vaccinations, lab draw and handling, pharmaceutical dispensing, and limited occupational health.
- **Coordination with other County offered programs:** Kannact, SurgeryPlus, CanaRx, Employee Assistance Program

**SIX (6) MONTH HEALTH CENTER UPDATE**

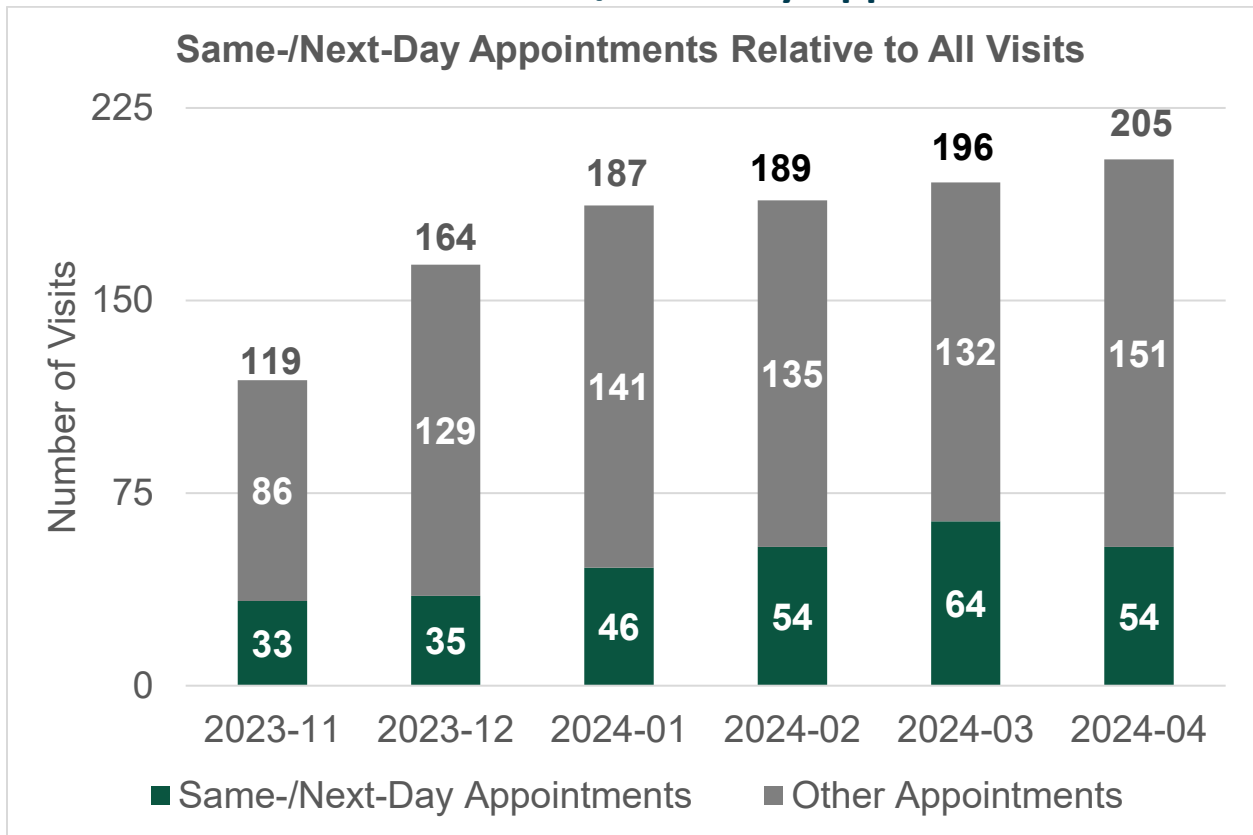
**Utilization is rising steadily**



The participation rate has risen to 10.8% among all eligibles: 16.0% among primaries, 9.2% among spouses, and 4.5% among dependents.



## Two Hours Blocked For Same-/Next-Day Appointments



## Patients are very satisfied with Everside

This feedback is specific to the Indian River County Everside Health Center.

Everside is convenient and doesn't feel like a typical office where people are hoarded into rooms and on a strict time limit. The appointments are at the patient's pace and the practitioner takes time to listen and cares about the overall outcome.

Staff is amazing, they take their time with you and you don't feel like a number. They take a whole health approach

Continue providing top notch health care, your focus on the patients needs and well being exceeds that of likely every primary care of whom I've visited.

There's no need for improvement! The staff at Everside health is awesome

Everside Health has been the best experience in health care that I have been exposed to. I am very fortunate for the opportunity that the county offers.

Very pleasant staff who takes the time to listen to and address questions and concerns. Highly recommend Everside!

I was very ill, without an appointment, but they managed to fit me in, were VERY helpful, and helped me tremendously. Everyone was thorough and kind. I am so grateful!

Not rushed, thorough questions, kind and respectful, did not have to wait long. Everyone was very pleasant!

It was the first time in my life that I felt like I was able to connect with the provider and go over my history with time and care.

Had run out of insulin as insurance was no longer covering one on and pharmacy was not getting a reply from other doctor. I tried to communicate with other doctor and he just sent me a list of meds to see if covered or not. Everside scheduled a same day appointment talk with me about life and concerns and came up with a plan and sent prescription to pharmacy which was filled the same day

I couldn't be more satisfied with my visit to Everside! I was able to have a discussion with the Dr for over 30 min about concerns and changes. What a relief, finally, to be heard.

A Net Promoter Score is a universal metric based on a survey question that asks respondents to rate on a scale of 1 to 10 their likelihood of recommending a brand to someone else.



**Indian River County Everside Health Center Net Promotor Score is 89 based on Patient Survey Responses**

## Everside has diverted healthcare costs

<p><b>\$528,659</b> <b>Total Value of Visits</b></p> <p>The average duration of a primary care visit is 9.7 minutes, and the average cost is \$117. The average Everside visit is 41.0 minutes, and there have been 1,069 completed appointments among Indian River County employees so far, putting the value of those visits at \$528,659.</p>	<p><b>\$59,954</b> <b>Referral Savings</b></p> <p>The industry referral rate is 20.3%, but the Everside Health referral rate is 13.1%. The estimated cost to the health plan is \$967 per referral. Everside Health utilizes RubiconMD, a group of salaried specialists who provide a second opinion before a referral is made.</p>	<p><b>\$27,903</b> <b>ER/Urgent Care Avoidance</b></p> <p>There have been 289 same-/next-day appointments. It is estimated that 18% of Everside same-/next-day visits are avoided urgent care visits that cost an average of \$147. It is also estimated that 3% of Everside same-/next-day visits are avoided ER visits that cost an average of \$2,251.</p>	<p><b>\$41,078</b> <b>Member Savings</b></p> <p>The average member cost share for an outside office visit is \$30-40 (depending on the plan), and Everside provided 1,069 visits. The average ER deductible is \$250, and Everside prevented 9 ER visits. The average member cost share for generic prescriptions is \$5-10, and Everside dispensed 173 generic prescriptions. The average member cost share for brand prescriptions is \$50-65, and Everside dispensed 2 brand prescriptions.</p>	<p><b>Total of diverted health care costs and member savings = \$657,594</b></p>
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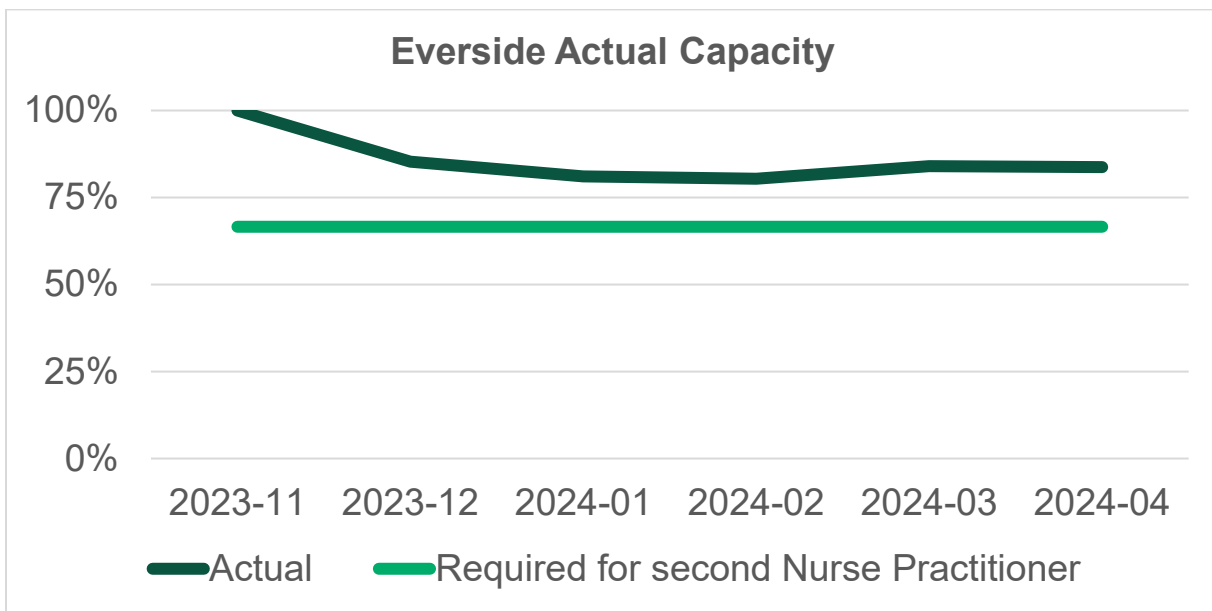


## **OTHER SAVINGS/BENEFIT**

In addition to the savings of \$657,594, other savings and improved productivity are realized due to a reduction in time away from work for appointments. The health center is conveniently located near many County facilities, and there is no waiting time for appointments which results in less time away from work. 753 of the 1,069 appointments to date have been for the primary insured member. Assuming each member saves one-hour per appointment, this would equal 753 hours of reduction in lost time.

The health center provides stress free access to medical coverage. The high utilization of the health center, and the high level of patient satisfaction, supports our overall goal of improved health and wellbeing for our employees and their families. Through the Indian River County Everside Health Center, our employees and their families have convenient access to quality care, prescriptions, labs and appropriate referrals to specialists which provides our employees and their families with the resources to address their health and wellness needs without lengthy delays.

**The health center is operating at above 66% capacity which is the threshold for adding an additional Nurse Practitioner.**



## **OPERATIONAL COSTS ARE ON BUDGET**

Based on the current staffing model of one (1) Nurse Practitioner and two (2) Medical Assistants, the operational costs, including the office lease, are estimated to be approximately \$800,000 per year and expenses are tracking within this range. Actual costs will vary based on utilization. Sufficient funds have been budgeted in anticipation of a continuing increase in

utilization, adding another provider, and providing increased services for the remainder of the fiscal year.

### **APPROVAL FOR ADDITIONAL STAFFING**

To continue to meet the needs of our employees and covered dependents, staff recommends the addition of another nurse practitioner to provide increased staffing to deliver services to employees and dependents over 2 years of age of the Indian River County BOCC, Sheriff's Office, Clerk of Court, Tax Collector, Property Appraiser and Supervisor of Elections.

The projected cost for the addition of a nurse practitioner and associated direct costs are estimated to be \$225,000 (actual staffing expenses may vary). It is also anticipated that labs, pharmacy, and medical supplies will increase as additional members obtain services in the health center.

### **APPROVAL FOR DIRECT CONTRACT FOR RADIOLOGY**

After learning our members were having difficulty scheduling follow-up radiology services and experiencing increased fees through Cleveland Clinic, staff requested Everside Health explore a direct contract for radiology and imaging services to improve the referral and scheduling process and provide a cost-effective alternative for members.

Staff recommend approval of a direct contract for radiology services through Everside. Once a direct contract for services is established, members will be able to receive no cost radiology services and imaging when referred by the Everside Health Center to include x-rays, CT scans, and MRIs that are medically necessary. The direct contract will be reviewed by Lockton for competitiveness prior to implementation. The radiology expenses will be billed by Everside as a pass-through expense to the County and paid from the Health Insurance Fund/Other Contractual Services/Employee Health Clinic account, number 50412719-033490-23005.

While providing radiology services through Everside will result in an increased expense under the health center, it is anticipated it will also result in comparable savings under the health plan due to diverting costs from the health plan. Additionally, under the direct radiology contract, members will not utilize the health plan and will save on imaging copays/coinsurance under the health plan.

### **FUNDING**

Sufficient funding exists in the current Health Insurance Fund/Other Contractual Services/Employee Health Clinic account, number 50412719-033490-23005 for the recommended addition of radiology services and an additional nurse practitioner. We will also request a budget of \$1,300,000 in FY24/25 to cover increased utilization and staffing.

Account Name	Account Number	FY 24/25 Budget
Health Insurance Fund/Other Contractual Services/Employee Health Clinic	50412719-033490-23005	\$1,300,00

## **RECOMMENDATIONS**

Staff respectfully request the Board of County Commissioners approve authorizing Everside to recruit and employ an additional nurse practitioner to enhance staffing at the Indian River County Everside Health Center, resulting in staffing of two (2) Nurse Practitioners and two (2) Medical Assistants; approve authorizing Everside to enter into a direct contract for radiological and imaging services, with pricing to be reviewed by Lockton and staff for competitiveness, with costs paid as a pass-through expense under the Everside agreement; authorizing Everside to begin providing no cost radiology referrals to health center patients when referred by Everside Health for imaging under the direct contract; and authorizing the Chairman to execute any necessary amendment to the agreement with Everside to implement the authorized changes upon review by Lockton and staff as well as review by the County Attorney for legal sufficiency.