

# Assistant Surgeon General visits local health centers

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Dr. Marilyn Gaston, director of the U.S. Bureau of Primary Health Care, spent Wednesday in Milwaukee learning more about the successful community-based clinics that provide care to many of the city's underserved residents.

Dr. Gaston's day included a meeting with Milwaukee Health Commissioner Paul Nannis and the directors of the city's community health centers, as well as tours of some of the facilities.

"The visit was an opportunity of Dr. Gaston to see how a city public health department and the community health centers can work together," said Nannis. "We're pleased that the Clinton Administration recognizes the impact community-based health facilities have in providing for the health care needs of our central city neighborhoods," he added.

At noon the Sixteenth Street Community Health Center, 1032 S. 16th Street, hosted local health care providers for a luncheon that featured remarks by Dr. Gaston. During her speech, Dr. Gaston focused on the need for other communities across the country to duplicate the strong public health department and community health center partnerships that have been established in Milwaukee.

"In many cases, these people would not receive necessary health care services if the clinics were not in their neighborhood," Nannis said.

Immediately following the luncheon and speech, Dr. Gaston met with local media representatives at the Sixteenth Street Health Center to talk about the role of community based health facilities and public health departments in health care reform.

Dr. Gaston also spent time meeting with Sixteenth Street staff and patients.

"Our health facility is among the local clinics to receive funding from Dr. Gaston's department, and I'm pleased that we can offer her an opportunity to see how effective

community-based clinic's can be when it comes to the use of those funds," said John J. Barkowski, Sixteenth Street chief executive officer.

In addition to the Sixteenth Street Community Health Center visit, Dr. Gaston spent part of the day touring the Isaac Cogg's Health Connection, Milwaukee Indian Health Board and Health Care for the Homeless Clinic.