

Evans expands its cardiology services

By Jeff Troth MEDDAC PAO



A ribbon cutting ceremony at Evans Army Community Hospital marked the expansion of services for the hospital's cardiology clinic. The additional capabilities of the clinic come with the arrival of a military cardiologist.

"We have been building upon what was already here," said Lt. Col. Daniel Carlson, Evans' new cardiologist who recently arrived from Fort Belvoir, Virginia. "Before the hospital had a cardiology/pulmonary section, without a physician. This meant that many patients were sent downtown and the results of the tests done by Evans' technicians were sent to Brooke (Army Medical Center, at Fort Sam Houston) for reading."

Carlson said sending test results to Brooke meant it could take up to two weeks to get the readings back. Having a cardiologist on staff allows for more rapid turnover for the readings.

Services now provided by the clinic include echocardiography, electrocardiography (EKG), exercise stress tests and interventional cardiology to include heart catheterization and coronary stents.

"Fort Carson beneficiaries will experience the benefits of an on-post provider who can follow their care throughout testing and intervention," said Col. Dennis LeMaster, commander of Fort Carson's Medical Department Activity. "This is a valuable addition to the services provided here at Evans. And, the expanded services of our cardiology clinic will benefit everyone in the Colorado Springs market."

Patients won't necessarily have to visit the Evans' cardiology clinic to benefit from the hospital having a cardiologist. Besides doing procedures and tests at the Fort Carson hospital, Carlson will perform cardiac procedures for TRICARE beneficiaries at other local hospitals and will assist the Air Force Academy clinic staff with their cardiac test results.

"Being stationed at Evans will also allow me to provide direct cardiology consultation to other doctors here," said Carlson. "I will be able to go to the family practice clinics and talk directly with a patient's doctor, which is ultimately better for patients."

Prior to his arrival Carlson said a "significant number" of Evans' cardiac patients were sent to civilian doctors. Now the cardiology clinic will be able to see the majority of cardiac consults and only refer a small number of patients downtown.

"We are a relatively robust clinic now, but we still won't be able to see everyone," Carlson said. "If we had more providers we could handle more patients. But, that is down the road a ways."

“For those that are already seeing a cardiologist downtown, there are currently no plans to pull them back to Evans,” he said.

Besides Carlson, the clinic is comprised of a noncommissioned officer in charge, three nurses and five technicians. The clinic has a dedicated treadmill/stress echo room, ECG testing room, PFT treadmill and testing room and two exam rooms.

“The cardiology clinic now has a strong staff to support the many services they provide,” said LeMaster. “And we look forward to the continued improvements in care that the cardiology clinic and its staff will provide to our beneficiaries in the future.”



To mark the expanded services offered at the Evans Army Community Hospital cardiology clinic (from left to right) Col. Dennis LeMaster (commander of Fort Carson’s Medical Department Activity), Sergeant Maj. Wesley Beene (acting Evans’ command sergeant major), Lt. Col. Daniel Carlson (cardiology clinic officer in charge), and Sgt. First Class Finees Agrait (cardiology clinic non-commissioned officer in charge) cut a ribbon at the clinic. (U.S. Army photo by Jeff Troth)



Lt. Col. Daniel Carlson, Evans Army Community Hospital's new cardiologist, talks about the expanded capabilities of the Evan's cardiology clinic. (U.S. Army photo by Jeff Troth)