

April 4, 2019

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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HOPE Center celebrates 30 years and invites the community to visit its new facilities

HIV/AIDS Clinic Introduces Opportunities for Community Collaboration

MACON – HOPE Center, the Ryan White-Funded HIV/AIDS clinic serving North Central Health District's 13 counties, is excited to announce the official grand opening of the clinic's expansion and its new offering, Community Outreach, Mentoring, Pharmacy, Assessment & Supportive Services (COMPASS). The center's staff invites everyone to attend the grand opening ceremony Wednesday, May 15, 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. HOPE Center, 180 Emery Hwy. in Macon.

Serving the community since 1985, but providing services as HOPE Center since 1989, the center marks its official 30th anniversary this year. The center has been providing care under the medical direction of world-renowned infectious disease doctors and spearheading new approaches to HIV/AIDS care. The center serves those living and affected by HIV/AIDS, providing a comprehensive, personalized approach to treatment that includes medical services, behavioral health services, peer counseling and assistance with housing, transportation and finances.

The HOPE Center expansion, built on to the pre-existing facility located at 180 Emery Highway, adds an additional 8,000 square feet to the clinic. The new space is designed to house expanded case management, mental health counseling, dental office, administrative services and HOPE Center conference and training space. This space allows the center more opportunity to meet the center's vision of becoming a medical home model.

"We're always looking for opportunities to evolve and improve the services we provide to our clients," said Dale Wrigley, HOPE Center Director. "HOPE Center is designed to be a medical home for those living with HIV/AIDS, and as the needs of the community grow, we need to respond appropriately. The new space for HOPE Center gives us the space we need to expand the services we already provide and room to introduce new services as they're developed."

In addition to unveiling the clinic's expansion, HOPE Center will be opening COMPASS, the clinic's pharmacy and health innovation center, to the public. The 9,000 square foot space

serves as a health innovation site where community members, health educators, students and healthcare professionals can come together to work, organize, develop and implement innovative health programs and educational presentations. COMPASS has been designed for our community health partners to work collaboratively to provide healthy activities and social events that spur conversations. COMPASS seeks to engage partners in forming connections that secure health funding and health resources for our community.

At its core, COMPASS houses a pharmacy specializing in HIV/AIDS, hepatitis and pre-exposure prophylaxis (PrEP). Though the pharmacy is focused on these services, COMPASS remains a full-service pharmacy opened to the public, designed to serve the community by offering pick-up, delivery and mail-order services available. COMPASS also houses a clinic offering vaccinations, STD testing and other treatment and preventative services.

In addition to providing healthcare services, COMPASS will serve as a hub for community activities. COMPASS includes work spaces, a conference room, gym, meditation room for community members. In addition to free access, limited office space and shared work spaces are available to rent for businesses, organizations and individuals. Future additions to COMPASS include a cooking demonstration area for classes led by the in-house dietitian and small farmers' market to ensure everyone has access to fresh produce.

"We want COMPASS to become a central meeting point that makes our community healthier together," said Wrigley. "Our goal is to create an open and comfortable environment that fosters true innovation and collaboration. Macon is a city full of motivated people full of ideas and we're excited to be able to host their work."

The grand opening ceremony is scheduled to begin at 10 a.m., Wednesday, May 15 at the HOPE Center located at 180 Emery Hwy. in Macon. The ceremony will include a ribbon cutting, speakers from public health and community partners, refreshments and tours of the new facilities.

For more information about HOPE Center and the services available, visit [NCHD52.org/HOPE](https://www.nchd52.org/HOPE).

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About North Central Health District

North Central Health District is a [nationally accredited public health provider](#) dedicated to preventing disease, promoting health and protecting Central Georgia communities against health threats through education, service, advocacy and collaboration. NCHD serves people of all classes and economic status within Baldwin, Crawford, Hancock, Houston, Jasper, Jones, Macon-Bibb, Monroe, Peach, Putnam, Twiggs, Washington and Wilkinson Counties.

Appointments can be made for certain services. Fees are based on income for those without insurance. For more information about NCHD, visit [NCHD52.org](https://www.nchd52.org) and follow NCHD on [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#) and [Instagram](#).