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Leased Health Clinics Inside Wal-Mart Stores: From Pilot To Permanent?

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Washington, DC (AHN) - **At the 4th Annual World Health Care Congress, Leo Scott, the President and CEO of Wal-Mart** disclosed their plan to possibly enhance their pilot program currently in place by opening a total of 2,000 health clinics within their stores over the next five to seven years.

Wal-Mart's pilot program began in 2005 by leasing medical clinic space inside just a few stores. To date, however, there are already 76 medical clinics now open within Wal-Mart stores across 12 different states.

Scott stated, "We think the clinics will be a great opportunity for our business. But most importantly, they are going to provide something our customers and communities desperately need -- affordable access at the local level to quality health care."

Wal-Mart's goal is to offer lower prices for generic drugs and make health services more affordable for the public, according to Scott.

Scott stated, "The fact is the time for politics in today's debate on health care is long past. The time for real and meaningful change has come."

The proposed additional health clinics, which will be leased spaces within the Wal-Mart stores, will be managed by either local or regional hospitals or by other independent organizations, according to Scott.

Surveys were conducted for the clinics that are already in operation. The information provided by those surveys indicated that more than 50 percent of the visitors to the clinics did not have any medical insurance.