

Uptown

December 2014

Employee clinics gain in popularity

With the consistently rising cost of employee health insurance, city officials are looking for creative ways to reduce costs while improving employee health. Employee health clinics are an option growing in popularity.

Before the [City of Anderson](#) opened its employee health clinic in January 2014, Building Inspector John Johnston often avoided the doctor's office—even when he was sick. Johnston felt it was a hassle to make an appointment with the family doctor, leave work then sit around a waiting room.



City of Anderson Employee Health Clinic

Anderson's new onsite health clinic offers a convenience and level of care that has benefited employees like Johnston, said Brandy Walters, assistant director of human resources. It offers new hire screenings including physicals, workers' compensation treatments, general wellness screenings

and acute care treatments.

"With the onsite health clinic, I believe that a sick employee is more apt to go to the clinic than go through the headache of trying to get in to see his doctor," Johnston said. "This decreases the amount of time either being out sick or taking the time off to go to the family doctor - It is by far one of the best decisions the City of Anderson has ever made for its employees."

Local governments can use onsite clinics or near-site clinics in cooperation with other employers, according to Rick Gantt, area vice president of [Arthur J. Gallagher & Co.](#) Gantt spoke on the topic of [employee clinics](#) at the [Municipal Human Resources Association's](#) Annual Meeting in November.

These clinics can be staffed with nurse practitioners, primary care physicians, physician's assistants or some combination of these. Gantt said the clinics are proving popular because they offer convenient acute care to employees and help the municipality lower costs by focusing on wellness and risk management.

The [City of Spartanburg](#) opened its onsite clinic five years ago with the goal of reducing the risk factors leading to high-cost chronic conditions, according to Human Resources Director Michelle Clyburn. The clinic offers biometric screenings, disease management, physicals, a weight loss program and episodic care. It's free to employees, spouses and retirees, according to Clyburn. It also offers the convenience of no wait times. Employees can be seen and back to work in 20 to 30 minutes.

"The nurse has helped our employees manage their health and has prevented some high dollar claims because conditions have been caught early, before hospitalization was needed," she said.

The [City of Aiken](#) began its wellness program in July 2003 and added the Employee Health Center in January 2007. Aiken began by providing access to a nurse three days a week, went to four days a week about a year later, and has been at five days a week for the last several years, according to Al Cothran, revenue administrator for the City of Aiken.



City of Aiken Employee Health Center

Aiken's center offers a comprehensive program including injury triage and assessment, counseling and case management of chronic conditions, assistance with general illness and referrals to local medical providers.



The Aiken clinic helps the city lower costs by focusing on wellness and risk management.

The city decided to offer the clinic because of the officials' belief that employees need to be empowered to take better care of themselves with education, health screenings and other assistance, Cothran said.

"We have had many employees share with us that they were able to identify health issues and treat the conditions early, which saves health insurance dollars in the long run," he said. "Having the nurse involved in our workers' compensation injuries has also saved dollars by routing the employees to the proper care and helping them return to work more quickly, often without any lost time."

The [City of Florence](#) opened its employee wellness clinic in May. It serves both city employees and their dependents. The clinic is available for blood work, physicals and sick visits. It also provides assistance with workers' compensation injuries and our wellness program, according to City Manager's Office Administrator Amanda Pope.

About 40 percent of Florence city employees do not have a primary care physician. The clinic allows the city to provide an accessible service to improve employee health and stabilize insurance costs, Pope said. The clinic offers a reduction in direct health care costs for the city and employees while also increasing productivity with fewer lost work hours. It also offers convenience and savings for employees. They are able to save leave time and avoid out-of-pocket medical expenses, Pope added.

In This Issue

[A Day in the Life of city managers/administrators](#)

[Advanced Institute offers more courses](#)

[Building the 2015 legislative initiatives](#)

[Celebrating the values of our hometowns and residents](#)

[Employee clinics gain in popularity](#)

[FOIA: Year in Review](#)

[General Assembly leaders headline HLAD agenda](#)

[Help is only a click away](#)

[Help Wanted](#)

[January 15 deadline for filing mandatory report](#)

[More than just an appointment](#)

[News Briefs](#)

[Public officials' liability: know the risks](#)

[Restoring public trust](#)

[The key to highly functioning councils](#)

['Tis the season for safety concerns](#)



Insurance and Risk Management
Affiliates
Municipal Online Directory
Research Tools

Contact Us

Municipal Association of South Carolina

1411 Gervais St., PO Box 12109

Columbia, SC 29211

Phone: 803.799.9574

Fax: 803.933.1299

mail@masc.sc

[Terms of Use](#) • [Privacy Policy](#) • [Map and Directions](#)