

14 churches to offer health care

By Amelia Buragas
The Capital Times

Fourteen area churches are working together to do their part to make health care available to area residents.

On Aug. 14, the churches are sponsoring a Touched Twice Clinic that will provide free health services to all who need them. There will be free physical examinations, chiropractic adjustments, eye examinations and dental care. There will also be live entertainment and a free lunch.

Sam Potter, the lead pastor of Spirit Winds, said the churches have become aware of the growing numbers of local people without health insurance and although they cannot solve the problem, "Christians and churches should at least be part of the solution."

Brenda Click of House of Hope is supplying lunch for the clinic and said she looks forward to not only this clinic, but the second and third clinics, which she said will only be more successful as the word spreads.

"We believe in our hearts that we need to do these things," Click said. "We see the need."

Rex Wegner, associate pastor of Capitoland Christian Center, said churches often focus on work in third-world countries, forgetting that help is needed closer to home.

"Sometimes we're so busy working outside our community," Wegner said, "it is easy to overlook what is going on here."

"It's like a five-hour mission trip and you

Free services will be available Aug. 14 at Evangel Life Center

don't have to leave the city," Pat Smith, co-pastor of New Life Christian Center, added.

Dr. Chris Kammer of the Center for Cosmetic Dentistry was one of the first medical professionals to commit to the clinic. Kammer said there will be six or seven people from his clinic volunteering their time, including three dentists.

"It's an honor for the clinic and doctors to contribute," Kammer said. "It is better to meet need now rather than wait for a government mandate."

So far, eight doctors have committed to working for the clinic and there are another 30 who have been contacted.

Clinic participants will fill out a form with basic contact information and check off their three biggest needs on a list of services being provided. There will not be a financial screening. Potter said their hope is to fulfill everyone's basic needs.

Also, although the clinic's secondary goal is to meet spiritual needs, care will be given regardless of denomination or religious beliefs.

"If they have a church and are happy, that's fine," Potter said. "If they are Muslim and not in-

terested in a Christian following up with them, we'll honor that."

Click said that she hopes people will take away with them more than one day of care. There will also be pamphlets and information available to connect participants to other organizations and free clinics in the city.

"We want to get to know these people and fill their needs," Click said.

Amazingly, the clinic is being run with zero budget. Everyone involved has volunteered his or her time. Even the printing costs for fliers was donated. The organizers say this is a key element to being able to pull the event together in about four months.

"Fund raising is usually the single biggest obstacle to getting work done in the community," Fred Grossenbach of the Jericho Project said.

The Touched Twice Clinic will be Saturday, Aug. 14, from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. at the Evangel Life Center, 4402 Fernite Drive. For more information or for transportation call 320-0446.

There are still many openings for clinic volunteers. Medical professionals should contact Steve Fine at 225-7314 or jobsandhousingpartners@charter.net.

Free training sessions will be held for other volunteers on Aug. 7 at 9 a.m.; Aug. 10 at 7 p.m.; or Aug. 12 at 7 p.m. The sessions, which will last about an hour, will be held at the Evangel Life Center, 4402 Fernite Drive.

E-mail: aburagas@madison.com