



**UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
RURAL DEVELOPMENT**

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**NEW MEDICAL OFFICE BUILDING FOSTERS GROWTH
--Improved Health Care Services and Enhanced Recruitment
of Health Care Professionals To Be Gained**

McCook, Neb., March 21, 2003 – The ribbon was cut today in McCook to celebrate the completion of the new 20,000 square foot medical office building that will serve over 22,000 residents in McCook and surrounding areas. USDA Rural Development presented an USDA symbolic funding check of \$2,558,000 to The Community Hospital Association, representing USDA's financial commitment to the project. The Community Hospital Association, provided the remaining \$672,400 for the over \$3.2 million project that allowed for the new clinic and improvements to the existing clinic.

Residents of primarily Red Willow, Frontier, Hayes and Hitchcock counties in Nebraska and Decatur County in Kansas will be served by the enhanced medical facilities.

"Our existing McCook Clinic consisted of approximately 10,000 square feet which was insufficient space to accommodate the 11 health care professionals it housed," stated Gary Bieganski, president of The Community Hospital Association. "Our new medical office building will allow us to recruit additional practitioners when needed in the future."

The Community Hospital Association is a not-for profit corporation run by a Board of Directors who are selected by the membership. Public funding is provided to the hospital through the Community Hospital Health Foundation. Community Hospital, owns both the new and existing medical clinics.

The new McCook Clinic is one part of an overall master plan to improve the delivery of medical services to the area. The clinic, located adjacent to the existing clinic, has the capacity to accommodate a minimum of 14 practitioners and provides adequate space for the clinic, ancillary services, a reception area, business office, support staff, department circulation and undeveloped space for future use. Reduced waiting and consultation times due to more exam rooms and practicing physicians available are anticipated results. The complex is leased to McCook Clinic, P.C. who will be in charge of the operations of the clinic, with the clinic itself being maintained by the Community Hospital.

A specialty clinic, presently located next to the emergency room in the hospital, will be housed in the existing clinic. This will allow for the expansion of specialty clinic services and patient visits and will improve the flow of patients from the general clinic to the specialty clinic.

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Funding was also utilized to extend the driveway at the existing clinic to provide for additional parking and to ease the traffic flow around the hospital and clinic. Approximately 3,000 square feet in the new medical office building was finished for a meeting room/education space. Additionally, a vestibule walkway enclosure of the new medical office building, the existing clinic and the hospital was constructed.

"The addition of the new McCook Clinic will help bring continued quality medical care to McCook and its neighboring communities and will help attract medical professionals to the area," stated Roberta Mues, rural development specialist for USDA Rural Development. "Rural areas need to plan for the future to ensure that the medical needs of their residents are met. USDA Rural Development is pleased to be a part of this project and we commend The Community Hospital Association for their foresight and action taken to bring enhanced medical care to an area that is identified as being medically underserved and with a shortage of medical professionals."

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