

“Thrive Drive” Clinics Offer Safe, Convenient Care

Kaiser Permanente adapts to pandemic with innovative drive-thrus

For people with chronic conditions, such as hypertension and diabetes, concerns about COVID-19 go beyond being worried about virus complications. This high-risk group has an added problem: How to safely access the regular, preventive care they need?

State lockdowns in the spring caused most outpatient clinics to close temporarily and, when buildings reopened, many high-risk patients didn't feel comfortable returning for in-person care. Recognizing the urgency of the situation, teams at Kaiser Permanente South Bay quickly mobilized to find an alternative.

The medical center's Quality team created drive-thru clinics – called “Thrive Drives” – at several facilities to provide blood pressure checks, blood sugar checks, diabetic foot exams, and immunizations. The first Thrive Drive opened at South Bay Medical Center on April 29, and 3 more in Gardena, Signal Hill, and Torrance opened July-August.

As of early September, the Thrive Drives have now served more than 6,229 patients. Services have expanded to include flu shots and pediatric immunizations, so even more patients can benefit from these clinics. Most services are done right from the patient's vehicle, and patients may also schedule lab tests and mammograms for a future visit.

“We're embracing new ways to care for patients and deliver the safest experience possible,” says Shelley Dozier, an Ambulatory Quality project manager who played a key role in the planning process. “Drive-thru clinics are a great solution to physical distancing, while allowing patients to maintain a personalized connection with us.”



Patient feedback has been overwhelmingly positive. “Convenient,” “safe,” and “efficient,” are just some of the ways surveyed patients have described Thrive Drives. An impressive 93.9% said they were “Extremely Satisfied” with the service they received, and 92.7% responded, “Definitely Yes,” when asked if they would use Thrive Drive service again.

The Quality team credits this success to medical center teamwork. Says Dozier, “This really was an integrated team effort. Our leaders were supportive of innovative ideas, and staff were empowered to make real-time adjustments based on patient feedback.”

South Bay Medical Center plans to continue the Thrive Drives for at least the next year, including during the winter if weather permits. Once the pandemic is more controlled, patient feedback will influence if the clinics become a permanent option.

Dozier reflects, “With COVID-19 limiting traditional forms of care, I believe these clinics have saved people's lives – I believe it with all my heart. And, for health care workers, that's what gets us up in the morning every day.”

Patient Feedback for Thrive Drives:

*“I just had a baby, so I have been... scared to come in, but **this place really made me feel safe.**”*

*“Thanks for coming up with **innovative ways to help us senior citizens** during these difficult times.”*

*“This works well. **I'm in my own private waiting room** with my own tunes, etc. **Keep it up!**”*

*“Drive-thru team member and check-in team member were both very friendly and helpful. **Felt safe and secure.**”*

South Bay Thrive Drive Hours of Operation:

South Bay Medical Center
(25825 S. Vermont Ave., Harbor City)
M-F, 8:30 am-4 pm

Gardena Medical Offices
(15446 S. Western Ave., Gardena)
MWF, 8:30 am-4 pm

Signal Hill Medical Offices
(845 E. Willow St., Signal Hill)
M-F, 8:30 am-4:30 pm

Torrance Medical Offices
(20790 Madrona Ave., Torrance)
MWF, 8:30 am-4 pm

Appointments preferred. Call
1-833-574-2273 to learn more.