

# Ramona health clinic opens in new location



Nurse Practitioner Chinh Doan anticipates the new North County Health Services clinic at 220 Rotanzi St. will provide convenient access for patients and a more collaborative work environment for the staff. ( Julie Gallant)

BY JULIE GALLANT

North County Health Services expects to accommodate more patients with better flow at its new Ramona medical clinic that opened Tuesday, March 26.

NCHS Ramona clinic is serving patients in a remodeled facility at 220 Rotanzi St., formerly the Sears building. The former clinic at 217 Earlham St., which was occupied by NCHS since 1978, closed as of Friday, March 22, to make the transition. The former site was about 5,000 square feet and the new location is about 8,500 square feet.

By moving, the clinic increased its capacity from eight medical exam rooms to 13 exam rooms and from two dental chairs to four dental chairs with expanded operatory space.

NCHS Director of Operations Kory Hernandez said planning for the move began about a year-and-a-half ago by looking at sites. He said the Rotanzi site had great bones with an adaptable layout and suitable electrical equipment.

The new clinic was originally scheduled to open Oct. 22, 2018, but was delayed by county permits and approvals.

“The team put together a great effort this weekend,” said Hernandez, who helped oversee the move. “Everybody knew what they were doing. It was a lot of work, but they did it with a smile on their face.”

NCHS Ramona’s first dental hygienist patient was Ariadne Vega, 7, who came to the clinic with her mother Marisol and brother Esteban.

Marisol Vega said she has been an NCHS patient for two years and appreciates the nice staff who give her good care.

“Whatever questions I have, I get all my answers,” said Marisol, who expects to get faster service at the new clinic. “I can’t complain but maybe this time the service will be a little faster.”

Dentist Audrey Foroutan said the average wait time of one week to 10 days for a dental appointment should get shorter now that they have a larger facility and anticipated increase in staff.

Chinh Doan, a nurse practitioner who has worked at NCHS for seven years, said improvements include easier access for patients — many of whom live nearby and can walk — better Internet access, and a more collaborative work environment where the five medical providers can work together in one office space.

“My four patients this morning said they were so happy and everything’s good,” Doan said. “It’s a good thing that many patients can walk here.”

NCHS operates 12 locations across North San Diego and Riverside counties and assisted more than 67,000 patients in 2018.