

Planned Parenthood Closing New Britain Center, But Not Leaving City



Planned Parenthood in New Britain.



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After 13 years, **Planned Parenthood** is closing its satellite facility at the **Hospital of Central Connecticut**. But the nonprofit provider of reproductive health services emphasized that it will still offer education and training services in **New Britain**, and will continue looking for new space in the city for a clinic.

“Planned Parenthood of Southern New England is here for its patients, no matter what,” said Kafi Rouse, vice president of public relations and marketing.

The decision to close the clinic was purely about availability of space and had no political overtone, both the hospital and Planned Parenthood said on Thursday.

Planned Parenthood is the prime target of abortion opponents in the country, and this spring the Trump administration proposed axing all federal Title X funding for it.

But the end of its space-sharing partnership in the Hospital of Central Connecticut's OB-GYN center began well before that, said Rouse and Shawn Mawhiney, spokesman for **Hartford** HealthCare, the hospital's parent organization.

"The hospital is undergoing extensive renovations and needs to reconfigure its space," Rouse and Mawhiney said in a joint statement Thursday afternoon.

Planned Parenthood's New Britain satellite clinic was open Tuesday and Thursday evenings and got about 700 patient visits a year; the organization said most were for birth control and testing and treatment of sexually transmitted infections.

It opened in 2005 at the hospital's request and operated rent-free. But Mawhiney said despite months of talks between the hospital and Planned Parenthood, there was no way to relocate the clinic to other space in the hospital or on an off-campus site. The satellite clinic's last day was Thursday, Planned Parenthood reported.

The organization's Southern New England chapter is headquartered in New Haven and operates 16 clinics around the state. It is advising its New Britain-region patients to visit one of them; the closest are in Hartford, West Hartford and Meriden.

"We wish we could keep providing services in New Britain, and to be clear: this is not our choice. For the women, men, and young people we serve, the care we provide is not about politics – it is about their well-being," Amanda Skinner, president and chief executive officer of Planned Parenthood of Southern New England, said in a statement.

The organization said more than 20 percent of the patients at its New Britain clinic were under 20, half were Medicaid recipients and 25 percent were uninsured.

Planned Parenthood will continue providing education and training programs in the city.

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