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For immediate release:

What began as an infirmary for quarantined students and soldiers during WWI is now one of the nation's premier campus care centers.

This spring the Campus Health Service is celebrating over 90 years of quality care to students and staff at The University of Arizona. One of the longest serving units at the UA, the mission of Campus Health is health, wellness and safety through a commitment to high standards and collaboration.

Campus Health was a direct result of the worldwide Spanish Influenza epidemic in the fall of 1918. One wing of University Hall (now Old Main) and one floor of the Agriculture Building (now Forbes) were turned into hospital wards to treat U.S. soldiers. The entire campus was quarantined during the epidemic as well.



Infirmary - 1919

Byron Cummings, dean of the archeology department and director of the Arizona State Museum, and his wife volunteered to help care for ailing soldiers and students. In the spring of 1919, the Reuben R. Schweitzer home (now the site of the Koffler Chemistry-Biology Building) became the first official infirmary. It also marked the beginning of a continuous and reliable presence on campus.

From those humble beginnings, the Infirmary grew to become the Student Health Center, a unit of the Division of Student Affairs. The center was located for 40 years at Cherry Avenue and the UA Mall. Until 1978, students who needed treatment often remained overnight while receiving medical care from staff members.



Infirmary - 1951

During the 1940s and 50s, three brothers - Burr, Stewart and Morris Udall - lived in the basement at Student Health and worked as orderlies, night watchmen and janitors. All three eventually graduated from the UA with law degrees. Burr Udall became a local attorney. Stewart Udall represented Arizona in Congress and was Secretary of the Interior during the Kennedy and Johnson administrations. "Mo" Udall served three decades in Congress.



Student Health Center - 1995

Today's modern Campus Health Service opened in 2004, and is housed in the Highland Commons Building on the south side of campus where it functions as an urgent care center and ambulatory health clinic. It also is one of the first health facilities in Tucson to use electronic health records. Each year Campus Health sees nearly 50 percent of all enrolled UA students, through more than 125,000 separate service visits.



Campus Health Service (Highland Commons Building) - 2009

Campus Health also has forged partnerships across campus with other units, including the Dean of Students, Residence Life, Risk Management and Safety, the Office of the Vice President of Research, Campus Recreation, UA Police Department, Student Unions, Greek Life, Intercollegiate Athletics, Center for Student Involvement and Leadership, ASUA, Eller College of Management, International Affairs, and the colleges of Medicine, Nursing, Pharmacy and Public Health, just to name a few.

"Since its inception during the 1918-1919 academic year, the Campus Health Service has taken the lead in looking out for the health and safety of those who learn, work and live at the UA and in promoting health and wellness across the UA community," said Harry McDermott, M.D., MPH, the executive director of UA Health and Wellness.

The people who comprise the Campus Health Service come from many disciplines and offer a comprehensive array of care, including medicine, nursing, laboratory, pharmacy, counseling and psychological services, physical therapy, women's health, x-ray and health promotion and preventive services. This integrated model of care is supported by other dedicated support and administrative personnel, working together with the goal of creating a safe and healthy community for students and others served.

Campus Health is perhaps best-known to students as the place to come for sprained ankles, sore throats, depression, or information on smoking cessation or sexual health. But other students benefit from the opportunity to advance their career education through student employment, internships and professional rotations working under the direction of expert staff members. The combination of service, teaching and research activities performed by the Campus Health Service supports the mission of the UA both in Tucson and statewide.

In addition to its 90-year anniversary, Campus Health earned its 11th consecutive accreditation from the Accreditation Association for Ambulatory Health Care. It was the first college health center in the U.S. to gain full national accreditation.