

Grand Opening

The Diabetes Education Center

After three postponed dates due to staff illness and community members' funerals, there was a Grand Opening of the Diabetes Education Center (D.E.C.) on March 11. Along with a celebration of the official opening of the building previously called "the trailer," events and education were offered in recognition of heart health.

Community members were encouraged to *Wear Red for Women* on that day. Education was provided about the special heart risks and heart attack symptoms that women experience. Those who came to the D.E.C. for this event were served chocolate-covered strawberries and coffee or tea. Gift bags given to attendees included a few items good for heart health (oatmeal, nuts, dark chocolate, and a coupon for Benecol spread), a D.E.C. magnet, and informational handouts.

Indian Health Service has developed a 10 class curriculum called *Honoring the Gift of Heart Health*, which would be a fun way for community members to learn achievable strategies to prevent or take care of existing heart disease. The curriculum binder was available at the D.E.C. during the Grand Opening for people to leaf through. Two heart healthy recipes were cooked as a demonstration, *Mediterranean Walnut Spread on Pitas*, and *Cilantro Chicken with Peanuts*.

Our own copy of the video *Supersize Me* was available for viewing, as it will be during open hours or by special appointment in the future.

The Diabetes Education Center: "Where? What? Why? When?"

The most commonly asked question about the Diabetes Education Center (D.E.C.) is "Where is it?" It is a freestanding trailer that has been installed in back of the clinic. There is a separate entrance, so that anyone can come for a group, a class, or just to drop in, without going through the clinic appointment and check-in system. The entry also has a ramp for wheelchair access. There is limited parking in the back of the clinic, with one handicapped space. People may also park in front of the clinic or in the Community Building parking lot, and walk to the back of the clinic.

The next most frequently asked question is "What is it?" It is a one-room center with a kitchen intended for cooking demonstrations and a conference table and chairs ideal for classes, groups, or even one-on-one visits. It is wonderfully bright and sunny, and is away from the hustle and bustle of the clinic. There are books, videos, magazines, and other educational materials available. All community members are invited to come visit during advertised Open Hours just to take a look.

The goal of the D.E.C. is to have a welcoming place for community members to learn about taking care of their health in a non-clinical setting. Initial offerings are a Weight Management Program called *A Better Weigh*; a *Diabetes Support and Prevention Group*; and *Cooking for Health* classes. Don't worry if you missed the first groups or classes, the plan is to offer them on an ongoing basis, so that people can come when or as often as they can. If the times are inconvenient, just let Madeleine know. There can be some flexibility, depending on demand. For example, we could offer some things during the lunch break, later in the afternoon, and earlier in the morning. Another option is to make an appointment with Madeleine at a time when you can come for one-on-one time.

Look for the Diabetes Education Center handout in each community flyer, and posted throughout the community for complete dates and times. In brief, however, the late April offerings are: