

Concern raised about air quality of health center

By JOE GORMAN Tribune Chronicle

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WARREN - The Warren West Community Health Care Center shut its doors last week because a leaky roof and other problems have made for unhealthy conditions in the building.

Dr. Ronald Dwinells, who runs the center for OneHealthOhio, said Wednesday that he was forced to close down July 14 because moisture had seeped in through the roof.

There are moisture spots on ceiling tiles in different parts of the building at the corner of Tod Avenue S.W. and Palmyra Road, and drywall near a back door had to be ripped out after the presence of mold was detected, Dwinells said.

"It's an air quality issue," he said.

Dwinells said operations at the center have been shifted to the Lloyd McCoy Community Health Center on Niles Road, but he said he was concerned because a large number of patients who use Warren West walk and have other transportation issues that make it hard for them to get the other center.

Brittany May uses the center for dental care and said she can not get to Niles Road because she has no transportation. She said she hopes Warren West can reopen soon.

The investment firm Capmark is the landlord for the building but because they are such a large organization, it is hard to get anyone to make repairs, Dwinells said.

"They're tough to deal with," Dwinells said. "They're not local and it's tough."

A spokesman at Capmark's main offices in Pennsylvania refused to comment.

Dwinells said the building formerly was a Rite Aid and the landlords have always been large corporations.

"They kept switching landlords," Dwinells said.

He said there have been other maintenance issues with the building over the years, but they have intensified in the last six months.

Warren West moved into the building in 2001, Dwinells said.

Councilwoman Cheryl Saffold, D-6th Ward, said she has received a lot of calls from residents upset that the center has closed who do not have any other place to go for health care. She said she hopes the issues can be fixed soon.

Dwinells said he has sent a letter to Capmark asking them to come up with a solution to the problems by Friday. He said he hopes the problems can be fixed and the center reopened.

"I need to get back in," Dwinells said. "We need to raise revenue and people around here need access to health care."

Article Photos



Toni Lloyd, site coordinator of Warren West Community Health Care Center, inspects a wall Wednesday that was damaged by a leaking roof. The operators of the southwest side center closed the doors last week due to air quality issues spurred by moisture seeping into the building.
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