



Integrated Services of Kalamazoo breaks ground on new behavioral health urgent care

by Raymond Hole | News Channel 3
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Integrated Services of Kalamazoo CEO Jeff Patton addresses the crowd thanking the many people that have worked to make the construction project a reality. Kalamazoo, MI. October 10, 2022. (WWMT/Raymond Hole)



KALAMAZOO, Mich. — Integrated Services of Kalamazoo, also known as ISK, celebrated the beginning of construction on its new 7,900 square-foot Behavioral Health Urgent Care facility Wednesday afternoon.

Dozens attended the ceremony including county and city officials, leaders of area medical centers and hospitals, and law enforcement representatives.

Kalamazoo County's first behavioral health urgent care and access center will be open 24 hours a day once it's completed sometime in June of 2023. The facility will provide both same-day access and urgent care treatment for mental health and substance use disorders, according to ISK CEO Jeff Patton.

"Most emergencies are handled by our two wonderful community hospitals and so we want to take some of the load off of our hospitals where individuals that otherwise could be served in a less restrictive environment can get mental health services," Patton said.

Nearly 70% of crisis calls could be resolved without using an emergency department, according to ISK.

"We can attend to individuals who might not necessarily need to be in the emergency departments. This is not taking the place of the emergency department but it is a less restrictive way that I think that we can intervene and provide services.," Patton said.

Once complete the new facility will feature a police/ambulance entrance to allow the center to serve as an alternative to a hospital emergency department for people experiencing behavioral health crises, Patton said.

Patton said he thinks a coordinated and comprehensive behavioral health urgent care and access system will reduce the need to deploy law enforcement and emergency medical services to intervene in mental health crises in the first place.

At 440 W. Kalamazoo Ave., the behavioral health urgent care and access center is located near areas with a high concentration of individuals receiving behavioral health services, including those experiencing homelessness.

Just five blocks from the Kalamazoo Gospel Mission, It's easily walkable from nearby shelters, Patton said.

ISK officials said their hope is that by offering quick access to mental health professionals, and the opportunity to be connected with other services will result in better outcomes for people in crisis.

The \$5 million project was made possible by funding from local philanthropic organizations, most notably the Irving S. Gilmore Foundation, and American Rescue Plan Act funds awarded to ISK by Kalamazoo County.



ISK officials along with Mayor David Anderson prepare to hoist the first ceremonial shovels of dirt at the future site of ISK's Behavioral Health Urgent Care facility. Kalamazoo, MI. October 10, 2022. (WWMT/Raymond Hole)



Integrated Services of Kalamazoo CEO Jeff Patton offers remarks before breaking ground on the \$5 million project. Kalamazoo, MI. October 10, 2022 (WWMT/Raymond Hole)



