

‘This is about life’: The Healing Place detox center opens in Wilmington



Eight years after the idea was brought before New Hanover county commissioners, a potentially life-saving facility opened its doors in Wilmington.

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WILMINGTON, N.C. (WECT) - Eight years after the idea was brought before New Hanover county commissioners, a potentially life-saving facility opened its doors in Wilmington.

Commissioners, alongside other city and county officials and dozens from throughout the community, celebrated the official launch of The Healing Place of New Hanover County, which will soon treat people struggling with substance abuse.

“Just walking through this facility, you’re going to feel the presence and the spirit of a higher power. I can’t say enough about it,” said Jay Davidson, executive chairman for The Healing Place.

Trillium Health first brought the idea for the Healing Place to commissioners in 2015, though the board had discussed adding new addiction treatment resources prior to that. The \$24 million project off of Medical Center Drive [broke ground in January 2021](#).

The Healing Place offers an abstinence-based program to those struggling with addiction at no cost to them. Clients receive food, shelter, clothing and recovery programming. The Healing Place of New Hanover County



joins more than a dozen other facilities in the region, including one in Raleigh, as well as in Virginia and Kentucky.

Those who go through the abstinence-based program could stay in the facility for a year or longer. They start in a detox center for around a week and are closely monitored as the drugs or alcohol they were using leave their system.

Then, they spend around two months in what staff call the Motivation Track, living together and attending daily alcoholics anonymous-style classes. Finally, they head to the recovery phase for several months where they take on jobs on the Healing Place campus and work with peer mentors, who also recently graduated from the rehab program.

“This will afford those people the opportunity to go somewhere and to really have the opportunity to pull their lives back together, to get well, and to come back and be an active part of the community that helped them get there,” Commissioner Deb Hays said.

Wilmington was at one time considered one of the worst cities in the country for drug abuse. The new facility is just one way the county is working to curb that issue and assist residents in need.

New Hanover County was also awarded \$19.5 million over 18 years from an opioid abuse lawsuit settlement. The Healing Place will not receive any of that funding after [concerns rose because it is abstinence-based](#), rather than using [medication-assisted treatment](#).

The new facility will start taking clients for its residential program on Feb. 1.

“This is about life. This is about healing, and this is an opportunity to do that for our citizens in our region,” said County Manager Chris Coudret.

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