

Chestnut Takes Medical Care To The Community With Mobile Unit

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EAST ST. LOUIS – St. Clair County, Illinois sits in the heart of a medically underserved area of the U. S. People living there are 23 percent less likely than the national average to access a primary health care provider - a physician, nurse practitioner, clinical nurse specialist or physician assistant. (www.regionalneeds.org)

To reach people where they are, Chestnut Family Health Center will host a mobile medical stop monthly at the 5th and Missouri MetroLink stop, 199 N. 6th St., East St. Louis, IL. The first event is Thursday, December 8 from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. The mobile unit will be at the same location during the same hours the second Thursday of each month throughout 2023.

Patients can be seen on the mobile unit for allergies, wellness exams, cholesterol, diabetes, employment physicals, heart disease, high blood pressure, infections, sprains, strains, thyroid conditions, and well-child exams. The mobile unit is not an urgent care clinic. In some cases, patients will need to establish ongoing care at Chestnut.

“We hope to serve at least ten new clients each month,” said Jennifer Evans, Chestnut Mobile Services Coordinator. “Since June of this year, practitioners have seen more than 100 patients at mobile unit stops in various locations. We’re eager to incorporate the mobile unit into our MetroLink partnership.”

The mobile unit stops are an outgrowth of a Chestnut and MetroLink partnership that has two-person teams working 40 hours per week to address transit-related issues. The teams connect with riders in need by using motivational interviewing that focuses on early intervention and treatment.

The Chestnut MetroLink Team will also be available at the mobile unit stops to link individuals to behavioral health resources, provide crisis intervention for those impacted by mental health and/or substance use, and distribute free NARCAN[®], which reverses the effects of opioid overdose.

“The MetroLink riders who we help often need a variety of services, including primary health care. It’s not unusual for them to face barriers to getting care,” said Nathan Zeller, Chestnut Health Systems Behavioral Health Outreach Specialist. “We’re confident that these planned stops will be an effective solution.” This year, the MetroLink team has engaged with more than 600 riders, connecting more than 100 to community services.

Chestnut focuses on integrated care including substance use treatment, mental health counseling, and primary health care. It has permanent locations in Granite City, Belleville, and Maryville, IL, among others.

No appointment is necessary, and patients will be seen on a first-come, first-served basis. However, an appointment can be made by calling 618-512-1863.