



The Community Health Center of Burlington
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2 page

BURLINGTON – New Decade of Growth Rising from Old North End Community Landmark

Crowds of spectators gathered today outside of their Community Health Center to say goodbye to the past and greet the future with the beginning of deconstruction and demolition of their old main facility at 617 Riverside. This new construction phase marks the start of the final phase of the Community Health Center of Burlington's (CHCB's) Gateway Project building construction. Construction of the new facility is scheduled to be completed in March 2012.

Although the construction progress is very exciting with all that it means for the future of CHCB and the expanded care it will make possible, it does bring with it mixed emotions for the many CHCB patients, staff, donors and supporters who have become a part of the CHCB family in the current building. In 2001, the success of The Building Renewal Project and the commitment of generous community donors set the stage for a decade of program expansion and patient growth. Nearly 500,000 patient visits later, CHCB is once again at a transformational moment in its history. Since the renovation was completed in 2001, nearly 6,000 patients have been added. Throughout this growth, CHCB converted storage rooms to offices and converted offices to dental operatories. It has been a wonderful decade of service, but CHCB out grew its Riverside Avenue building and is looking ahead with excitement as the new facility is rising from the old.

"I'm excited for the new building. I'm a little sad the old building is coming down after being here for so long. It started out as a little health center when I first arrived but it has evolved into something tremendous for the community," said one of the last patients seen in CHCB's old building.

The need for the new building came about in part because of the age of the current facility; some parts were originally built in 1881. Although it was beautifully renovated in 2001, it is structurally unable to accommodate further expansion. New construction was deemed the most cost-effective use of community dollars. This new facility will provide CHCB with the space and new opportunities to grow to meet the changing needs of the community and CHCB's patients.

Over 96% of the construction costs have been earned through a competitive national grant that CHCB received in December of 2009. The remaining funds must be raised through community dollars and CHCB's Heart of Health Care capital campaign is underway to raise the remaining \$700,000 in community funds to complete the project.

For 39 years, The **Community Health Center of Burlington** has increased access to high quality health care for Vermonters, regardless of their ability to pay. One of Burlington's largest family

medical and dental practices and one of eight non-profit, federally qualified health centers in Vermont, the Health Center provides comprehensive health, dental, and human services to all community residents, with special programs that ensure access to care for people without health insurance and adults and families experiencing homelessness. These special programs include: medical visits starting at \$10 for the uninsured or 15% of the total cost for dental visits; free and low cost prescription programs; social work support; and interpreter services for non-English speaking patients. CHCB's Homeless Health Care Program offers a full range of services at two specialized clinics, Safe Harbor Clinic for adults and families at 184 South Winooski Avenue and Pearl Street Clinic designed for at-risk youth and young adults located on Pearl Street. CHCB is a United Way of Chittenden County agency and is funded in part by a grant from the US Health Resources and Services Administration and generous community support.