

Transforming
LIVES



THE FREE MEDICAL CLINIC OF GREATER CLEVELAND

Mission

To address vital community health needs by providing high quality health care and related services to individuals and families, regardless of their ability to pay, and by advocating for policy changes that promote greater access for the underserved and improved community-wide health and wellness outcomes.

Vision

To be a health home of choice by providing exemplary health services and to be a respected voice for positive change through effective advocacy.

Values

- Health care is the right of every individual
- Health services will be initiated and continued in response to prioritized unmet community needs
- Resources will be leveraged to provide the maximum level of care
- Services will be provided in such a way as to preserve patient and client dignity and confidentiality
- Patients and clients are encouraged to take appropriate responsibility for their own health and well-being
- Advocacy in support of the organization's mission is essential
- Securing sufficient resources to ensure stable operation until the organization's mission is fulfilled is an essential function

Transformation

While change is inevitable, the degree of change The Free Clinic has undergone in recent years has truly been transformative. We believe the changes we have made have positioned us well to continue to be a trusted source for care for many years into the future.

Most significantly, after more than 40 years as one of the country's largest free clinics, The Free Clinic has become a community Health Center (aka, federally qualified Health Center), under Sec 330 of the Public Health Services Act. This designation, awarded by the Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA), was an outgrowth of President Obama's historic efforts through the Affordable Care Act to extend health benefits to millions of Americans who were previously uninsured, isolated or medically vulnerable.

We were already actively serving the very population the ACA and HRSA were seeking to support. However, providing those services free of charge, without dedicated revenue sources to cover operations, was proving unsustainable. As a Health Center under the HRSA umbrella, we are entitled to federal dollars to cover a portion of the uncompensated care we provide, which still includes absolutely free care for those falling below Federal Poverty Levels. We also now accept Medicaid, Medicare and private insurance. Most importantly, as always, we continue to care for individuals regardless of their ability to pay, with or without insurance.

The following pages detail many of the other changes brought about largely because of our new identity, but also to enhance and modernize our facility and care practices.

Through this sea of changes, we remain fundamentally unaltered in our mission and values. We continue to be inspired and driven by our core philosophy: health care is a right, not a privilege.

No matter what future transformations may come, our commitment to providing high quality health care to those most in need and to advocacy for a fair and just system of care remains constant. We are profoundly grateful for all you have done to support this important mission.



Debra Rex, MA, M.Ed
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Danny R. Williams, JD, MNO
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"Change is the law of life. And those who look only to the past or the present are certain to miss the future."

John F. Kennedy



Debra Rex



Danny R. Williams

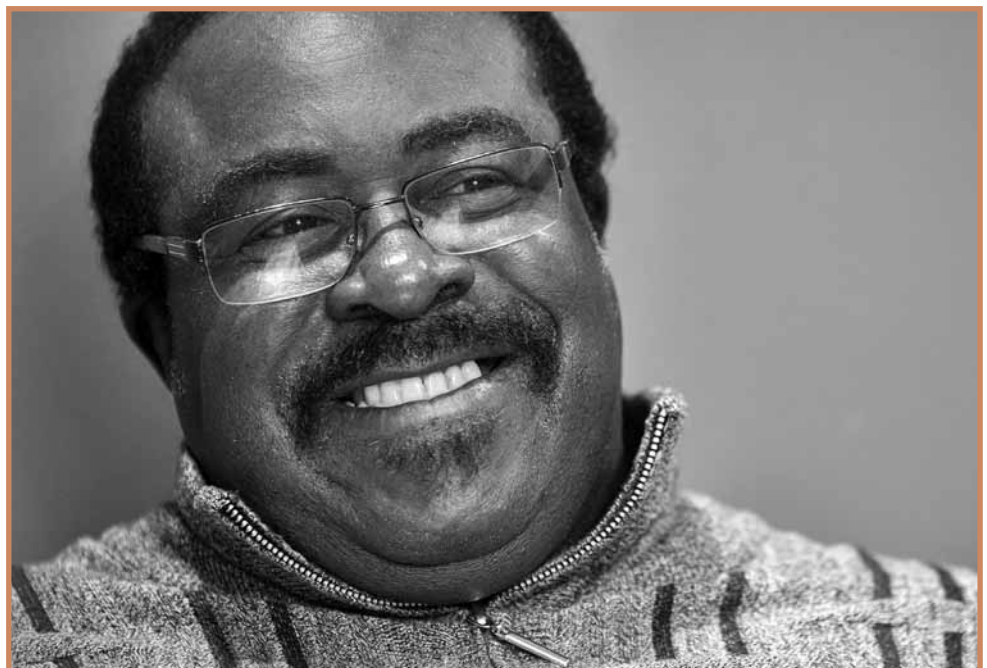
Transformation

When Wiley Bridgeman first visited The Free Clinic on December 16, 2014, it was not his medical appointment that was particularly remarkable — it was the fact that he arrived at all. A little more than three weeks earlier, Bridgeman, his younger brother and a close childhood friend were exonerated for wrongful convictions in 1975 for the murder of a Cleveland-area money order salesman. Wiley had been in prison for 39 years, the longest sentence ever served in this country concluded by exoneration, according to news reports.

Reclaiming Lives

Bridgeman was warmly welcomed at our Health Center and received the care he needed over a period of successive months. In the course of checking in for his appointments, he engaged in conversations with one of the front desk staff members. The two found that they had a mutual appreciation of jazz, so she bought a couple of CDs for him at a music exchange store. She told him she thought he might find listening to the disks soothing and inspiring. By the questions he asked, she knew he did not quite know what CDs are; almost 40 years out of circulation is a lot of popular culture and technological advancement to catch up on.

He also told her that he had visited a few health care centers when he was first released from prison. His story had captured local and national attention and many institutions were eager to help. “But I like this place the best,” he said. “They’re just nice and they treat you like you’re normal.”



Wiley Bridgeman

Leading the way

to better health outcomes

Chief Wellness Officer Dr. Farah Munir is a leading advocate for integrating primary care and behavioral health services at our Health Center and works hard to ensure that this strategy is always at the forefront of patient care. The Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration defines integrated care as “the systematic coordination of general and behavioral health care.” Research demonstrates that such coordination is vital to improved health outcomes. People living with mental illnesses and addictions can die decades before the general population, mostly from untreated and preventable chronic illnesses.

Under Munir’s guidance, The Free Clinic embraces integration by providing team-based primary care, dental and behavioral health care services to our patients through a culturally sensitive, patient-centered approach that allows for healing of the mind, body and spirit.

Introduced in 2015, and modeled on exceptional case management services already established for HIV patients, a key to the success of this growing program is that The Free Clinic offers diverse services at a single location and all departments enthusiastically promote and participate in the integration process. Care managers work closely with patients and care providers to accommodate individual patient needs, including treatment goals with attention to the patient’s personal preferences and lifestyle goals.

According to Munir, compassionate, coordinated care can turn a person’s life around even during devastating times. She cites as an example a patient in our behavioral health program who complained of feeling tired all the time but had avoided seeing a doctor for years. With the encouragement of her counselor, the patient agreed to be seen by one of our primary care staff. The appointment resulted in a diagnosis of HIV, which enabled a care team to immediately begin medication treatment together with intensive education and counseling services to help address and manage the questions and concerns that come with this life-changing diagnosis.

The patient’s care manager continues to meet with and check in with her on a regular basis to ensure she has uninterrupted access to medication, transportation to appointments and consistent support and encouragement to maintain the lifestyle changes critical to her ongoing self-care. Perhaps most importantly, the patient has learned that she should not avoid seeing doctors, and that by continuing her behavioral health treatment and faithfully taking the prescribed medications as directed, she will ultimately enjoy a long and fulfilling life. This patient is proof that integrated care improves and saves lives.



Farah Munir, DO
*Free Clinic
Chief Wellness Officer*

Transformation

As important as our daily efforts serving patients will always be, we are also watchful for emerging policies or social trends that could have even greater impact on those we serve. So, we joined with scores of like-minded agencies to educate lawmakers about the importance of expanding Medicaid, and the resulting outcome of that legislation has meant that half of our clients now have health insurance coverage, many for the first time in their adult lives. And a new staff team of Certified Application Counselors is working to add more to the insured rolls every day.

Advocating for Social Change

In recent years, we became a distribution site for Project DAWN (Deaths Avoided With Naloxone), a program that provides free lifesaving kits containing naloxone (brand name Narcan) to people at risk, or who know people at risk of opioid overdose. When administered in time, naloxone can reverse overdoses caused by heroin, OxyContin, methadone, Percocet, Vicodin, fentanyl and other opioids. Project DAWN is directed by the MetroHealth System and collectively supported by funding through MetroHealth, the Office of the County Executive, Ohio Department of Health, and the Cuyahoga County ADAMHS Board.

Since becoming a distribution site, we provided testimony and actively helped convince our state legislators to change Ohio's laws to allow for broader access and distribution of this life-saving protocol. Thus far, more than 200 lives have been saved from overdose deaths since the program began.

A topic that has captured great national and, more recently, statewide attention is the legalization of marijuana. In June 2015, The Free Clinic organized and presented a community forum to examine the many considerations attendant with potentially legalizing medical marijuana in Ohio. The forum offered a keynote address on the state of the science concerning marijuana as medicine by a leading expert from the Department of Clinical Pharmacy at the University of Colorado; panel discussions on some of the intended and unintended consequences and the potential economic impact of legalization; and a debate between a key proponent and opponent of the proposed ballot initiative on whether medical marijuana would improve public health in Ohio. Excerpts from the forum can be viewed on The Free Clinic's website, www.thefreeclinic.org.

Syringe Exchange Programs

= Community Health Harm Reduction

The Free Clinic's Syringe Exchange Program (SEP) remains one of the very few formally authorized SEPs in Ohio and its contiguous neighbor states. The National Institutes of Health has noted that SEPs have produced reductions in HIV transmission rates by injection drug users (IDU) of 30% or more, along with reductions in risk behavior as high as 80%.

These impacts have been evident in the Cleveland area as well. At the time Cleveland's exchange program was created, 19% of new HIV cases were among IDUs in the city. As of 2011, the annual percent of new HIV cases involving injection drug use had dropped to 0.8% for the city of Cleveland and 1% for Cuyahoga County. While this significant reduction cannot be fully attributed to our Health Center's SEP, it is certainly a factor in these outcomes.

In addition to providing sterile syringes to the injection drug users (through a one-for-one exchange), the program also provides HIV and Hepatitis C testing, basic wound care, safer injection kits, condoms and other barriers for sexual activities, as well as influenza vaccines.

The program currently exchanges more than 300,000 needles annually through our clinic location and two mobile sites in the city of Cleveland.

Approximately 3,200 clients are served each year through the Health Center's SEP.

More than 270 clients are provided with HIV testing and counseling by Health Center staff.

Approximately 300 clients are referred to medical services within the Health Center each year, many of them covered by Medicaid.

More than 440 clients, most covered by Medicaid, are referred to drug treatment services each year at the Health Center and other community treatment centers.

Transforming

Young Lives

Historically, The Free Clinic focused on the health needs of adults and older adolescents because young children could access care through Medicaid or The Children's Health Insurance Program (CHIP), created in 1997 to provide coverage for children under 19 in families that earned too much to qualify for Medicaid, but were unable to afford coverage in the private

market. However, Cleveland's children continue to be poorer and more exposed to environmental health risks, keeping the need for high quality integrated care a high priority. Now, as a Community Health Center, (CHC), we can serve as a trusted source of care.

Starting in January 2011, The Free Clinic began seeing children when a pediatrician, Dr. Mary Clough, started volunteering once a week. Long established in a practice at Kaiser, Dr. Clough wanted to devote some of her time, expertise and love of children to the underserved people cared for at our Health Center. When she retired from Kaiser Permanente, Dr. Clough became a part-time staff member for the Health Center she already knew quite well.



One of our littlest patients with Dr. Niyati Mahajan



Dr. Mary Clough

Then, in February of 2014, Dr. Niyati Mahajan joined the Health Center as its first full-time pediatrician, having previously worked at a CHC in Fremont, Ohio. She received her medical degree in India and then attended the University of Kentucky, where she earned a Master of Public Health degree and completed her pediatrics residency. "I love to interact with kids. I like all stages of childhood," said Dr. Mahajan, herself the mother of a 2-year-old boy. And so, like the children we serve, The Free Clinic's pediatric practice continues to grow.

Transforming

Health Education Through Partnerships

When Jim Alsop first came to The Free Clinic in August of 2014, he was a recent graduate of the University of Wisconsin, Madison, with a degree in Medical Microbiology and Immunology and aspirations to go to medical school. Before starting medical studies, Alsop decided to devote a year to the AIDS United AmeriCorps Program. He sought out a placement at this Health Center because, he said, "I believe working in The Free Clinic can help me become even more comfortable working with and helping those of sociocultural backgrounds different from my own. In the future, I hope to work as a physician, specifically working in larger, diversely populated urban areas, and I think this work will give me invaluable experience. I hope to be able to utilize the education in Immunology, especially when it comes to HIV, to be able to effectively educate people during outreach events. I hope to be able to answer any, if not all, questions people may have and have the opportunity to be an effective and reliable educational resource."



Jim Alsop is interviewed by Cool Cleveland's Marty Bielat

According to the Health Center's HIV Manager, Lisa Fair, Alsop easily achieved his stated personal goals and so much more, greatly enriching The Free Clinic along the way. "This was our first opportunity to engage with AmeriCorps and it was a wonderful experience for everyone who was part of it," said Fair. Not only did Alsop master outreach activities, connecting with others with openness and grace, he also proved an adroit HIV tester and counselor and a wonderful organizer, bringing new order to the HIV office and streamlining practices for greater efficiency. And because Alsop's addition to the Health Center's HIV Department was such a mutually beneficial partnership, Free Clinic staff hope to host more AmeriCorps recruits in the future. As for Alsop, the native Minnesotan is indeed studying medicine at the University of Minnesota, preparing for a lifetime of transforming the health of others.

The Free Clinic is able to welcome Jim Alsop and other AmeriCorps volunteers thanks to the national AIDS United program and the local AIDS Funding Collaborative, which provide funding and administrative support. Throughout the Health Center's history, partnerships such as this have made our work possible.

DONORS

Generous philanthropic community support sustains The Free Clinic. The following list recognizes donors and supporters for FY 15, which runs from 7/1/14 to 6/30/15. We are deeply appreciative of every contribution; however, space constraints restrict our ability to acknowledge all supporters in our Annual Report. Donations below \$100 and those designated to The Free Clinic through local United Way agencies and Greater Cleveland Community Shares are not reflected in this list below.

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Leonard H. Calabrese, DO

Charles F. Clarke, Esq.
 (Deceased)

vic gelb

Gordon S. Friedman, Esq.

Donald H. Messinger, Esq.

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 Courtney Batt, MD

Vice President
 Jim Lockshaw

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Ronald Young

Board Leadership at Its Best



Carol Metz began her volunteer career with The Free Clinic in 1992 while still a University of Akron student aspiring to go into medicine. Today, an accomplished attorney, Metz is still a devoted volunteer, but rather than helping the medical team gather patient information as a history taker, she plays a leading role in being a Health Center history maker.

In 2007, Metz resumed volunteering for The Free Clinic as a board member, having taken a hiatus for law school, building a law career, marriage and starting a family. As a longtime volunteer, Metz is well-versed in the history, philosophy and mission of the organization. But it was during her recently concluded two-year term as board president that Metz was thrust into the role of lead change agent, navigating the clinic and its crew through uncharted waters of transforming from a free clinic to a Federally Qualified Health Center that at times seemed to threaten to capsize the ship. Metz assumed the role of board president in January of 2013, in the midst of this difficult evolution.

In August of that same year the Health Center launched its new Electronic Medical Records system, a necessary and positive step in successfully operating as a community Health Center, but an enormous undertaking coming about at a time and place already contending with major system-wide changes. September 2013 brought the first-ever inspection from the Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA), the federal agency that has oversight of FQHCs, to determine how well The Free Clinic had converted to being a Health Center. The report card was dismal and a second site visit was set for a year later to determine if the Health Center could pass inspection at that point.

Metz was undaunted and under her calm, fearless leadership, the board worked relentlessly alongside of management staff to make corrections and meet the spelled out HRSA program requirements. At the end of what may have been the most trying year in The Free Clinic's history, Metz's tireless tenacity paid off. The clinic passed each and every one of the 19 stipulated program points with flying colors. And in the process of working to forge the free clinic into a Health Center, new bonds and synergy between the board members and staff was a serendipitous and unexpected byproduct. She said "I am still inspired by the depth of the compassion and dedication I see from the staff and volunteers, and there are days I can't wait to go to meetings because I need my Free Clinic fix. It adds an uplifting balance to my life that I truly cherish."

National Health Center Week

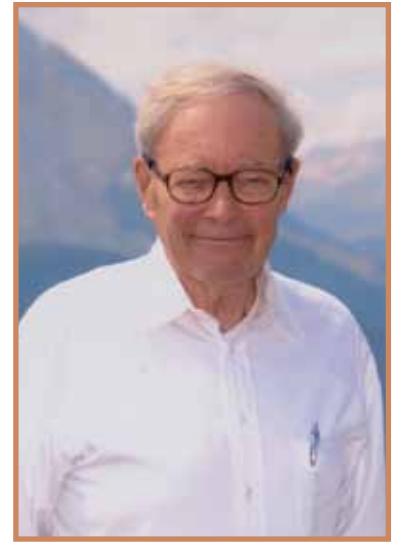


Each year, community health centers around the country plan a variety of celebrations to mark National Health Center Week (NHCW). Locally, The Free Clinic collaborates with the other health centers in the community to hold a joint event that highlights a meaningful health-related subject and recognizes individuals and groups making an important difference at any one of our health centers and the community collectively.

At the 2015 NHCW celebration in August, which marked the 50th anniversary of community health centers and for Medicaid and Medicare, The Free Clinic recognized standout volunteers **David Filmer** and **Adina Wolf**. Both of these individuals put in many long and arduous hours guiding The Free Clinic through the challenges of transitioning its finance system from a philanthropically donation-driven model (as a free clinic), to the fee for service model proscribed for Federally Qualified Health Centers. Because the CFO position had been vacated, Filmer was interim CFO during this period, coming out of retirement from another health center to steer the clinic through these turbulent changes. Wolf, the wife of a board member, stepped in to offer assistance, capitalizing on her pre-motherhood experience as a state auditor proficient at identifying problems within systems. They are a talented and dedicated duo who played crucial roles in restoring not just order but a whole new order to the Health Center's finance system. And they are still volunteering and making a difference today.

Transitions

While The Free Clinic is dedicated to delivering quality care to the people we serve, we would be shortsighted if we did not also consider our own health and longevity. Part of that critical self-care is our new Planned Giving program. Generous donors have always been the lifeblood of this clinic, and so we are pleased to be able to offer some of our staunchest supporters and those who believe in our mission the opportunity to join their legacies with ours.



Charlie Clarke

Building the Future

The Free Clinic's history is populated by many storied, passionate and daring individuals who shaped who we are today, among them Charlie Clarke, the clinic's first and longest serving Board President and a well-known and respected legal and civic leader in Cleveland. His vision and commitment were essential to the creation and launch of The Free Clinic.

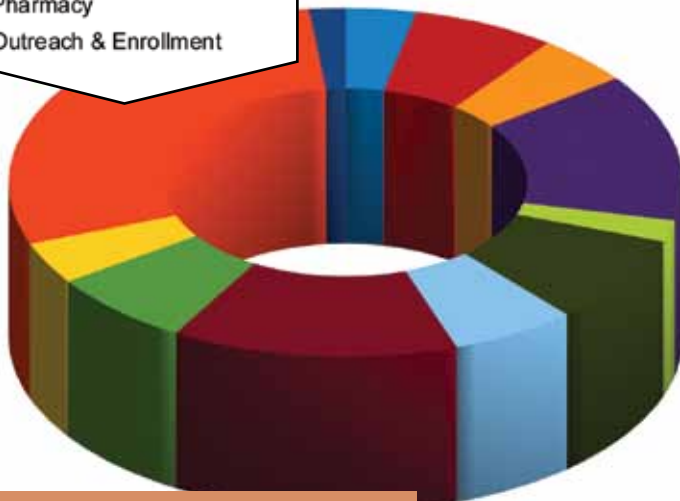
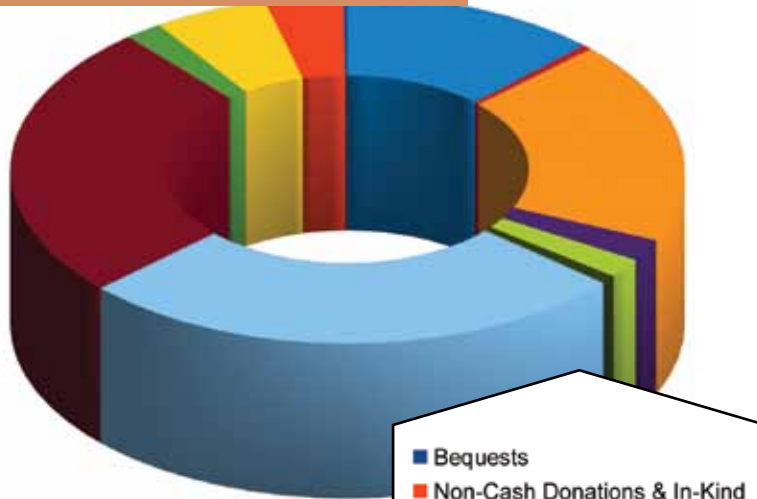
Although Charlie died in January 2014, a team of volunteer professionals, together with a few of this Health Center's board members, established the Charlie Clarke Legacy Society to celebrate and sustain the exemplary spirit of service and advocacy on behalf of the underserved that was Charlie's hallmark. We invite you to join us in nurturing the work of The Free Clinic that Charlie so loved and our community so needs by investing in The Fund for The Free Clinic's Future, our endowment fund. We gladly accept cash or stock gifts, as well as charitable gift annuities, life insurance policies, IRAs or other retirement plans, charitable trusts and bequests.

Your gift today can have an impact on the lives of others for generations to come.

Financials

FY 2015 (July 1, 2014 to June 30, 2015)

Support and Revenue



Support and Revenue

Bequests	\$8,000
Non-Cash Donations & In-Kind	\$178,362
Individuals	\$258,574
Corporations	\$84,349
Foundations	\$1,208,164
Government Grants & Awards	\$1,259,972
Special Events (net of direct costs)	\$36,278
Miscellaneous Income & Services Rendered	\$85,466
Interest & Dividend Income	\$95,976
Donated Services	\$885,501
Net Realized/Unrealized Gain (Loss) in Investments	\$22,172
Patient Service Revenue	\$581,950
Total Revenue	\$4,704,764

Expenses

Case Management & Other Enabling Services	\$96,402
Adult Medical	\$1,600,977
Pediatrics/Teen Clinic	\$214,228
HIV Outreach/Syringe Exchange Program	\$385,573
Mental Health Services	\$759,620
Substance Abuse Treatment	\$333,110
Dental	\$448,758
Advocacy	\$110,732
Administration	\$755,727
Fundraising	\$254,161
Pharmacy	\$379,499
Outreach & Enrollment	\$185,466
Total Expenses	\$5,524,253

Net Assets, Beginning	\$6,911,376
Net Assets, Ending	\$6,091,887
Increase/(Decrease) in Net Assets	(\$819,489)

Expenses

