

7 MYTH BUSTERS

MYTH: LCHC is a St. Charles or Mosaic Clinic

TRUTH: It is not. La Pine Community Health Center (LCHC) is an independent nonprofit corporation of its own, established as a Federally Qualified Health Center (FQHC) in June, 2009. Prior to that time, it was a privately owned clinic for over 20 years. Mosaic is also a FQHC but does not have a presence in south county.

MYTH: LCHC is a “free clinic” fully funded by a government grant

TRUTH: It is not a free clinic. However, in 2021, 20% of its income came via a federal grant through Health Resource Services Administration (HRSA) and oversight is through the Bureau of Primary Care. The additional 80% is obtained through insurance payments (reimbursements) for patient visits, and grants or funding from other sources.

MYTH: LCHC only cares for the underserved

TRUTH: LCHC is mandated to care for the underserved and those with Medicaid and Medicare, but LCHC serves everyone including those with commercial insurance and those who can afford to pay for their own healthcare.

MYTH: Providers only stay for two years or less

TRUTH: More than half of LCHC’s providers have been with the organization for more than four years. LCHC qualifies for providers to receive federal student loan repayment through the National Health Service Corp. (NHSC) by working at a rural community health center. This myth used to be more factual, but after 2012, providers began staying after their loans were repaid.

MYTH: Providers are all new graduates

TRUTH: See above. Also, in the past five years, LCHC has hired three doctors, one Physician’s Assistant (PA), and two Family Nurse Practitioners (FNP)s who each had over 10 years of experience. New graduates are still hired through the NHSC loan repayment program and are mentored by the very experienced providers who work at LCHC.

MYTH: We are in competition with the St. Charles La Pine Clinic

TRUTH: Since the St. Charles clinic opened in 2018, LCHC management has promoted a collaborative relationship with them. This has been achieved, and both clinics work together to assist the communities we serve in the best possible way. For example, when either organization’s x-ray or lab is not operational, patients are sent for their x-rays or labs to the other clinic as needed.

MYTH: St. Charles, as an urgent care center, offers more services than LCHC

TRUTH: LCHC offers the same services as the St. Charles La Pine Clinic. LCHC has a walk-in clinic that provides the medical services that are at the same level as the St. Charles urgent care. LCHC also offers additional services that St. Charles in La Pine does not offer or the patients must go to Bend. Services such as Outreach, Dental, Behavioral Health, etc. As stated above, LCHC and St. Charles La Pine collaborate on as many services as possible to benefit the communities. When the new LCHC Wellness Center building opens, it will receive referrals from St. Charles for services such as ultrasounds, mammography, and CT scans.