



West County Health Centers

Caring for our Communities

a californiahealth⁺ center

Russian River Health Center

16319 Third Street
Guerneville, CA 95446
Phone: 707-869-2849
Fax: 707-869-1477

Sebastopol Community Health Center

6800 Palm Avenue, Suite C
Sebastopol, CA 95472
Phone: 707-824-9999
Fax: 707-824-9335

Clinic Hours:

Mon-Thu 9:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m.
Fri 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.
Sat 9:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m.

Mental Health Appointments

RRHC: 707-869-2961
SCHC: 707-824-3376

Russian River Dental Clinic

16312 Third Street
Guerneville, CA 95446
Phone: 707-869-2933
Fax: 707-869-2663

Visit us online at:

www.wchealth.org



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Living Positively

WEST COUNTY HEALTH CENTERS HIV SERVICES

Russian River Health Center: Fire Update

We are saddened to report that a fire destroyed the RRHC building in the early hours of December 26, 2015. The Russian River Health Center has been a vital source of medical care in this community for more than 40 years. We will rebuild as quickly as possible.

Russian River Health Center Patient Appointments:

For appointments, call the RRHC phone number 707-869-2849. We will schedule the appointment and let you know the location. Most appointments will be scheduled in Guerneville at our temporary Russian River Health Center site next to the Russian River Dental Clinic at 16312 Third Street in Guerneville.

How do I contact my RRHC HIV Team?

The Russian River HIV Team is still located in Guerneville. Contact them at the RRHC phone number: 707-869-2849. You may also contact Christopher Bowers at 707-326-1452, Victoria MacDonald at 707-869-5979 and Nina Redman at 707-328-0248.

Updates are posted regularly on the West County Health Centers website www.wchealth.org



Dr. Michelle Davey & Dr. Jared Garrison-Jakel stand outside the burnt Russian River Health Center building.

PATIENT PERSPECTIVE — BY GEORGIANNA KEPLER

“Your problem is you’re afraid to acknowledge your own beauty. You’re too busy holding onto your unworthiness.” —Ram Dass

When I was diagnosed I had been without a mate for over 10 years. My first reaction was to think, “Well, I had better live it up, make every day important and become the best person I can because I may not live another year!” I didn’t know that the new medications were effective at helping HIV+ people maintain a reasonable degree of good health.

I told my best friend about having AIDS and she said, “George, if anyone could handle this, you can!”. That made me feel very important because she meant what she said. I kept asking Dr. Steve Bromer how much longer I had to live. After I asked him three times he told me that the medications were good and I would not die from AIDS, although I would eventually die. I asked him if I should feel ashamed. He said, “No, it is an illness and not a character flaw.”

My T-Cell count kept getting higher, I got healthier fast. I began to attend the Santa Rosa Junior College taking

classes in fitness, nutrition, art, printmaking, and cultural anthropology. I also got my massage therapist license and held down three part-time jobs. I dated a lot and always used precautions. I told every date that I had AIDS. The first ten years were dynamic. I made new friends who were also HIV positive. I attended the Learning Immune Function Enhancement (L.I.F.E.) program at Face to Face, and I met Sil Mochado who I still consider to be a good friend as well as my therapist.

Today my T-cell count is near 700. At age 76 I have two radio spots a week on Guerneville’s own KGGV, a 40-year-old boyfriend and a 42 year-old transgender girlfriend (the best of both worlds!) And yes, I still have my libido, a vibrant though sometimes surreal imagination, and I’m so self-confident that I almost get myself in trouble. Luckily doctors, nurses, social workers, and friends help keep me in check. My four sons love and LIKE me the way I am today.

Overall I have a better life. I realized the challenge before me and was able to make it the fuel for a better life. My advice is to go out and live life... Every moment is precious.

The AIDS Drug Assistance Program

The AIDS Drug Assistance Program (ADAP) is a helpful but complicated benefits program. ADAP is a state program that is administered by Ramsell, a private corporation. Ramsell and ADAP are interchangeable. When you get mail from Ramsell or a phone call from Ramsell it will always be about ADAP.

THE BASIC ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS TO RECEIVE ADAP:

- you have an HIV and/or AIDS diagnosis
- you make less than \$58,000 a year
- you have Medi-cal and you pay a share of the cost for Rx's and other services.

HOW ADAP WORKS WITH YOUR OTHER INSURANCE:

ADAP is considered a "payer of last resort". That means that whatever other insurance you have must pay first. For this reason, you are required to have other insurance. Here is a break-down of how your insurance situation may interact with ADAP:

- 1. Medi-Cal:** You will be required to apply for Medi-Cal if you want ADAP unless one or both of these apply to you:
 - You have too many assets;
 - You make too much money (more than \$16,105 a year for a single-person household);

If you are denied, your eligibility worker will need the denial letter. If you are accepted you will either have full Medi-cal coverage (with no share of cost) or Medi-cal with a share of cost. If you have no share of cost then you are not eligible for ADAP. If you do have a share of cost then you are eligible.

2. Medicare: If you have Medicare, you will be required to have a Part D prescription plan or you will not be eligible for ADAP.

3. Private Insurance: You are eligible for ADAP even if you have private insurance.

PAYING FOR PREMIUMS:

Part of the ADAP application is an optional application for the Office of AIDS Health Insurance Premium Payment Program (OA-HIPP). This helps pay for monthly or yearly health insurance premiums. The requirements are the same as those for ADAP. However, if you are on Medicare you are ineligible for the OA-HIPP program but can instead apply separately for the Medicare Premium Payment Program.

6 MONTH AND 12 MONTH UPDATES:

6 month: At the six month mark between birthdays you will need to complete the

Are you Interested in participating in a home visit project?

Contact Victoria 707-869-5979 or Joe 707-824-3391

We will be exploring how technology can enhance the home visit experience!

Self-Verification Form (SVF). This form is simpler than the yearly recertification. You should receive it in the mail. It asks about income, residence and insurance. If none of those items have changed you can simply send the form back. Or you can do it online at <https://www.svf.com/california>.

12 month: Every year on your birthday you are required to recertify for ADAP. You can make an appointment with your eligibility worker up to 45 days prior to your birthday.

* If you do have changes to either your residence, your insurance, or your income, you must contact your eligibility worker to make an appointment to update your file.

Nutrition News with Nina Redman

Creamsicle Smoothie

1 frozen banana (slice before freezing if you remember)

2 tsp vanilla extract, optional

½ cup orange juice

¾ cup vanilla yogurt

1 orange, peeled and sliced

2 tsp orange zest, optional (Zest is the outer part of the orange peel. It can be removed with the small holes of a box

grater, a sharp knife, or a microplane.)

On high, blend banana, vanilla, and orange juice until thick, creamy, and smooth, about 3 minutes.

Scrape down the sides of the blender as needed. Add the yogurt, orange, and zest (if using). Blend until combined.



Patient Experiences: Getting Off Pain Medication —by Christopher Bowers

For many HIV+ people, especially those infected and/or diagnosed 25 or more years ago, exposure to life-saving antiretroviral medications had an unexpected downside: peripheral neuropathy. This sometimes painful condition led to many patients being prescribed strong painkillers. As the medications and understanding of the virus has grown, we now see more clearly the negative side of those pain medications.

Science is showing that long-term pain medication can have some serious effects on physical and mental well-being. Studies are strongly suggesting a law of diminishing return with regard to pain medications, —in other words, the longer you take them, the less effective they will be.

Increasingly, patients are looking at ways to reduce or stop their use of pain meds. Two patients that have successfully quit using pain medication, Jeffery Fox and Gary Flowers, shared their journey with me.

Jeffery, who used pain medication for over twenty years, found that being on pain medication had grave and unanticipated consequences. He believes that his use of these medications, while not the primary cause, may have contributed to a traumatic car accident, in which his father was killed. Gary, who was on pain meds for over five years, made the choice to stop the medications after he found he was close to liver failure.

The withdrawal symptoms can be daunting. Both men shared that it was very difficult and also not at all impossible. There are ways to cope with the withdrawal state. Gary used exercise, hot baths and patience as his allies against withdrawal.

“I had to realize that being uncomfortable was not going to kill me and that it was not a permanent state of affairs”.

Jeffery found lots of support from his IHSS worker who provided encouragement.

“He was able to tell me that I was getting better even if I didn’t feel better and to convince me that going back on the pain meds would not be helpful”. Jeffery also found that using some medication to assist with the anxiety can be helpful. Gary also commented on the importance of social support stating that his doctor and partner were invaluable throughout the process.

Once through the initial withdrawal period, both found that the benefits of coming off pain medications far outweighed the costs.

“Myself and people around me, including the doctor, noticed that I am brighter, my eyes are clearer, and I am sharper,” Said Jeffery. Gary stated that he feels great and, as studies are suggesting, he is actually in less pain than he was when taking

pain medication. His pain now is easily managed by Tylenol, ice and heat.

When asked what advice he would give to other people who may want to reduce or stop their use of pain medication, Jeffery had this to say about his own journey: “I had to commit to it. It had to take precedence over everything else and it was a choice I had to make over and over, every day”. Both Jeffery and Gary suggested tapering and finding a doctor who is willing to go at one’s own pace. Both also spoke highly of the value for supportive people in their lives.

Jeffery is certain it was the right decision. “I am so very grateful to be off that stuff!”.

If you are interested in discussing minimizing the risks posed by pain medication or information on alternative pain management possibilities, please contact your provider for pain management support.

www.wchealth.org

Introducing Joe Hatheway, RN

What kind of life experiences made you passionate about helping others?



Well, I don’t want to be presumptuous; I hope I am actually helping someone out there! I want to do a good job for our patients. I have always been in search of a career that would allow

me to feel like I was contributing positively to the world. After serving as a Peace Corps volunteer in Cameroon I eventually found my way to nursing. In Cameroon, I worked as a high school English teacher. In the remote, underdeveloped area in which I was living, staying healthy was a major issue for just about everyone. I

came to realize that I would have had more to offer my community there, if I had had health related skills and knowledge. After completing my service in Cameroon, I went back to school to get a degree in nursing... and here I am.

What brought you to work at SCHC and how long have you worked here?

I started working at SCHC about 14 months ago when my wife, daughter, and I moved out here from New Hampshire. In New Hampshire I was working as a floor nurse at a hospital but I was more interested in working at a health center where I could get to know my patients better and, hopefully, provide more personalized care. I was also excited to find an organization like WCHC, that was more in line with my values and the belief that everyone has a right to unbiased, quality healthcare.

Need After Hours Medical Advice?

Call our after-hours number at 707-571-7029 and talk to the provider on call!

*Dr. Jared Garrison-Jakel,
Dr. Michelle Davey and
Jane Barry Facilities &
Emergency Preparedness
Coordinator embrace
outside West County
Health Centers Emergency
Response Unit*



*Dr. Jared Garrison-Jakel
& Cindy Lewis, CTMA inside
the St. Joseph Mobile
Medical Unit located in
the parking lot of Russian
River Dental*



Russian River Health Center Fire: Frequently Asked Questions

Does West County Health Centers Have Insurance?

Yes, West County Health Centers has insurance for the Russian River Health Center building as well as Business Interruption Insurance. All of our equipment will be replaced and the process of demolition followed by rebuilding will begin as soon as the fire investigation and the detailed insurance inventory is complete.

What is the Short Term Plan?

All Russian River Health Center patients are being seen in temporary locations on the Russian River Dental Clinic site at 16312 Third Street in Guerneville. In the near future, the old Russian River Health Center building will be torn down and we will place a large modular building on this site that will be used until we are able to rebuild a new Russian River Health Center facility in another location in Guerneville.

How will the fire affect my medical care?

West County Health Centers will continue to take care of your medical needs. The Russian River Health Center Team has access to all of your medical records. You will continue to be able to see your

usual provider but most appointments will be at our temporary location in Guerneville.

Refills—If you need help with a refill, please follow the usual protocol and call your pharmacy. They will still be able to send us your refill request through our electronic system and our medical providers will respond. Refills that require a paper prescription will be available to pick up at the Dental Office.

Labs—We will continue to manage new lab orders through our electronic health record and can send the orders to any lab in Sebastopol or Santa Rosa. We are working with Quest to set up a draw station in Guerneville soon.

Appointments—If you need to make an appointment, call the usual phone number 707-869-2849, and we will schedule the appointment and let you know the location. Most appointments will be scheduled in Guerneville at our temporary Russian River Health Center site next to the Russian River Dental Clinic at 16312 Third Street, Guerneville.

Other Inquiries—We are managing all medical records requests, referrals and other inquiries in the usual manner. Please call if you have any questions.

What caused the fire?

This is definitely the most frequently asked question! The answer is that we really don't know and we may never be certain. The fire was reported in the early morning hours after Christmas Day and it appears that it probably started some-

where in the front of the building. Fire and insurance investigators are trying to determine the cause but so far they have not made any final determination.

Will we rebuild?

YES, absolutely. Russian River Health Center has been a vital source of medical care in this community for more than 40 years and we will rebuild as quickly as possible.

How can I help?

Donations for The Russian River Health Center "Build for the Future" Campaign are being accepted online at www.wchealth.org by clicking on the "DONATE NOW" button. Or visit our "How to Help" page here: www.wchealth.org/help/donations. We are still planning ways for people to help get us back into full operation. We appreciate all of the positive energy and support that we have received already and we will let people know how they can help us "Build for the Future" when we have assessed the situation more carefully and developed a plan.

What if I cannot travel to another location?

For transportation assistance please contact Victoria at 707-869-5979 or Christopher at 707-326-1452.



Visit our website to receive our newsletter by email:

[www.wchealth.org/
service/hiv-services](http://www.wchealth.org/service/hiv-services)



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