

# OFFERING EXTENDED HOURS IN YOUR FAMILY PLANNING CLINIC

Block Grant Series

Summer 2022 Edition



## The Facts

Tips that can make your extended hours clinic more successful

- Appropriate number of staff
- Consistent extended hours schedule
- Not requiring appointments
- Same day LARC Insertions
- Coordinating with transportation services
- Inclusivity for teens, LGBTQA+, and males

Advertising is one of the strongest tools you can use in promoting your extended clinic hours. Family Planning funds may be used to purchase advertising for your extended family planning clinic hours. Utilizing social media and connecting with local high schools/ community colleges will increase awareness with teen and young adult populations.

***When in doubt***, ask the people what they want! If your agency has struggled in the past with extended clinic participation; consider conducting an online survey. This information will help you to tailor your extended clinic hours to your community's needs.

**In a perfect world, every client would be able to access family planning services at any time.**

**Offering extended hours in your family planning clinic is a manageable step to creating better access for your community to receive services.**

**A survey from the Guttmacher Institute showed that 51% of clients reported preferring to go to clinics with extended hours because they did not have to take time off from work or school, were more likely to find free or low-cost childcare, and there were shorter waiting times during non- conventional clinic times.**

**There are benefits of offering extended clinic hours to more than just your clients. By having additional hours, it can increase your agency's revenue, reduce health care provider burnout by offering flexible scheduling opportunities, and reduce the amount of un-used family planning devices.**

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## TIPS FROM CURRENT SITES

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### What are current NC Extended Hours Clinics Saying?

Why are they offering extended hours?

- To provide services to populations that are not able to access services during standard clinic hours
- To provide a safe space for teens to access family planning
- To offer more flexibility to patients

What are the greatest strengths for offering extended hours?

- Increased clinic numbers
- More flexibility for staff scheduling
- Allows students or working individuals to access services without missing work or school

How many clients are seen during extended hours clinics?

Agencies reported seeing as few as three clients to as many as 48 clients during extended hours clinics.

What is the greatest challenge to offering extended clinic hours?

Staffing was indicated as the greatest challenge by the surveyed health departments. To meet staffing needs, many agencies utilize flexible scheduling, exempt employee positions with compensatory time, or contract staff positions.

**“Communicate your expectations with your staff, to efficiently offer extended hours”.**  
-PCHD

**“Do what works for your agency and the community you serve. Start small.”**- CCDPH

**“Survey your patients to determine what is needed during extended clinic hours”.** - MCHD

### The Facts

How has your agency been successful advertising the extended hours clinics?

- Facebook, Instagram, Twitter and other social media outlets
- Updating Google hours and other easily search-able web postings
- Agency, County, and Community Partner Websites
- Flyers at high community traffic locations, Newspaper Advertising
- Having front desk staff offer appointments during late clinic hours for patients

What were some lessons learned from offering extended hours?

- The surveyed agencies offering extended hours expressed that their biggest lessons learned were
- Being transparent with staff about staffing needs
  - Actively engaging your community about what is needed for extended hours
  - Starting small by offering one set of clinical services then expanding.

There are several local health departments in North Carolina that have been offering extended clinic hours in family planning for as long as 27 years! If you are interested in connecting with these organizations for additional information, please contact the Reproductive Health Branch Family Planning Program Consultant or your Regional Nurse Consultant for contact information.



NC DEPARTMENT OF  
HEALTH AND  
HUMAN SERVICES

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