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City Furniture opens in-house wellness clinic

Wellness center to cater to more than 900 employees

By [Arlene Satchell](#), Sun Sentinel

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City Furniture has joined the growing number of South Florida corporations that now offer on-site healthcare clinics for employees and their families.

The Tamarac-based furniture retailer on Tuesday officially opened its Health & Wellness Center at its headquarters at 6701 N. Hiatus Road.

The center offers free basic medical services to more than 900 City Furniture and Ashley Furniture HomeStore employees. It's staffed by a Holy Cross Hospital occupational health nurse practitioner.

Spouses, domestic partners and dependents of employees age 16 and older can also take advantage of the free medical services that include treatment of minor illnesses, basic physician exams, biometric screenings and blood pressure and diabetes monitoring, the company said.

Many companies are now taking a proactive approach to preventative healthcare and see in-house clinics as a way to help employees more easily seek early help for problems they may have otherwise put off, experts say.

City Furniture President Keith Koenig said the clinic is partly an effort to tackle rising healthcare and workers' compensation costs, as well as to provide a convenient healthcare option for employees.

"Healthcare costs are going up for us," said Koenig, noting that the business of moving furniture can often mean workers' compensation is unavoidable.

Recent studies have shown that "a wellness center, if executed properly," is one of the strategies companies are implementing to reduce health insurance costs.

City Furniture Human Resources Director Janet Wincko said the wellness center is a complement to the healthcare insurance options employees already have, but its services won't require co-pays. "They come here, they don't pay anything."

In addition to having cost-saving benefits for both company and employees, the clinic is expected to be a magnet for new talent.

One newly hired sales associate is already raving about the clinic, which started receiving patients last week.

"I think it's phenomenal," said Rich Quarantello on Tuesday after getting a checkup. "We work in a stressful industry, whether it's on the sales floor or delivering furniture, so having access to this service is definitely beneficial."

Nurse practitioner Sylvia Davis said the employees really like the convenience of an in-house wellness clinic. "It's one of the main perks."

Koenig said City Furniture networked with a handful of local companies for inspiration and insights into opening the wellness center, including Deerfield Beach-based JM Family Enterprises, which has offered an on-site wellness clinic for its employees since 1989.

"JM Family opened our eyes to what could be done," he said.

The automotive company's clinic has three full-time doctors on staff and visiting specialists in obstetrics and gynecology.

In recent months, other South Florida companies have added similar in-house healthcare programs.

In May, ADT in [Boca Raton](#) opened an on-site clinic for its employees, which is staffed by a nurse practitioner from Tenet Florida. ADT's clinic offers physical exams, blood work, vaccinations and health screenings, among other services.

Last September, Royal Caribbean Cruises Ltd. opened a clinic at its Miami headquarters for employees, which is also staffed by Tenet.

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