

## Porter-Starke methadone clinic up and running

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By **Teresa Auch Post-Tribune staff writer**

VALPARAISO -- Porter County's first methadone clinic is fully running, according to officials.

Porter-Starke Services opened the clinic at its main site on Wall Street in February. Officials wanted to take it slowly, though, to work out any problems.

Bob Franko, vice president of marketing and development, said the clinic has about 10 to 15 patients now.

The site has had few, if any, problems.

"It's gone wonderfully," Dave Lomaka, president and CEO, said.

Right now, Porter-Starke is working on contacting the people who had previously called, wanting to know when the clinic would be open for them to use.

Lomaka said he hopes people can see now that the clinic won't cause problems in the community. He added that Porter-Starke doesn't look any different except for more people going in and out.

"The best news is with gas prices going up, people don't have to drive to Gary anymore (for a clinic)," Lomaka said.

County officials began working for the clinic, the 13th in the state, after concerns about a growing heroin problem. The clinic was originally scheduled to open last summer, but delays pushed it back to February.

The clinic provides several drug-treatment options, including buprenorphine and suboxone. Anyone interested in starting at the clinic can call 531-3500.

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