

ALPHA CLINIC

Birth clinic gets new name, services

Anti-abortion Alpha Pregnancy Clinic adding prenatal services

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The Napa Birth Choice Clinic has a new name and will be expanding its services for parents and babies.

Now known as Alpha Pregnancy Clinic, the center will be adding prenatal care services, an abortion recovery counseling program, as well as a “LIFE” program that offers support and education to mothers and babies through the child’s first year.

Napa’s Birth Choice Clinic was part of a franchise of Birth Choice Health Clinics, based in Southern California. Birth Choice was in the process of pursuing a license for all of its clinics, which could have resulted in the Napa clinic switching from a medical clinic to a resource center, said Cindy Irish, director of services of the Alpha Pregnancy Clinic in Napa.

As a resource center, Birth Choice wouldn’t have been able to provide STD testing, pregnancy testing or ultrasounds. That’s when the Napa clinic contacted Alpha, Irish said.

Like Birth Choice, Alpha Pregnancy Clinics of Northern California is an anti-abortion organization that works to prevent abortions and encourage abstinence in youth and singles. All of its services are free, and the clinic depends heavily on donations and volunteers.

Executive Director Diedre Eckle said Alpha is not a political organization, nor does it use pressure tactics.

“When people hear ‘pro-life,’ they think you have an agenda that you’re trying to push down girls’ throats,” Eckle said. “It’s their choice, not our choice. We just want to give them the best information.”

The Alpha clinic in Napa opened Aug. 19, but Alpha has been in existence for nearly 30 years. The organization also has a medical clinic in Vacaville, a resource center in Fairfield and a mobile medical unit that currently serves Solano County.

The mobile unit is basically a pregnancy clinic on wheels — offering services like pregnancy testing, counseling and ultrasounds. One of the places the mobile unit parks in Solano County is outside Vallejo High School. When they get the appropriate level of staffing, Eckle said, the plan is to expand the mobile unit to Napa County.

Eckle said she hopes to expand the Napa clinic’s hours. The clinic currently offers medical

services 20 hours per week — the goal is to increase those hours to 40.

Alpha does not provide referrals for abortions, but it does offer an abortion recovery counseling program, which provides the option of one-on-one or group counseling. Counseling is open to women who have had abortions, as well as women who have suffered a miscarriage or stillbirth.

“For women who choose to parent, Alpha provides pregnancy support through medical referrals and parenting classes,” according to the clinic’s website. “We also provide information on adoption for clients who want to carry their child, but aren't ready to parent.”