



Georgetown Health Foundation repurposes shopping center into nonprofit destination

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Written by Beth Wade Friday, 10 April 2009

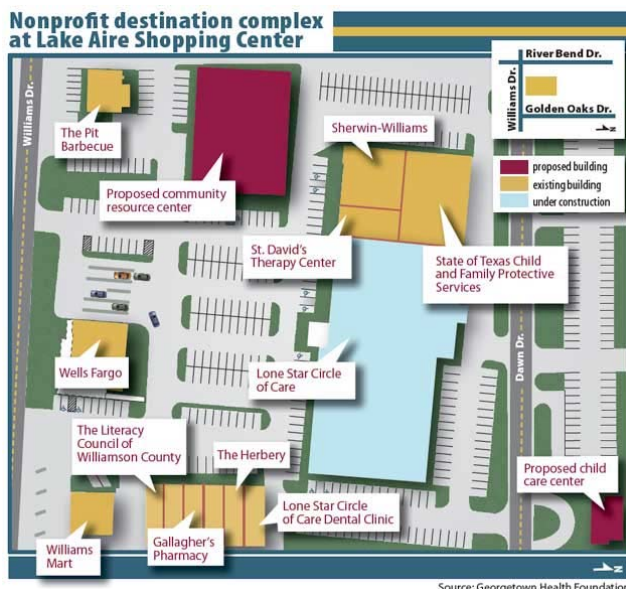
Georgetown residents driving along Williams Drive have seen the Lake Aire Shopping Center sit mostly empty for several years, but construction is now underway to repurpose the center to become a nonprofit destination.

The Georgetown Health Foundation purchased the shopping center in spring 2004 and plans to create a health-related nonprofit center.

Currently the shopping center is home to some businesses, including Sherwin-Williams, The Herbery and Gallagher's Pharmacy.

"As those leases come up, we are going to be re-evaluating the appropriate use of that space with an idea or focus around nonprofit or charitable-type entities that would support that health/health-related destination complex," GHF Chief Executive Officer Scott Alarcon said.

Build out on a space for the Literacy Council of Williamson County is underway and expected to be completed soon, but which other nonprofits will join it in the center have not been finalized, Alarcon said. GHF is talking to the Community Resource Center about a proposed 15,000 sq. ft. building that could be built behind The Pit Barbecue Restaurant.



"We have visited with 11 different nonprofits to [determine] their interest in co-locating in a multi-tenant center," Alarcon said. "Now that the economy has changed there are [many] more restraints on resources. [We are] going back and double checking with those entities [to see if a multi-tenant center is still viable]."

For now, construction continues on a 40,000 sq. ft. section dedicated to anchor tenant Lone Star Circle of Care, a nonprofit group whose purpose is to provide primary health care to the underinsured and uninsured. The group is already operating an 1,800 sq. ft. dental clinic in the Lake Aire center.

Medical mall

LSCC's \$6.5 million clinical hub will include the nonprofit's first senior care clinic, an adult primary care clinic, pediatric primary care clinic, mental healthcare space, administrative space, approximately 6,000 sq. ft. of community space and a pharmacy.

The idea is to create a one-stop shop for primary healthcare services, said Jayne Pope, CEO of LSCC clinical systems.

"We care for families, and families can go to one place to get all of their services," she said. "It is also important for providers, when we care for families, that there can be bedside or clinic-side

conversations between providers because often what is affecting a child can affect a whole family. It is the integrated model of care that is best for health."

The hub will add 10.5 new physicians and nurse practitioners and an additional 30 to 32 clinical support jobs, Pope said. The new location will also provide space to see an additional 37,000 patients in the next year, which will double the number of people seen in 2008, she said.

The senior care center is expected to open in early summer with three physicians and nurse practitioners, while the remaining clinics are expected to open this fall.

Once the new hub is operational, adult services will be moved to the current pediatric clinic location at 612 E. University Ave.

LSCC

Founded in 2001, LSCC opened its first clinic in Georgetown in 2002 seeing underinsured and uninsured patients. A group of concerned citizens came together to open and fund the clinic.

The first clinic is still operational, but is now part of a nine-clinic system throughout Williamson County with clinics in Georgetown, Round Rock and Granger.

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When opened, LSCC had eight employees and a budget of \$600,000. Now the nonprofit employs 230 people and the 2009 budget is more than \$26 million, a 65 percent increase from last year.

"The two main reasons we have gotten so big so fast is that normally in the traditional business world, you spend a lot of time, money and energy trying to find a market for your goods and services. Our focus isn't creating a market; it's creating a pool of investors," LSCC CEO Pete Perialas said. "Because of the almost unlimited need, we were able to grow because we focused on other entities that had some impact or were impacted by that need. The second reason is because we are very tenacious about our mission."

After it became apparent to board members that the clinic was losing money, the group made the decision to seek Federally Qualified Health Center status, and LSCC was designated as an FQHC in 2004. By becoming an FQHC, the clinic system must meet federal guidelines and is required to see anyone who comes to the clinic, whether the individual has private insurance, no insurance or any kind of public assistance such as Medicaid.

LSCC is not a free clinic. Patients pay on a sliding scale depending on the patient's income according to the federal poverty level. Any patient at the 100 percent poverty level or below pays a flat \$15 fee.

Because of its federal status, LSCC receives \$156 per visit for individuals with Medicaid. That money, along with other patient revenue including any form of insurance and patient fees, accounts for approximately 70 percent of the nonprofit's revenue.

The other 30 percent of LSCC's revenue comes from grants and private donations.

"One of the misperceptions is that Lone Star [Circle of Care] receives a lot of federal money to see the uninsured and all these patients, [but] no, we don't," Perialas said. "We don't get any money to see the uninsured. We have to find a way to see the uninsured by creating business relationships with hospitals, growing our Medicaid practice and seeking grants and other funding."

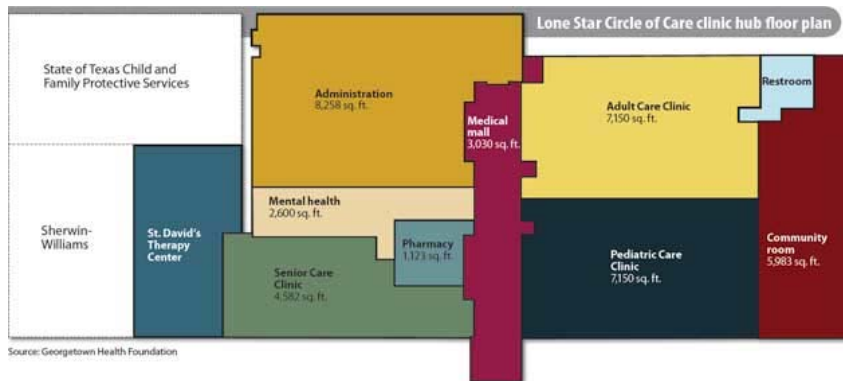
The clinic system has long been associated with St. David's HealthCare and works with other hospitals in the area, including Seton Medical Center Williamson, to provide patient care.

"The St. David's Community Health Foundation gave us our first grant in 2004," Perialas said. "Each year we expand our relationship with them because they have been with us the longest amount of time."



Renderings of the medical mall inside the Lone Star Circle of Care clinic hub

Courtesy: Georgetown Health Foundation



The future

As the need for its services expands, LSCC will continue to grow, Perialas said. A second clinic hub will be included at the Texas A&M Health Science Center campus opening in Round Rock this year. Perialas estimates the two hubs will increase LSCC capacity to provide care to approximately 250,000 patient visits in 2010.

Perialas and his staff also plan to spearhead an initiative to regionalize health care.

"Instead of each county, individual hospital system or individual medical school trying to apply their efforts on a unilateral basis, I think you will see us have a pretty key role in getting lots of players to the table to address some of these issues on a regional basis," he said.

2008 budget break down

Non-operating revenue* - \$4,704,736

Total patient revenue - \$11,585,022

Total operating expenses - \$15,283,048

- uncompensated care: \$4 million

*Non-operating revenue is money raised from grants and donations.

The 2008 Annual Report with a more detailed breakdown of the budget is expected to be available online at www.lscctx.org in late spring.

Grants and donations

In 2008 Lone Star Circle of Care receive \$4,704,736 in grants from the following organizations:

- City of Georgetown
- City of Round Rock
- Georgetown Health Foundation
- Georgetown and Round Rock SERTOMA
- Meadows Foundation
- Michael and Susan Dell Foundation
- Round Rock ISD
- Scott & White
- Seton Family of Hospitals
- Seton Medical Center Williamson
- St. David's Community Health Foundation
- St. David's Partnership Hospitals
- St. David's Round Rock Medical Center
- St. David's South Austin Hospital
- Texas Department of State Health Services
- Topfer Family Foundation
- United Way of Williamson County
- Williamson County

Clinics

- **Georgetown Community Clinic** - 701 E. University Ave., 863-9208
- **GCC Dental Center** - 2411 Williams Drive, 864-1445
- **GCC Pediatric Center** - 612 E. University Ave., 930-5437
- **Granger Medical Center** - 115 W. Davilla, 859-2251
- **Round Rock Community Clinic** - 1099 E. Main St., Ste. 200, 341-0500
- **Round Rock Health Clinic** - 2120 N. Mays St., Ste. 430, 255-5120
- **LSCC OB/GYN** - 2300 Round Rock Ave., Ste. 202, 828-3300
- **Round Rock Dental Center** - 905 N. IH 35, Ste. 109, 733-2100
- **LSCC Learning & Wellness Center** - 2120 N. Mays St., Ste. 490, 341-8908
- **A.W. Grimes Medical Offices** - 2051 Gattis School Road, Ste. 250, 238-5400

Courtesy Georgetown Health Foundation

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