



FernCare Free Clinic, Inc.

2018 Clinic Review

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Dr. G. Christopher Popp, Medical Director

A letter from the FernCare's acting Executive Director

Dear All,

I am pleased to present the document that is a compilation of our services and patient demographics for the 2018 program year, January through December.

Our mission: To enhance lives and champion thriving communities by providing no-cost health services and advocacy for medically uninsured people.

We continue to schedule new patients three to four weeks out because of the demand. Our four clinics for our established patients are usually between 20 and 28 people. We have seen no deminishment in calls to the clinic or and only a slight change in the number of appointments.

It would be impossible to do what we do without volunteers. This document is clinic services based and our medical volunteers are dedicated and compassionate and so good at what they do. Our patients are receiving great care. Patients include very positive comments about their care on the Patient Surveys and mention it frequently to staff and to myself.

On behalf of FernCare, our volunteers and very grateful patients, thank you. None of what we do would be possible with very generous supporters.

We welcome your comments and questions.

Ann Heler
Interim Executive Director

About this report:

This is our 8th Clinic Review. We use this data to:

- better serve our patients by analyzing this current report to past reports
- assist in-house improvements at the clinic
- achieve greater efficiency
- document progress on grant objectives and outcomes

Data is compiled through information provided by clinic volunteers and team leaders, patient satisfaction surveys, patient charts, incoming calls to the appointment/information line, requests for a variety of resource information including clinic information, and reviewing budget documents indicating service specific expenditures.

A yearly review of the clinic and services offered represents a best practice strongly supported by the Board of Directors. This report, along with open board meetings and the information on our website, is a part of our commitment to be ethical and transparent caretakers of the donations and grants we receive to operate our clinic. This has also earned us the GuideStar Exchange Platinum Star participant status for organization transparency. The Clinic Review is included in our Annual Report which is approved and issued at the FernCare Annual Meeting in July. The last Annual Report and Clinic Review are available on our website

www.ferncare.org

About FernCare:

FernCare is a free medical clinic for uninsured individuals 19-64 years of age. We offer primary medical care, mental health counseling, acupuncture, benefits information including enrollment assistance in either the Insurance Exchange or Healthy Michigan, assistance in reducing the cost of medications, basic lab testing and dispensing generic medications.

FernCare is one of 52 free medical clinics in Michigan, one of two free clinics in south Oakland County and the only free clinic close to south Macomb County and north of McNichols (Six Mile Road) in Detroit. FernCare is a member of the National Association of Free Clinics (NAFC) and Free Clinics of Michigan (FCOM). Ann Heler, acting Executive Director, currently serves as FCOM's Board President as well.

FernCare is open 15 hours each month as an operating **medical clinic**, six hours each month for **counseling** and six hours each month for **acupuncture treatment**. On weekdays, the office is open 9 a.m. – 2 p.m. for inquiries, appointment scheduling and as a health services resource, among other administrative services.

All services are **by appointment only**. Returning patients are able to obtain an appointment within one to two weeks of their call. New patients must wait a month for an appointment, simply because of high demand and limited hours. All calls to the clinic are returned within 24 hours with Saturdays and Sunday's calls returned the following Monday.

Scope of Service

FernCare provides primary care practice services.

In addition:

- We dispense generic and over-the-counter medications as prescribed by our volunteer practitioners. We have a Prescription Assistance Program available for those patients qualifying within income guidelines. We also maintain a list of locations for both free and low-cost medications.
- Lab testing: Hemoglobin A1C (diabetic indicator) and urinalysis testing are completed in-house. All other tests are done by Detroit Bio Medical labs at a generous discount.
- Wellness coaching, nutrition counseling and health insurance enrollment assistance is offered during clinic sessions and by appointment.
- Counseling is available two evenings a month.
- Acupuncture is available two mornings a month.

The current list of services is always available on our website, www.ferncare.org.

Scope of Service (cont.)

Our community at large services include being a drop off site for:

(1) "No-longer-used" **medical equipment and medications**. We send medical equipment and medications within date to World Medical Relief (WMR). We made **180 drop-offs to WMR** in 2018. Out-of-date medications are delivered to the Ferndale Police medication receptacle. In 2018, total pills collected was an astonishing **154.54 lbs**. Pill containers are saved for recycling.

Since 2013, through collaboration with the SE Oakland Coalition, a group that works with families with substance abuse issues, we served as a collection site for the nationwide **DEA Drug Take Back Days**. The "poundage" count of dropped off medications is included in the pill count above.

The Clinic collected and donated **47 pairs of glasses, 54 packs of hearing aid batteries and 14 hearing aids** to Dr. Howard Crane, a Ferndale optometrist and Lions Club member.

2) Three new collection programs began in 2018:

- Diapers for **The Metropolitan Detroit Diaper Bank** are distributed to parents with children under two years of age and seniors over 80 who have difficulty leaving their homes. MDDDB made **19 pickups** at the Clinic.
- Donated disposable bed pads are delivered to the **Macomb County Animal Shelter** for surgical pads and to line the cages.
- Feminine products go to our local Planned **Parenthood**.

Scope of Service (cont.)

(3) A **Health Care Resource Library** is located in the hall outside the Clinic. Anyone can come in and take any literature they find helpful. This has 23 categories of local health resources that are either free , have very generous payment plans or have a sliding fee scale based on a person's earnings.

(4) Each year, we participate in regional **health fairs and staff health information tables** with copies of our resource sheets, clinic information and signup sheets for volunteers. These are excellent opportunities to tell our story and answer questions about the Clinic.

(5) The **Resources pages** on our website continue to be our most visited pages. As noted above, health-related resources are also available as hard copy handouts at the resource library located outside the Clinic. The information is reviewed and updated as needed, at a minimum every six to eight months.

Clinic services are supported by individual donations, local fund raising and grants. In 2018, Metro Health Foundation, Blue Cross Blue Shield Safety Net Program, The Jewish Fund, Michigan, Hitachi Automotive, Michigan Department of Health and Human Services, Ferndale Community Foundation, Alana's Foundation, The Lennon Foundation, and the Croll Family Foundation helped fund clinic services. Sixteen local fund raising events were held in 2018.

Clinic Management Team

G. Christopher Popp, MD **Medical Director**
Pamalar Burnette, RN **Clinic Manager**

Office Manager
Carolyn Barr

Pharmacy Manager
Christine Rainey, PharmD, DSci

Lab Manager
Susan Lux, MT

Acupuncture
Darlene Berger, MSAc

**Prescription Cost
Assistance Manager**
Donna Reeves, RN

**ACA and Healthy Michigan/Medicaid
Enrollment Assist**
Sheri Dirkse

Front Desk
Mary Ellen Rollins

Counseling Manager
Sara Abrin

Assistant and all-around support
Linda Baker

IT
Geoff Blumenthal

Purchasing Agent/Building Maintenance
John Ulinski

Statistician
Michael Kruger

Acting Executive Director
Ann Heler

We have more than 110 volunteers that provide services in various capacities on a regular basis.
The clinic manager reports monthly at the regularly scheduled Board of Director meetings.

Staff and Volunteers

The only paid part time positions are Clinic Manager, office manager, bookkeeper (contract position) and two people supported by dedicated grants. Our volunteers (medical and non-medical) gave us over 5500 hours of their time. The IRS 2018 base volunteer rate is 24.69/hour. This translates into \$135,795.00 as an in-kind donation to FernCare. The volunteer count includes the Board of Directors, volunteers that help with fundraising activities and "chores around the clinic," purchasing agent, statistician, medical director and interim executive director.

All medical volunteers are licensed or certified as required by the state of Michigan.

Additionally, the clinic pharmacy and lab are state-licensed.

Between 11 and 15 volunteers staff each clinic. This includes practitioners, nurses, medical assistants, CNAs and EMTs, insurance counselor, lab staff, pharmacist and pharmacy techs, reception and cleaning staff. We have not had to close the Clinic for any session because we did not have adequate volunteer coverage. We are very fortunate and recognize that without all of our volunteers, there would be no Clinic.

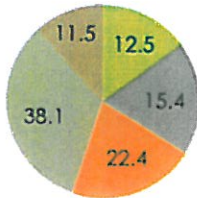
Staff and Volunteers (cont.)

Both Wayne State School of Pharmacy and Michigan State University, College of Human Medicine, 3rd and 4th year residents have contracts with us. Their students either do rotations at the Clinic, or volunteer a certain number of hours. The comments from these students and their sending schools are very complimentary. Our hope is that once they are fully accredited this experience will encourage them to continue volunteering their skills AND seriously consider working in primary care.

2018 Patient Demographics

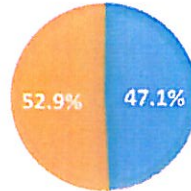
AGE

■ 19-29 ■ 30-39 ■ 40-49 ■ 50-59 ■ 60-65



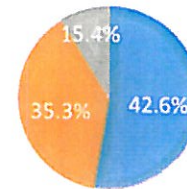
GENDER

■ Male ■ Female



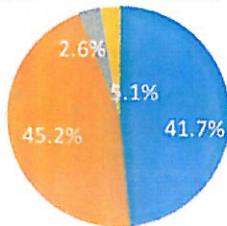
INCOME CATEGORY

■ Under \$16,000 ■ \$16,000 - \$32,000
■ Over \$32,000



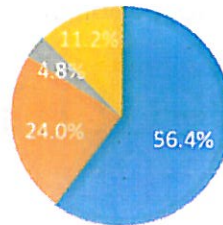
ETHNICITY

■ Caucasian ■ African American
■ Hispanic ■ Asian



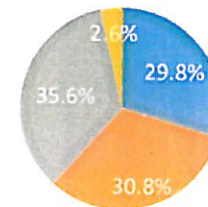
MARITAL STATUS

■ Single ■ Married
■ Partnered ■ Divorced



EMPLOYMENT STATUS

■ Part Time ■ Full Time
■ Unemployed ■ Retired



Note: All information is patient reported. 6.7% did not report income, 5.1% did not report ethnicity.

Patient Residency

ZIP CODES	CUMULATIVE PERCENTAGE
48220 - Ferndale	13.1%
48089 - Warren	10.9%
48337 - Oak Park	9.0 %
48071 - Madison Heights	5.1%
48030 - Hazel Park	4.8%

COUNTIES	CUMULATIVE PERCENTAGE
Oakland*	56.7%
Wayne**	25.0%
Macomb	17.3%

*22% from Ferndale

**69% from Detroit

Clinic Statistics

We served 312 unique patients in 2018. This is a small increase of 1.63% from last year.

There were 961 patient appointments in 2018, including clinic, counseling, acupuncture and massage. This is a decrease of 7% from 2017. We believe the reasons are:

- Patients being approved for health insurance more quickly,
- Our decision to cut the number of new patients from 10 to 5 per clinic,
- Being able to direct potential patients to other clinics because of wait time for an appointment with us and
- Cancelling clinics due to downtown Ferndale events (street closures) and one lack of heat issue.

Most patients were seen from 1-3 times with a very small number registering 4-11 visits. Most of the patients with the larger number of visits either had ancillary service appointments or very unstable medical issues.

We saw an average of 23 patients per medical clinic session.

Since opening, we have served just over 1450 patients.

Patient Exam Room Time

In 2018, the average exam room time was 28 minutes.

Diagnosis

94% of the patients have more than one diagnosis, with 2-4 being very common.

Clinic Statistics (cont.)

The most common diagnoses:

Hypertension	46.5% - increase of 1.6% since 2017
Pain including back pain	36.9% - increase of 22.7% since
Diabetes	17.3 - decrease of 3.9% since 2017
High Cholesterol	14.1% - did not track in 2017
Any infection-fever	11.9% - did not track in 2017
Obesity	8.7% - decrease of .7%
Digestion	9.0% - decrease of .4%

Weight

Mean average weight:

- Our female patients 192.09 lbs. (U.S. mean weight from CDC - 2018: 170.6 lbs.) 191.87 (2017)
- Our male patients 211.69 lbs. (U.S. mean weight from CDC - 2018: 197.67 lbs.) 211.20 (2017)

Age

49.6 % of our patients are over the age of 50.

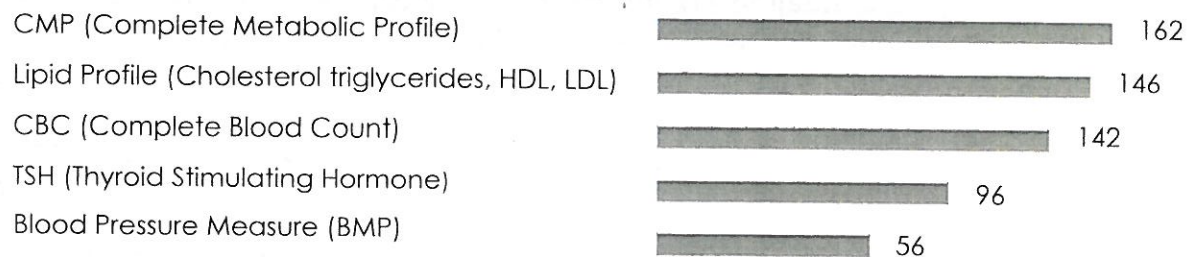
Lab

We requested 816 tests from Detroit Biomedical Laboratories and completed 143 A1 C and 69 urinalysis tests in our lab for a total of **1028 tests for 212 patients in 2018**. This is a 2% increase in the number of tests done in 2017 and a 38% decrease in the number of patients.

Clinic Statistics (cont.)

Most patients have two to three tests per visit. The most frequently requested tests were:

Most Frequent Lab Tests



The lab was supported by Blue Cross/ Blue Shield Safety Net grant and The MetroHealth Foundation a second year in a row. This is the 6th grant we have received from BCBS Safety Net and our 5th from Metro Health. Both organizations have long supported health care for the uninsured and underinsured.

Detroit Biomedical Laboratories provides tests at greatly reduced rate and continues to be a great clinic partner.

The lab is CLIA licensed and meets Medical Waste Producing Facility standards.

Susan Lux, MT is the Lab Manager. Susan continues to have some of the volunteer positions open to newly certified phlebotomists so they can continue to improve their skills as they job hunt. Susan has volunteered with us since the second month of our opening.

Pharmacy

253 of 312 patients received medications here at the clinic. This is a 7.0% decrease over 2017. Our largest monthly prescription count was in September with 350 prescriptions filled.

Total Prescription Count

TOTAL 2017 -- 3526

TOTAL 2018 -- 3280

Increase: 246

% Decrease: 7.0%

Total meds dispensed 2018: 105379

Total meds dispensed 2017: 125890

% change: 16.3% DECREASE

Most prescribed were:

Number of pills	Diagnosis	
60,610	Hypertension	57.5% of total of 105379
10,276	Neuropathy/analgesia	9.8% of total
6283	Gastrointestinal	6.0% of total
5797	Antidepressants	5.5% of total
5557	Thyroid meds	5.3% of total

Pharmacy (cont.)

FernCare does not purchase insulin, syringes, lancets, alcohol swabs, inhalers, or nebulizer solutions as these are all donated items.

We order a number of medications from Anda Pharmaceuticals at a discounted cost through our membership with National Association of Free Clinics and Free Clinics of Michigan, and having a non-profit status.

We receive three shipments of free medications from AmeriCares (a non-profit organization that provide access to medications and medical assists) as well as over-the-counter products and health assists for our patients. The value of the meds we received from both AmeriCares was \$10,456.

Christine Rainey, PharmD, MSci., our Pharmacy Team Director, also supervises students from Wayne State University School of Pharmacy and is an Adjunct Assistant Professor at Wayne State University, College of Pharmacy and Department of Pharmacy Practice. This experience is invaluable. A community organized, self-funded, volunteer led clinic and its dispensary is a completely different experience than a hospital, retail chain drug store or an independent pharmacy. The students love coming to the clinic and have frequently told us that they wish Christine was an instructor at WSU! This is our 5th year working with the WSU School of Pharmacy. Christine has volunteered with us since before we held our first clinic in August 2010.

Acupuncture

Acupuncture is available twice a month at the clinic. This is considered a medical service and as such, the patient data is housed in the patient's medical charts. The program began in May, 2018 and 11 patients have taken advantage of the acupuncture treatments in 78 visits. The principal reason for appointments is lingering pain. Darlene Berger, MSAC created the program for us.

Patient Assistance Program

We enrolled only two new patients in the Patient Assistance Program (PAP) coordinated by Needy Meds (an online medication distribution non-profit organization). PAP provides medications free of charge to patients who qualify. This is a 80% decrease since 2017. This decrease was caused by:

- PAP does not fund medications for people who are found eligible for either the Affordable Health Care or Healthy Michigan program
- We have steadily improved our own health insurance program
- There are more organizations and pharmaceutical companies who are offering considerable savings on some medications

Donna Reeves, RN has been coordinating this program since its inception. She has volunteered since our second session in 2010.

Patient Appointments/ Information Line/Health Resources

This is our **most used clinic service outside of the medical clinic** and has been since we opened. We received just over 2700 calls, more than 1300 "walk-ins," and over 302 email inquiries. It should be noted that walk-ins also include people who are dropping off no longer used medications or medical equipment.

The Resources Library and web pages are used

- By the medical team when talking to patients
- Handed out to our walk-in inquirers.
- Available from the brochure stand outside the clinic door.
- Mailed or 3-mailed when people phone and handed out at health fairs and fund raisers

The topics were developed and chosen based on most requested by patients, callers and people who walk in looking for some kind of health care. In 2018 we had more people coming in looking for resources who had been specifically referred to FernCare by United Way 211, local hospitals or Oakland County Department of Health (Greenfield office) because our resources emphasize generous payment plans or sliding fee scales based on income.

Patient Appointments/ Information Line/Health Resources

- Federally Qualified Health Clinics
- Health Insurance Enrollment assistance
- Dental Services
- Prescription Resources
- Counseling Services
- Women's Health
- Medicaid/Medicare Information
- Sexually Transmitted Infections
- Domestic Violence
- Transgender Resources
- Alzheimer Caregiver Resources
- Free and Urgent Care Clinics
- Tobacco Cessation Resources
- Vision/Hearing Resources
- Substance Abuse
- Oakland County Resources
- Weight Control/Weight Loss/Nutrition
- Accounting Aid (Federal, state and local tax assistance)
- Food Pantries
- Legal Aid

Information most requested: dental care resources, prescription resources, mental health resources and women's health (in that order). This was also true in 2017.

Carolyn Barr, Office Manager, has made all the difference. Her commitment to helping anyone find a resource that can help them is invaluable.

Patient Referrals—medical team generated

In 2018, most referrals were for podiatry, gynecology and imaging services (in that order). This is the same as 2017. We are continually building our list of physicians and services that will see our patients either pro bono or at a minimal cost to the patient. If we have no referral name for an issue, the patient is directed to another general resource such as the Oakland County Nurse on Call, FINDMYCARE or United Way's 211.

Counseling

The evening counseling sessions are twice a month with a 12-session limit. We saw 15 patients in 77 appointments in 2018.

Counseling continues to be a patient valued service.

Sara Abrin coordinates the Counseling Team and has since we began the program.

Chair Massage

Chair massage was offered at the same time as Counseling in 2018 and we had 15 patients take advantage of this during the year. Cassie Floreno began this program in conjunction with Counseling, but regrettably left a wonderful new full-time job.

Affordable Care Act/Healthy Michigan Enrollment Assistance

Enrollment assist began in November 2013 and will continue as long as both programs are available in Michigan.

In 2018, we enrolled 131 in either an ACA insurance plan or Healthy Michigan. The number of successful enrollments partially explains the decreased number of patients. Our insurance counselors talked to over 290 people. We helped an additional 23 patients with either initial enrollment assistance or redetermination assistance. We currently have 31 patients who, for one reason or another, are not eligible for any insurance. Because of this, FernCare is the medical home for these patients.

When a patient has successfully enrolled, the patient continues with us for 60 days to ensure a smooth transition to a new provider; this greatly lessens the chance of any treatment or medication not being continued in a timely manner.

Sheri Dirkse is the coordinator. She is supported through partial Metro Health Foundation and BCBSM awarded grants.

Clinical Studies

Hypertension and hyperlipidemia diagnosis and patient characteristics in a free clinic, 2014

FernCare Clinic was part of a study that suggests FernCare is providing valuable services which help to improve blood pressure and cholesterol levels.

Value of expanded initial visits and focused 2nd and 3rd visits for new patients, 2019

We have just started our second study, funded by Metro Health Foundation, which will end in December 2019. This second study, examines the results of a longer initial followed by 3 regularly scheduled visits. By the end of the 3rd visit – is the initial issue stabilized and/or has the patients been able to successfully enroll in an insurance program

Looking Forward

Like all health care agencies, clinics and hospitals, we are impacted by the Federal Government's changes to the ACA and the state's decisions regarding the Healthy Michigan insurance programs. In 2020 there is a good chance that Michigan will have work requirements in place for people on Medicaid with a few exceptions. This could mean in a year's time that we have more people looking for health care. Michigan has a new governor and perhaps something may change. Like everyone, we watch and wait.

The Clinic continues to get positive reviews from patients leaving us and going to "traditional" clinics with their newly acquired insurance. Our friendliness, interest in them both as patients and people, and most of all, the nonjudgmental attitude by all of our volunteers means so much to them.

We also feel that our current patients are very comfortable with us. We have a very low "no show" rate for appointments (3.8%), our first encounters continually have helpful and complete information indicating that from the start, people feel they can trust us. This trust and low no show rate keeps volunteers volunteering again and again.

Looking Forward (cont.)

Our community outreach projects, the “no longer used” medication/medical equipment collection site project, the specialized low-cost resource sources information, and the Little Free Library have been very well received. We are very happy that Ferndale and the surrounding communities continue to feel that we contribute to both people that need our medical services and to the community as a whole.

We see a role for FernCare in quality of health issues for people in Ferndale and surrounding communities for years to come.