

Community Free Clinic

2015 Executive Summary

Mission Statement:

Community Free Clinic's mission is "To help Cabarrus County adults move toward wellness by providing healthcare and pharmacy services."

Organizational Information:

The Community Free Clinic (CFC) is a standalone free clinic with an in-house pharmacy located in Cabarrus County. CFC provides healthcare and pharmacy services to low-income, working aged adults who have chronic health conditions (i.e., high blood pressure, diabetes, heart disease) and other primary medical care needs. It was established in 1994 by Dr. David Lockhart and Dr. George Liles. Their mission was to remove the barriers of limited financial resources and lack of health insurance so that Cabarrus County residents could achieve and maintain a healthy status in order to take care of themselves and their families.

Clinical services are provided three days and one evening each week and pharmacy services are provided three days per week. Since 2012, the clinic's hours have increased by 44% from 13 to 23 hours per week. The number of patients served has increased from 287 in 2012 to 883 in 2014. The large weekly evening clinic is staffed by 20 area physicians who volunteer and rotate through CFC on a scheduled basis. Four new volunteer physicians were added in 2014 to weekday schedules. The Clinic and pharmacy was also supported in 2014 by 53 volunteer nursing staff, 17 volunteer lab technicians, 10 dentists, 17 volunteer pharmacists, and 34 pharmacy assistants. The clinic is also supported by 39 administrative volunteers, 18 Board members, a Strategic Planning Committee, a Development Committee, a Finance Committee, and a Special Events Committee. In 2014, 215 volunteers logged over 4,363 service hours to increase clinical, pharmacy, and operational capacity.

2014

- The Community Free Clinic has been responding to Cabarrus County's unmet healthcare needs for 20 years.
- Both annual fundraising events surpassed all other events in the history of the Clinic.
- Patient population increased from 350 to 883. 4,495 patient appointments were provided
- Pharmacy costs were reduced and efficiency increased by leveraging the services of a large non-profit mail order pharmacy.
- Patient enrollment, eligibility, financial recertification, pharmacy, and care coordination services were assumed for 900 patients enrolled in the county healthcare safety net due to county and state funding cuts.
- 13,362 prescriptive medications (no controlled medications) were provided to uninsured Cabarrus County residents valued at \$3,221,655.
- "Exercise is Medicine" was implemented. Of those 110 patients enrolled, 34% have increased their weekly physical activity.
- HealthNet quality improvement year end data indicated that only 29% of patients with hypertension had blood pressures greater than 140/90 and only 24% of diabetic patients had HgbA1c's greater than 9. Volunteer Pharm D residents provide medication and medical adherence counseling to patients each week by phone and clinic visit to improve clinical outcomes. A small group of volunteer RN's have been identified in 2014 to begin to provide individual patient education and supportive counseling to improve clinical outcomes and measures.

2013

- A new annual fundraising event, “Heart to Heart Evening” was founded to celebrate the clinic’s 19th anniversary. This event raised more funds than any other single fundraising event in the clinic’s history.
- A quality improvement program was implemented to measure and improve our patients’ health and clinical outcomes quarterly. This initiative is coordinated by the NC Association of Free Clinics and supported by NC Blue Cross Blue Shield Foundation.
- The Community Free Clinic continually strives to assure that people in our community have access to quality healthcare and medications. To this end, we must adapt to changes in the local healthcare safety-net and step-in where we can to provide leadership and expertise. This year, the Community Free Clinic took on additional responsibilities for the 800+ low-income uninsured patients enrolled in the Community Care Plan. These new responsibilities and services include:
 - Assumed care coordination for Community Care Plan uninsured patients to assure that they have a medical home, obtain needed specialty referrals, interpretive services, and follow-up care.
 - Became the Point of Entry Pharmacy in Cabarrus County for NC MedAssist—a large non-profit pharmacy that provides no cost medications for our patients.
 - Assumed the patient eligibility, enrollment, and recertification process for Community Care Plan patients to assure that all enrolled patients meet federal poverty income guidelines and other eligibility criteria to access medical care and medications at no cost.
 - Created a “one application, one stop shop” to improve continuity and access to services for patients. This was done by working collaboratively with Community Care Plan of Southern Piedmont, CMC-NorthEast, Cabarrus County Department of Human Services (DSS), and private medical practices.
- Host and provider of “Living Healthy”, a six week self-management class for people living with chronic health conditions.
- Clinic enrollment increased by 61%.

Financial Information:

- The rate of return for Community Free Clinic’s supporter investments is \$12 to \$1. For every \$1 invested by our donors, sponsors, partners, and supporters, the Community Free Clinic returns \$12 of healthcare services back into the Cabarrus County community through efforts to “*Keep People Healthy*”.
- Due to decreased individual, civic, corporate, and church donations, CFC has had to rely more heavily than ever before on restrictive and competitive grant funding.
- Due to grants providing a majority of operational funding, this leaves the Clinic financially vulnerable and dependent based upon grant funding competition and availability.
- The Clinic has implemented a Development Committee and Process to assess and improve social and media marketing, outreach, and donor development.

Future Plans:

The Affordable Care Act (ACA) of 2010 has left many uninsured with no access to affordable healthcare. Cabarrus County has 19,904 uninsured, low-income, working age (18-64 years) adults. NC Legislature has not yet elected to accept federal expansion of Medicaid, **leaving those at or below 138% of the federal poverty level no option for healthcare within the ACA.** Those above 138% of the federal poverty level may be exempt or opt to pay the fine for not enrolling in a health insurance exchange due to out of pocket expenses and limited financial resources. The Clinic is the community’s response to unmet healthcare needs in Cabarrus County. The Clinic has changed through the years as local healthcare needs and priorities have changed. The Community Free Clinic will continue to remain true to its mission and provide access to healthcare services as long as there is an unmet need in Cabarrus County.