Vital Signs

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The Free Medical Clinic of Greater Cleveland

Health care is a right, not a privilege.



ACCESS ◆ DIGNITY ◆ HOPE

True or False?: Corporate Wellness Programs Work

Find out on Thursday, June 20, from 8 a.m. to 1 p.m., at the InterContinental Hotel Cleveland, when The Free Clinic holds a free community forum, *Economic Development: What's Health Got to Do With It: The Sequel.* The second in an annual series of forums designed to highlight the inseparable connection between the health of the Northeast Ohio workforce and the region's economic vitality, the forum will feature Greater Cleveland-area business leaders, policy makers and human resource professionals to discuss workplace health trends, private employer and public-sector driven wellness plans and the impact employee health has on our local businesses and our economy. The half-day forum will include a prominent keynote address, and will feature panels showcasing public and private sector examples of promising practices. A highlight of this year's event will be a debate designed to bring into sharp relief those strategies that are more hype than help. To register, visit www.thefreeclinic.org.

DAWN of a New Program at The Free Clinic to Combat Spike in Heroin Overdose Deaths

As of March 1, The Free Clinic became part of a groundbreaking new initiative, Cuyahoga County Project DAWN (Deaths Avoided with Naloxone), a potentially lifesaving program directed to opioid users who are at risk of overdose death due to use of heroin, OxyContin, methadone, morphine, fentanyl and other pharmaceuticals containing opioids. The program was launched largely because Cuyahoga County Medical Examiner's Office statistics show that heroin-related deaths in the county rose by more than 50% to 161 in 2012, from 107 the year before.

While Naloxone has been administered to overdose patients in emergency rooms and by trained EMTs staffing rescue squads for some time, this collaboration with MetroHealth will enable opioid users to visit The Free Clinic on a walk-in basis every Friday from 1 to 5 p.m. to pick up Naloxone kits and receive instruction on how to recognize and respond to an overdose and how to administer intranasal naloxone to reverse an opioid overdose. All training is provided onsite at The Free Clinic by a MetroHealth physician. Users are encouraged to bring friends or family members with them to pick up kits so that individuals close to the user are also trained in how to give the antidote to a person who has overdosed; overdose victims are incapable of giving themselves the Naloxone nasal spray.

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Above: Megan Hatta, RN, (left) and Joan Papp, MD, explain how to use a Naloxone kit to a client.

Left: Naloxone kit contents

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"We're Not in Kansas Anymore!"

Danny R. Williams, JD, MNO
Executive Director


Danny R. Williams

One reviewer of the new movie, *Oz The Great and Powerful*, the prequel to the *Wizard of Oz*, described it this way: "A small-time magician is swept away to an enchanted land and is forced into a power struggle between three witches." While the analogy may not be perfect, satisfying the various bureaucracies involved in The Free Clinic's conversion to a federally qualified health center, patient-centered medical home and CARF-accredited behavioral health facility feels very much like dealing with the competing camps encountered by the sometimes befuddled "magician" in the story. With the help and support of his able friends and colleagues, and a few tricks of his own, the over-matched wizard manages to save the kingdom after which, presumably, he hires contractors to pave the yellow brick road.

One enduring message from the Oz movies was the overwhelming sense that something uncharted and transformational was underway. Dorothy captured the sentiment in her immortal observation, "Toto, I've a feeling we're not in Kansas anymore!"

Strange surroundings...

That phrase has taken on a life of its own and a meaning that transcends her literal observation. The Urban Dictionary attributes this meaning: ***"When you're in a place or situation that is outside your comfort zone or scope of understanding. Strange surroundings."*** Well, we're certainly there.

Finding the path

Like our intrepid band of misfits in Oz, gradually we are starting to make sense of our surroundings. In April, we began the implementation process of our new electronic health record system, with a planned "go live" date in mid-August. Also in April, *for the first time in our 43-year history*, we received certification of our status as a Medicaid and Medicare provider. Teams are also working hard to prepare us to apply for the "good housekeeping" seals of quality represented by certification as a patient-centered medical home and accreditation by the Commission on the Accreditation of Rehabilitation Facilities.

Our first test of how well we have progressed in our FQHC conversion will come in September, when a team from the Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA) will spend several days assessing whether we have met a rigorous 19-point set of quality and governance standards that will help determine our next round of funding.

"There's no place like [a medical] home"

We all wish life were simpler, and that people could get the comprehensive health care they need and deserve without fear of financial ruin or bureaucratic entanglements (a.k.a. flying monkeys). Our goal in going through these various changes is to ensure that we can maintain the highest community standards in our delivery of care, while allowing us to draw upon resources that will ensure our ability to continue to be a safe haven and medical home for people in need for years to come.

Expand or Reform: The Medicaid Issue Simmers in Ohio's Senate and House

Medicaid expansion continues to be a hot topic in Ohio's Statehouse. Discussions are taking place in three different arenas: the Senate budget process, the Senate task force on Medicaid reform, and the House Healthier Ohio Working Group. The Free Clinic's leadership is solidly behind extending Medicaid coverage to the more than 275,000 uninsured Ohioans who could benefit from this action, and we will advocate for whichever actions would most benefit the uninsured.

The Senate Finance Committee heard testimony advocating for Medicaid expansion despite the fact that Senate President Keith Faber has said that the issue will be taken out of the state's budget and treated as a separate issue. Thus, Senator Burke is chairing a new committee in the Senate to work on Medicaid reform.

At the same time, House Finance Committee Chairman Ron Amstutz recently announced the creation of the Healthier Ohio Working Group to consider Medicaid reform outside of the budget process, and we are optimistic that Medicaid expansion will be a part of that discussion.



Despite rain, hundreds of concerned Ohioans descended on the Statehouse April 12 in a show of solidarity for extending Medicaid benefits. The Free Clinic's Patient Advisory Committee member, Rob Norris, was one of them.

Please call, write or email your senator that you support Medicaid expansion to help more Ohioans obtain health coverage and invest in Ohio's economy. Visit www.ohiosenate.gov to find your senator and his or her contact information.

Endowment Campaign Completed

An Endowment Campaign first launched in 2005 in response to a $1.5 million challenge grant from the William H. Skirball Foundation was successfully concluded in December when gifts solicited to help meet the final $500,000 match were raised. The B. Charles and Jay G. Ames Family Foundation contributed $250,000 toward the final match and a $100,000 mini-campaign was conducted in honor of bobby gelb, an early local HIV/AIDS advocate, and son of Trustee for Life, vic gelb, and his wife, joan. An appreciation reception recognizing contributors to the campaign will be held on June 9th.

Volunteer Spotlight

Reflections from Sarah May



Sarah May

Sarah May began her volunteer service at The Free Clinic in January 2012 and, with some time off in summer months, has completed three semesters here. A Master of Social Work student at CWRU's Mandel School of Applied Social Sciences, she wrapped up both her advanced degree requirements and behavioral health student internship at the clinic in April.

"I have really enjoyed my time here," she said of her volunteer stint. "I appreciated the autonomy, the freedom to identify a need and then do something about it." Her principle role was as a behavioral health counselor, but before she left, May was instrumental in merging several volunteer functions into one streamlined process that allows patients to report on their physical, emotional and financial well-being in one intake encounter instead of across three separate interviews. "It's the perfect marriage between social service and financial registration," said May of her new approach to patient intake. "We even get some sense of basic needs such as food or managing rent payments and then we can do something – give them information and referrals to real sources of help."

It is a credit to May that she was given the leeway to try this new intake process with a handful of quickly trained volunteers. She made a point of getting to know people across all departments at the clinic and gained the trust of everyone with whom she had contact. "Sarah was an ideal volunteer," said G. Buddy Bailey, PhD, Director of Behavioral Health. "She was reliable, competent and cheerful and always exploring the internal dynamics of The Free Clinic."

A native of Kent, and a graduate of Kenyon College, May's next stop is likely Washington, DC. "I'm a big picture person," she said. "I like to discover how everything is integrated into a whole, and my passion is health care." She plans to parlay her education and interest into health policy and research. "It's been so eye-opening for me to witness firsthand and hear patient stories about how much they struggle to gain access to programs and services they qualify for; enrollment processes are too complicated."

If The Free Clinic is any indication, where there's a will and a May, there's a way.

Syringe Exchange Program Lauded

In December 2012, The Free Clinic was awarded the Kaiser Permanente HIV/AIDS Diversity Award and a $10,000 grant for outstanding HIV/AIDS prevention and care in recognition of its Syringe Exchange Program. According to Kaiser's award guidelines, recipients have developed innovative, effective and replicable practices that have reduced rates of HIV/AIDS infection and disparities in HIV/AIDS incidence and care.

Established in 1995, The Free Clinic's Syringe Exchange Program was among the first Cleveland-area outreach programs focused on reducing the spread of HIV/AIDS and sexually transmitted infections caused by shared needles. The program has been instrumental in slowing the spread of HIV/AIDS in the Cleveland area.

"While there has been encouraging progress in both the science and educational outreach that have resulted in fewer deaths from AIDS-related complications than in the peak years, more work is needed," said Danny Williams, executive director of The Free Clinic. "The rates of infection among certain at-risk populations, such as injection drug users, remain persistently high in some areas. To the extent we can continue to produce healthier outcomes for these individuals, we hope it will encourage others to build upon our work and create a community of knowledge that will lead to the permanent eradication of this threat to our collective well-being. This generous award will help underwrite the cost of the approximately 140,000 syringes we will distribute during the year."

DAWN of a New Program at The Free Clinic to Combat Spike in Heroin Overdose Deaths

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"This program of preventive distribution allows us to put an antidote into the hands of some of the individuals most at risk for heroin overdoses," said Joan Papp, MD, FACEP and lead emergency medicine MetroHealth physician for Project DAWN. She added, "Studies indicate that people who have been given a Naloxone kit tend to show less heroin use and more interest in treatment."

Each Naloxone kit contains two doses of Naloxone, two atomizers, a mouth barrier, a takeaway DVD copy of the training on when and how to use the product, and information on detox referrals. The kits are available free of charge to opioid users through funding provided by the Office of County Executive Edward Fitzgerald, The MetroHealth System and the Ohio Department of Health.

The Free Clinic is one of only two locations in Ohio authorized to distribute these kits and the only one in northern Ohio. More distribution sites are expected to be added soon in Cuyahoga County and elsewhere in the state.

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, unintentional drug overdose death rates have tripled since 1990 and in 2008 were responsible for 36,000 deaths in the United States. Opioid analgesics prescribed for the treatment of pain are the main cause of increase in overdose deaths, and prescription opioids such as OxyContin and hydrocodone (Vicodin) are involved in more overdose deaths than heroin and cocaine combined.

In Ohio, from 1999 to 2010, death rates due to unintentional drug overdose increased 372 percent; 63% of those deaths involved opioids. Each day, 4 Ohioans die because of drug overdose, according to the Ohio Department of Health's Vital Statistics report.

MicroBrew Extravaganza



Associate Board members, hosts of the annual MicroBrew Extravaganza, celebrate the success of the 2012 event.

Mark your calendars for the 16th Annual MicroBrew Extravaganza on Friday, November 8, 2013 at a hot new location, the Ariel International Center at 1163 E. 40th St., in Cleveland. Come and enjoy delicious pub-style fare, expanded brewery samplings, fun new activities and the same crowd-wowing band as last year, Abby Normal and the Detroit Lean.

Our last Microbrew Extravaganza in November was a huge success with over 200 young professionals and friends of The Free Clinic eating, drinking and dancing the night away at Massimo da Milano in Ohio City. Special thanks to the 8 local breweries who donated their time and flavorful brews to the event: **Buckeye Brewing Company, Cleveland ChopHouse & Brewery, Fat Head's Brewery and Saloon, Great Lakes Brewing Co., Indigo Imp Brewery, Rocky River Brewing Company, The Brew Kettle Taproom & Smokehouse**, and **Thirsty Dog Brewing Company**. In 2012 The Free Clinic Associate Board events raised over $15,000 which provides meaningful assistance to us as it continues to provide free services to medically underserved patients throughout Northeast Ohio.

Seeking Corporate Support!

Searching for affordable community exposure for your business? Look no further! The Free Clinic's Associate Board is a dedicated volunteer young professional group that hosts fundraising and awareness events to help The Free Clinic provide safety-net medical, dental, mental health and HIV services for those who lack affordable access. Become an Associate Board sponsor in 2013!

This is a valuable opportunity for quality advertising, while also supporting your local community. As a Free Clinic Associate Board sponsor, you have the opportunity to reach civic minded young professionals in 2013 through the following event:

- **MicroBrew Extravaganza** – November 8th
  Ariel International Center. Annual attendance is between 200 – 300.

For more information about Associate Board sponsorship, contact Danyell Boyd at (216) 707-3418 or dboyd@thefreeclinic.org.

The Free Clinic Gets Growing

With over 200 community gardens sprouting in the city and surrounding suburbs, Cuyahoga County is home to a growing and nationally recognized local food movement; and in 2012, The Free Clinic became an active part of this movement when it launched The Free Clinic Community Garden.

As a means of encouraging wellness, The Free Clinic's community garden promotes healthy eating, inspires people to grow their own fresh produce, and emphasizes gardening as a form of physical exercise and stress-reducer. Built by volunteers from Business Volunteers Unlimited, the garden is made up of multiple raised beds in the gated yard behind The Free Clinic. Last season, eight staff members participated as gardeners, harvesting radishes, carrots and greens.

Now gearing up for its second growing season and as a new member of the City of Cleveland and OSU Extension's Summer Sprout Program, The Free Clinic Community Garden is expanding to welcome more gardeners in 2013 and to include a communal plot that can generate food donations for patients and volunteers.



A volunteer plants the first carrots of last summer.

Donor Spotlight

The Charles and Peggy Stephenson Family Foundation

The pride is evident in Cindy Field's voice when she talks about her young adult, Cleveland-based niece, but that pride seems to be spread around equally to each of the third generation descendants of Charles and Peggy Stephenson, who established The Charles and Peggy Stephenson Family Foundation in Tulsa, OK. Field is the daughter of the foundation founders, or a G-2 (second generation) as she likes to identify herself. Early this year The Free Clinic was selected by Field's G-3 niece to receive a gift of $10K in support of its Syringe Exchange Program. The other five G-3s in the family were also given equal amounts of money to donate to the charities of their choices.

"It's a way for us to get them (the G-3s) to take on more responsibility for the foundation, but also to educate them about philanthropy and how we can best meet needs in our neighborhood," said Field. The grandchildren, who range in age from 21 to thirty-something, have settled in areas around the country and are sowing philanthropic seeds in each of their own neighborhoods.

Field said that she and her father are the primary drivers of the family foundation and she wants to teach the G-3s all she can while her parents, whom she describes as "constant movers and shakers," are still young enough to lead and inspire them. That is why she organizes family trips every three years or so. It provides quality time not just for fun and bonding but for transmitting values. This year all the family members and some significant others will travel together to Italy. "Now that the kids are all out of school and some have been out in the workplace learning about life, they are ready for more structured education about the foundation. I am working on defining roles for each of the family members as I learn more about their individual interests so this whole thing doesn't collapse when my Dad is gone."

The local Free Clinic donor wanted all of the gratitude for the gift directed to her grandparents. In 2011, the founding couple was inducted into the University of Tulsa's Hall of Fame by its President Steadman Upham: "Peggy and Charlie Stephenson walk a path of excellence," he said. "They represent the quintessential American success story," he said. "Their individual and joint achievements reflect time-honored values that include entrepreneurial drive, love of family, service to country and community and the philanthropic support of causes that improve the lives of individuals and strengthen the fabric of society."

Charlie Stephenson's career has spanned more than five decades, including the founding of Vintage Petroleum Inc., the Tulsa-based independent energy company that became listed on the New York Stock Exchange in 1990. He served as chairman of the board, president and CEO for Vintage, which grew from three people to more than 750 people with worldwide operations when it was acquired in 2006 by Occidental Petroleum. Today, he serves as co-founder and chairman of the board of the independent oil and gas firm Premier Natural Resources, president of Stephenson Investments Inc., and has leadership roles with two venture capital firms.



Peggy and Charlie Stephenson are the founding G-1s of the Charles and Peggy Stephenson Family Foundation.

Peggy Clark Stephenson learned the bedrock Oklahoma values of faith in God, hard work, and generosity as a native of Antlers, Oklahoma. She also met her future husband Charlie there at a birthday party when she was 14. They became high school sweethearts and married when he was a senior at the University of Oklahoma majoring in Petroleum Engineering. The marriage created a partnership in all aspects of their lives, including their philanthropic work.

Her career in volunteering and community involvement started when she was in high school, and she has never stopped. For many years she served as executive director of the Charles and Peggy Stephenson Family Foundation which provides support for church, community, and education programs in Tulsa and throughout the state. She co-manages their personal philanthropic activities which combine with the family foundation to support an array of projects.

We are very appreciative that The Free Clinic Syringe Exchange Program is one of those projects.

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* Hire in process at time of publication

Introducing The Free Clinic's Newest Staff Members:



Danyell Boyd
Development Manager

Danyell joined the development team in January bringing with her events, fundraising and marketing experience gained at United Way, the Cleveland Food Bank and Cogswell Hall. She is responsible for managing The Free Clinic's fundraising events and cultivating and tracking donors. She graduated with a business communications/public relations and marketing degree from Brock University in St. Catharines, Ontario. She eagerly awaits warm, dry weather so she can motor about Cleveland on her silver Vespa scooter.



Amanda Dennison
HIV Manager

Amanda began working as the HIV Outreach Coordinator in April 2012, shortly before she graduated with her Masters of Public Health from George Washington University. In November 2012, Amanda was promoted to HIV Outreach Manager and now oversees the HIV department, including the testing, outreach, and syringe exchange activities. Additionally, Amanda is co-leading the patient-centered medical home transformation here at the clinic.



Donna Korn
Director of External Relations

Donna has worked in a variety of communications, marketing and advocacy roles at a number of non-profit organizations including the American Red Cross, The American Cancer Society and The Jewish Federation of Cleveland. In her current position, which she started in October, she oversees The Free Clinic's volunteers, advocacy efforts and communications functions.



Brione Martin
HIV Outreach Coordinator

Brione joined The Free Clinic team at the end of February. He has extensive background in HIV education and counseling, having worked at the AIDS Taskforce for 9 ½ years in a variety of roles concluding with youth activity coordinator. He then worked for Recovery Resources as an HIV prevention case manager and adolescent counselor. As a certified Ohio peace officer, Brione could be a body guard or bounty hunter, but for now he prefers pursuing his degree in social sciences.



Janet Stubbs
Financial Counselor

Janet, an experienced Ohio Benefits Bank (OBB) counselor, began her position at The Free Clinic in December. Formerly working for the Thea Bowman Center, a community resource for Cleveland's Mt. Pleasant neighborhood, Janet brings in-depth knowledge of the programs and services designed to meet the basic needs of individuals seeking educational or social services assistance. Janet is a proud graduate of Cleveland State University's Urban Studies program and has a Master's degree in Information Systems from the University of Phoenix.

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