

Clinic closes doors



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Planned Parenthood forced to shut down after protests

By: Beth Giuffre - Updated: 21 hours ago

PASO ROBLES — A Planned Parenthood clinic closed its doors March 30 in Paso Robles. John Fowler, president of Peoples' Self-Help Housing said his organization has decided to end the partnership that allowed the Planned Parenthood to operate a satellite Health Center out of the existing medical clinic on the property.

The health center was located at the Peoples' Self Help Housing complex known as the Canyon Creek Apartments. Peoples' Self-Housing collaborates with Dignity Health, Alliance for Pharmaceutical Access and the Noor Clinic to offer free and low-cost services out of the Oak Hill Road location.

Jenna Tosh, CEO of Planned Parenthood, said in a statement: "Four weeks into the partnership, People's Self Housing informed Planned Parenthood California Central Coast

that they received hostile communications from anti-Planned Parenthood activists.” Tosh said PSH chose to close the clinic because of “hostile emails from anti-Planned Parenthood activists.”

“Faced with the opposition, Peoples’ Self-Help Housing was unwilling to continue the partnership,” the statement read.

Planned Parenthood provides reproductive health care, including abortion services and referral, birth control, emergency contraception (morning-after pill), HIV services, LGBT services and general health care and patient education for both men and women. The organization began providing services at the Canyon Creek Apartments in February, supported by a grant intended to last for a year, Tosh said, adding that the Planned Parenthood clinic was open just two days each week, serving 32 patients in its first month.

“Planned Parenthood believes that access to healthcare is a human right,” Tosh said. “We will never give up, or back down, when faced with opposition.”

Fowler told the Tribune his organization did receive “angry anti-abortion emails,” which was no surprise to him, considering a common reaction to Planned Parenthood’s abortion services, but Fowler was quoted as saying the reason for closing the clinic in Paso had more to do with the clinic not being a good fit for the facility on Oak Hill Road, and was “more of a business thing than a service for our residents,” he said. Fowler said the expanded health services at the Canyon Creek Apartments, which included Planned Parenthood services, “was in response to an impression that those amenities did not exist in the North San Luis Obispo County.”

“We have since reassessed the assets in the area and believe that the community can be served by existing health programs,” Fowler stated. “Peoples’ Self-Help Housing will continue to support our residents through access to a wide range of mission-aligned, unduplicated services and to the building and property management of much-needed affordable housing.”

Tosh said, “It’s disappointing that anti-Planned Parenthood activists were able to interfere with this critical expansion of care in Paso Robles. Today and every day our commitment to providing care, no matter what, remains resolute.”

Statements and reports to the media from both Planned Parenthood and Peoples’ Self-Help Housing representatives were unspecific in regards to which groups sent the emails, though protests outside both the San Luis Obispo County Planned Parenthood clinic and Paso Robles Clinic have been publicized online.

You may reach Reporter Beth Giuffre at bgiuffre@atascaderonews.com (<mailto:bgiuffre@atascaderonews.com>) for questions and/or feedback.