

The Berlin Sun

Residents pick up fresh fruits and vegetables

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Aug 18, 2021 Updated 12 hrs ago

BERLIN — A line formed early Tuesday morning outside Coos County Family Health Services facility on Willow Street, as residents were looking for the opportunity to get a variety of fresh fruits and vegetables from NH Healthy Families' "Green to Go" van.

Coos County Family Health Services partnered with NH Healthy Families to provide this service, which is now in its third year according to NH Healthy Families Director of Marketing and Communications Kerry Pascetta.

From 10 a.m.-2 p.m., dozens of people stopped by to get an assortment of fresh offerings including carrots, bananas, potatoes, green beans, oranges and apples. Participants also had a chance to spin a prize wheel for a variety of prizes and speak with the staff at Coos County Family Health about diabetes education and nutrition-related community services at no charge.

Pascetta said this marked the second year the van has come to Berlin and a similar event is planned for the fall. She said NH Healthy Families enjoys working with Coos County Family Health to put the event on.

She said the idea behind the Green to Go van is that many communities lack healthy food options and other related resources, specifically fresh fruit and vegetables. She said the selection of fruits and vegetables depends on what is in season, but generally includes items that can be used in a variety of ways.

Several members of NH Healthy Families' Community Engagement Team helped to provide food and materials to those in attendance. Pascetta said events like the one Tuesday generally draw around 100 to 150 people.

In addition to the Green to Go food program, Pascetta said NH Healthy Families offers other services. The organization, which was founded in 2013, offers Medicaid and Medicare services and insurance through the federal government's health insurance marketplace with Ambetter insurance.

Pascetta said while the organization works for the benefit of its members, events like Green to Go are open to the entire community.

Pascetta said NH Healthy Families also provides a "Vision Van" which provides vision screenings and other related services as one of the community-based programs that will visit the Berlin area from time to time.