

Volunteers Continued

Q: What achievements are you most proud of regarding volunteer work at the Center?

I am extremely interested in education, and getting to know individual patients. I have really enjoyed developing relationships with patients whom I've seen several times. I think these aspects of my clinical approach will most benefit patients at the Community Health Center.

Q: When did you first begin volunteering at the Center? How often do you volunteer?

I have been volunteering since 2005 and try to volunteer twice a month.

Q: Has your volunteer work at the Center positively affected your personal and/or professional life?

My volunteer experience has benefited me professionally and personally. I enjoy working in our community (our office is in Roanoke) and helping to fill a need in our immediate area. I have also immensely enjoyed building relationships with the staff. They are wonderful, kind, and compassionate.

Focus on: Tony Ramsey, PhD, FNP-C

Q: What inspired you to volunteer at the Community Health Center as opposed to other healthcare entities in the area?



The Community Health Center provides care to those without insurance and my goal as a practitioner is to help the uninsured and the insured as much as possible. The CHCNRV provides me the opportunity to fill this desire.

Q: Briefly describe your professional experiences that will most benefit patients at the Community Health Center.

I have worked as a nurse practitioner in various capacities serving the uninsured. I feel that all of my experiences allow me to give back to the southwest Virginia community.

Q: When did you first begin volunteering at the Center? How often do you volunteer?

I first started volunteering at the clinic in 2003. Over the years, I have volunteered an average of 1-2 days per month or around 16 hours per month

Q: Which recent changes at the Center are you most excited about?

The most exciting change is the addition of expanded dental and mental health services. In the past, so many of the patients I see would have to wait weeks or sometimes months before receiving dental and/or mental health services.

Q: Has your volunteer work at the Center positively affected your personal and/or professional life?

At the end of each day at the clinic, I feel like I have made a small impact on patient's lives. Moreover, the patient's help me stay focused on what is most important in life—helping others and being grateful for what I have.



The Family Dental Clinic staff continues to be exceptionally busy providing general dentistry to children and adults under the care of our two staff dentists, Hui Yang and Maria Joseph.

Thanks to generous donations from several local churches and organizations, the staff has been able to add new dental services and enhance our ability to provide pediatric care through the provision of new pediatric equipment and through the construction of an onsite laboratory. The staff is now able to make acrylic temporary crowns and bridges and pour models for diagnostic casts, permanent crowns, partials and dentures. For patients who already have dentures and are receiving new ones, the dentists are now able to make adjustments to the dentures thanks to newly purchased handpieces and instruments. In addition, we can also now produce soft night/bite guards in-house.

~ Thank You ~

We wholeheartedly thank the Blacksburg Presbyterian Church, The Community Foundation of the New River Valley, Luther Memorial Evangelical Lutheran Church and the Blacksburg Newcomer's Club for their interest in dental care and their generosity toward the pediatric and lab projects.

Our Mission:

The Mission of the Community Health Center of the New River Valley is to provide affordable and high quality medical, dental, behavioral, and preventive health care services to people of all ages and circumstances, regardless of ability to pay or insurance status.

Contact us:

Community Health Center of the New River Valley

Montgomery County
215 Roanoke Street
Christiansburg, VA 24073
540-381-0820

Giles County
219 South Buchanan Street
Pearisburg, VA 24134
540-921-3502

www.chcnrv.org



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Summer 2014

Letter from the CEO

Free Clinic Grows into its New Role as a Community Health Center



Michelle Brauns, MS, APR
CEO

September 11, 2013 was undoubtedly the most important day in the history of the Free Clinic of the New River Valley. That is the day that the Clinic received notice that we had achieved something extraordinary: The Free Clinic had been granted federal designation as a Community Health Center. This was one of only

32 awards across the nation, from a field of over 300 applicants. Those of us who had worked so hard to achieve this goal were elated, and our shouts of joy were heard throughout southwest Virginia. This news meant that, whatever happened with health care reform, we would grow and become the foremost provider of primary health care to the underserved in our region. In other words, we are here to stay—bigger, better and more relevant to today's shifting health care environment.

This is a significant and complex transition. After the news set in, the happiness was still there, but so were fear (of changing a beloved 32-year old institution), dread (of the work involved in meeting a host of new regulations), anxiety (of potential misunderstandings by our stakeholders, including our patients), and frustration (with all the red tape).

Although we're a bit dizzy and exhausted, overall we feel that the past ten months have gone as smoothly

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as possible. Our patient population is growing every week at both our Christiansburg and Pearisburg sites. For the first time, we are serving **children and seniors** in addition to adults. We are providing medical, dental, medication assistance and behavioral health care services. We are serving the uninsured, the underinsured, and the fully insured. We have become the **Community Health Center of the New River Valley**. It is a truly astonishing transformation, and one that our community can take pride in.

And even though the cost for our practitioner's services have changed (see box at right), a June patient survey tells us that nine out of ten patients understand the reasons for the change and are appreciative that they have an affordable and welcoming option for their family's health care. That's really what matters—that our neighbors with barriers to health care and an assortment of life challenges receive affordable, compassionate, and high quality treatment from people they know and trust.

Please help us spread our good news:

**We are here! We are affordable!
We welcome you, no matter what brings
you through our doors!**

Patient Fees at the new Community Health Center of the New River Valley

All patients who earn 200% or less of the federal poverty level are offered a sliding fee based on family size and income. The fee for a medical visit ranges from \$25 - \$35.

Dental fees are deeply discounted for low-income patients. The typical fee for an exam and X-rays is \$35.00. Based on family size and total family income, dental treatment services are charged at 35% - 50% of the full fee.

Behavioral health visits for low-income patients range from \$10-\$20.

No patient is turned away due to an inability to pay. Our goal is to work with all patients on options available to them based on their individual circumstances.



Celebrating a New BRAND Identity!

The Community Health Center of the New River Valley unveils a new brand identity reflecting the organization's evolving mission and celebrating the culture of caring built during our 30-year history. The logo reflects the energy and vitality of our organization and the hope it inspires. Elements of the logo include mountains, the state of Virginia, a heart and a breaking sun, all woven into a harmonious unit. This is representative of the people and purposes we serve with the single goal of improving the healthcare options and quality in our community.



Focus on Volunteers

In November, 2013, our volunteers were mailed personal letters to share the good news about our designation as a Community Health Center. What is especially exciting for us is that we are able to maintain volunteers (professionals and students) as a part of our consortium of care just as we did as a free clinic. Current volunteers like ob/gyn **Linda Morrow, MD**, provide valuable support to our underserved patients. Any professional volunteer who provides treatment to a patient must now complete some additional paperwork which includes a credentialing/privileging packet. The volunteer must also learn how to enter patient data into our new electronic health record: eClinicalWorks.

Some volunteers who have made this change with us are highlighted so you can get to know them a little bit better!

Focus on: Tracy Cohn, PhD, behavioral health counselor volunteer

Q: *What inspired you to volunteer at the Community Health Center as opposed to other healthcare entities in the area?*



I had been a volunteer with the Mental Health Association, shortly after moving to SWVA. When the Pro Bono counseling program transitioned to the Center, it made sense for me to start a relationship with the Community Health Center. I was also interested in the integrated care model that the Center was moving toward.

Q: *What achievements are you most proud of regarding volunteer work at the Center?*

I am proud that I am able to help people find better ways to live. There are few better feelings that being able to help people understand motivation and find out alternative ways to respond to problematic situations.

Q: *Briefly describe your professional experiences that will most benefit patients at the Community Health Center.*

I went to graduate school in the Midwest and volunteered at a local free clinic. Much of my work was with individuals who were HIV+, sexual minorities, LGBT, and/or survivors of trauma. Those clients and staff taught me a great deal about embracing diversity. I think one of my strongest experiences was working with a breadth of professionals, clients, staff members who taught me the importance of understanding the story of the individual.

Q: *When did you first begin volunteering at the Center? How often do you volunteer?*

I first began with the Pro Bono program about two years ago. I see clients once a week.

Q: *Has your volunteer work at the Center positively affected your personal and/or professional life?*

It has! I certainly have come to know more providers in the community and come to know more people who are in my community. I think we can get pretty isolated and not see that there are other people outside our little bubble. Volunteering at the Center has helped me connect with other people who are in my community.

Q: *Which recent changes at the Center are you most excited about?*

Now that the Center can accept patients with insurance, not just those without insurance, it increases the possibility that more people will receive services, especially those with insurance programs funded by the government such as Medicare and Medicaid. There can be long wait-lists for individuals with government insurances and it is important that they have a medical home from which to receive services.

Focus on: Mona Semtner, DDS, dental volunteer

Q: *What inspired you to volunteer at the Community Health Center as opposed to other healthcare entities in the area?*



I was inspired and interested to volunteer here because of my positive experiences at free clinics in Richmond and Norfolk.

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