



Florida Association of Free Clinics Newsletter

Issue: # 2

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Mission:

To develop a unified network of Florida free clinics focusing on the strategic components of collaboration, visibility, communication and advocacy and mentoring

FAFC Website coming soon!

What is a Free Clinic?

Free clinics are volunteer-based, safety-net health care organizations that provide a range of medical, dental, pharmacy, and/or behavioral health services to economically disadvantaged individuals who are predominately uninsured. Free clinics are 501(c)(3) tax-exempt organizations, or operate as a program component or affiliate of a 501(c)(3) organization. Entities that otherwise meet the above definition, but charge a nominal fee to patients, may still be considered free clinics provided essential

FAFC Participates in National Association of Free Clinics Annual Summit in San Diego, CA

Marisel Losa, President and CEO of the Health Council of South Florida, attended the Fourth Annual Summit hosted by the [National Association of Free Clinics](#) (NAFC), on October 22-27, 2009 on behalf of the Florida Association of Free Clinics (FAFC).

The Summit was a three-day event focused on the clinical, logistical, financial and ethical aspects of operating a free clinic. This year there were well over 300 attendees from over 28 states. Ms. Losa and Reverend Michael Dailey, Miami Baptist Association, led a round table discussion on a "Charter Clinic" concept, which if approved, would allow for a steady stream of funding for Free Clinics. The participants were very receptive and look forward to further exploration of potential funding.

Throughout the three-day event there was robust discussion on the role free clinics play in today's health care system and moreover, the important position free clinics will continue to play until some comprehensive, system-wide reform is readily available. FAFC is a proud member of the NAFC.

Membership is Now Open!

The Florida Association of Free Clinics is a professional association aligned with the National Free Clinic Association in providing valuable guidance and assistance to Free Clinic organizations, professionals, and their partners/suppliers as they seek to maximize their potential and respond to a rapidly changing environment. Currently, the Association is in the process of developing the FAFC's infrastructure, to include rules and regulations, committee structure and membership criteria.

Membership to the Florida Association of Free Clinics (FAFC) is currently open with no member fees. To apply, please contact Manivone Douangdara by phone at (305) 592-1452 ext.120 or via email at manie@healthcouncil.org. In addition to the membership application, potential FAFC clinic members are **required** to complete the Free Clinics Nationwide Survey, which can be accessed [here](#).

services are delivered regardless of the patient's ability to pay.

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The Florida Association of Free Clinics is currently seeking individuals to fill committee membership positions for the FAFC to include an exciting opportunity available to lead FAFC by serving as Committee Chair for the 2010 year. Self nominations and nominations are currently being accepted for this unique opportunity. Please feel free to contact Vanessa Rodriguez by phone at (305) 592-1452 ext.118 or via email at vrodriguez@healthcouncil.org should you be interested or have further questions or concerns regarding committee roles and responsibilities.

FAFC News and Happenings

FAFC Committee Meetings

The Health Council of South Florida (HCSF) hosted two FAFC Committee meetings in September and October to discuss the establishment of the Association. The meetings were successful in its efforts to bring in community leaders to share their thoughts, visions, perspectives and concerns for FAFC. The next FAFC Committee meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, February 10, 2010 at 10:00 am at the HCSF. The next several months promise to be exciting as the FAFC will have a positive impact on the communities it serves. For additional information on FAFC Committee meetings please contact Manivone Douangdara, at (305)592-1452, ext. 120 or via email at manie@healthcouncil.org.

Miami-Dade County Free Clinics Study

The FAFC partnered with the Health Council of South Florida to analyze the Free Clinics in Miami-Dade County and their role as core safety net providers, in order to better understand the available resources, gaps, and barriers that the uninsured population faces. The study will contain the data and insights on Free Clinics in the County. Key Aspects of the study relate to the challenges faced by the Free Clinics in the context of the current economic crises and their neglect in current debates on health care reforms, with an emphasis on the important function of the Free Clinics in our county and the specific challenges they locally encounter. Stay tuned for the study release!

Implementation of Electronic Health Record System

The Agency for Health for Health Care Administration awarded a \$100,000 matching grant to Saint John Bosco and Good News Care Center, two Free Clinics in Miami Dade County, for the purchase of an Electronic Health Record (EHR) system. Both clinics went "live" in June, 2009 with their new Health Choice Network Intergy EHR system. They are successfully using and adapting to their new system. We congratulate both clinics on their hard work and perseverance in implementing their system on time and on schedule.

Free Clinic Spotlight

Universal Heritage Institute Medical Clinic

Universal Heritage Institute (UHI) Medical Clinic is an innovative center of the Pakistani community that has been fully operating under the Florida Department of Health Volunteer Health Services Program since April 2008, serving more than 400 patients. The community support, in the form of generous financial contributions and volunteer medical service, has helped the clinic to surpass every barrier.

UHI has embraced community service with respect and warmth, providing care for the underserved and indigent of our community, regardless of race, religion or place of origin, while providing access to high quality healthcare. Services currently offered in the clinic include basic health care check-up, blood pressure and EKG readings, pediatric services and gynecology. As well, the Clinic provides medical education and training to future health professionals, while exposing students to the medical and social uniqueness of the urban poor.

The clinic also plays an active role in increasing awareness among Pakistani Americans of domestic social issues and their moral obligation to address them. For more information on the UHI Medical Clinic, including location and eligibility requirements, please click [here](#).

FAFC Resources

Grant Opportunities

The Aetna Foundation Healthy Community Outreach Program will award grants to nonprofit 501(c)(3) organizations to support philanthropic initiatives focused on health walks, health fairs and health educational outreach. Grants of up to \$25,000 will be considered. Funding decisions and notifications will be made throughout the year. For more information, please click [here](#).

Home Depot Building Healthy Communities Grants Program - up to \$2,500, are now available to registered 501(c)(3) nonprofit organizations, public schools or tax-exempt public service agencies in the U.S. who are using the power of volunteers to improve the physical health of their community. Grants are made in the form of The Home Depot gift cards for the purchase of tools or materials. The grant cycle closes on December 15, 2009. For more information, please click [here](#).

Kresge Foundation Health Clinic Opportunity Fund - This is a two-year, national grant program developed in direct response to the rapid increase in the number of people losing their jobs and health insurance as a result of the economic crisis. Grants ranging from \$75,000 to \$150,000 per year for a maximum of two years will be provided to build the operational capacity of charitable health clinics, public-health clinics, and those designated as federally qualified health center look-alikes. Letters of inquiry submitted online constitute the application process and must be submitted by March 1, 2010. For more information, click [here](#)

Volunteer Opportunities

FIU School of Medicine Clinical Preceptorship

Florida International University (FIU) Wertheim College of Medicine has currently a Family Medicine's Primary Care Experience Clinical Preceptorship, where FIU students will learn from and serve our community. Through this Preceptorship, medical students are assigned an afternoon a month to work with a community-based physician, where they will observe and appreciate the dynamics of communication, the patient-doctor relationship, continuity of care, and the primary health care delivery system. This is an exciting opportunity for the Free Clinics to be part of this Preceptorship opportunity. If you are interested in hosting an FIU student at your clinic, please contact Alina Perez-Stable by phone at (305) 348-0627 or by e-mail at apstable@fiu.edu.

Opportunity for Free Clinics Workforce Expansion!

In an effort to explore and identify voluntary opportunities among Free Clinics, FAFC would like to know your currently staffing needs. We firmly believe that a combination of experienced, innovative individuals and a great initiative such as FAFC help strengthen our community. If your Clinic is in need of volunteers, we can help. Please contact Manivone Douangdara at (305) 592-1452 ext.120 or by e-mail at manie@healthcouncil.org for more information regarding volunteer opportunities.

Discounted and/or Donated Medical/Pharmaceutical Products

Please note: membership to the FAFC is required in order to take advantage of discounted/donated opportunities

CommonWealth Purchasing Group

The Florida Association of Free Clinics has made an agreement with the CommonWealth Purchasing Group (CWPG), to allow all FAFC clinics the opportunity to join CWPG and save a significant amount of money on the supplies, equipment and services Clinics purchase. CommonWealth Purchasing Group is a group purchasing organization for community health centers, clinics and other human services providers. Florida's Free Clinics now have the opportunity to become members of CWPG at no cost.

CommonWealth Purchasing Group's success is based on sound planning and management. All vendors are carefully screened and tightly managed to meet member's needs. CommonWealth Purchasing Group also provides on-going consultation about effective purchasing program management, and complete cost comparison analysis for members that calculate exactly how much money a health center can save by purchasing through a CommonWealth Purchasing Group vendor. If you would like to find out exactly how much your Clinic can save, contact Tom Halliday at thalliday@cwppurchasing.com or Scott Halterman at shalterman@cwppurchasing.com. For additional information about CWPG, please click [here](#).

Steede Medical

Steede Medical has partnered with the American Diabetes Association and FAFC to provide high quality consumable supplies to Free Clinics at very reasonable costs. Through membership with the FAFC, access is granted to a range of products including free meters and subsidized low cost quality test strips. These supplies will be available from the clinics or directly from Steede Medical. For more information, please e-mail to diabetic@steedemedical.com or call 305-592-1667.

In-kind Assistance of New and Used Medical Equipment and Supplies

If you have any new, old or unused medical equipment or supplies in your possession, we'd like to put it to a good use. Medical donations provide our clinical facilities with essential supplies. Your donation will directly benefit someone who desperately needs it: people with limited or no insurance coverage. Most medical equipment or supplies can sit around and go wasted or unused. Make a difference in someone's life today; it will make a difference in yours.

If you would like to make a donation of used and/or new medical equipment or supplies, please contact Manivone Douangdara at (305) 592-1452 ext.120 or by e-mail at manie@healthcouncil.org. Thank you for your generous support!

FAFC is working diligently in exploring the availability of prescription drug assistant programs for Free Clinics. We are exploring the opportunities to partner with drug manufacturers that would provide discounted or donated prescription drugs and medical supplies to Free Clinics in Florida. Stay tuned!

Healthcare Issues & Legislation

340B Legislation

This legislation amends section 340B of the Public Health Service Act, to revise and expand the drug discount program under that section, in order to improve the provision of discounts on drug purchases for certain safety net providers. To read more, click [here](#).

Volunteer Healthcare Programs Legislation

This legislation provides grants for the establishment of demonstration programs that enable States to develop volunteer healthcare programs. To read more, click [here](#).

Increase Mileage Rate for Charitable Purposes Legislation

This legislation amends the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to increase the standard mileage rate for charitable purposes to the standard mileage rate established by the Secretary of the Treasury for business purposes. To read more, click [here](#).

News & Links of interest

Miami-Dade Blue, an Innovative Insurance Solution

Miami-Dade Blue is an innovative insurance solution from Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Florida that offers quality, affordable health care for less. It is designed specifically to meet the needs of the more than 600,000 uninsured in Miami-Dade County who struggle with the high cost of health care.

Developed in collaboration with Miami-Dade County, the insurance policy is for people who live or work in Miami-Dade County. It includes routine doctor visits, hospitalization, urgent care and emergency room as well as prescriptions, lab tests, routine dental care and more. Miami-Dade Blue is available for individuals under 65 and small businesses with less than 50 employees. For more information or to apply, call 800-950-8519 or log onto www.exploremdb.com.

National Association of Free Clinics in the News

In this video, Countdown's Keith Olbermann and Nicole Lamoureux, President of the National Association of Free Clinics, discuss how Americans can show their support for health reform by supporting the National Associations of Free Clinics and sponsoring free health care fairs. To watch the video, click [here](#).

Harvard Medical School Taps Mobile Health Clinic to Improve Care Quality

A study suggests that a Harvard Medical School mobile health clinic that provides free preventive health care and counseling to low-income residents has helped enhance the quality of care provided to the city's residents. According to the study, the clinic last year recorded 4,848

patient visits, approximately 80 percent of which would have otherwise occurred in a hospital emergency department. To read more, click [here](#).

Amid Noisy Health Care Debate, Free Clinics Struggle to Keep Up

Although the U.S. spends more on health care each year than any other nation does, about 46 million people in America have no health insurance, according to the Census Bureau. While the number of uninsured Americans dropped from 2006 to 2007, indications are that the number has increased drastically in recent years and will continue to rise as unemployment swells. Over the past year, free clinics across the country have seen a 20 percent decrease in donations and a 40 percent to 50 percent increase in patients. Last year, the clinics - which largely have been excluded from the health care debate - treated 4 million people. This year, they'll serve some 8 million, 83 percent of whom come from homes in which at least one person works full time. To read more, click [here](#).

