



SPRING 2017

Photo: Tim Porter

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Our Mission

To improve the health of our patients and community by providing high quality, cost-effective, culturally sensitive, patient-centered health care.

Going Above & Beyond: Our Patient Care Navigation Program

Imagine if you don't speak English, are homeless, and can't afford to buy food. Or, if you don't have transportation, are worried about your immigration status, and have experienced bias from health care providers. Getting health care may not be your top priority; at a minimum, the prospect can be daunting.

Last year, Marin Community Clinics developed an innovative program that goes beyond traditional navigation models: we not only help our patients navigate the complex health care system, but also connect them with community resources to address their economic and social issues.

Addressing life's broader challenges

We know that if our patient's broader life challenges aren't addressed, they are less likely to be healthy. We see it every day – stress-related illnesses such as hypertension, depression and anxiety, and dangerous delays in seeking care.

“Our Patient Care Navigator Program supports patients ‘outside the exam room’ to improve their well-being.”

—Hannah Bichkoff, Patient Care Navigator

Advocating for our patients

When Clinics patients have special needs, they are referred to our Patient Care Navigator, **Hannah Bichkoff**. She conducts a needs assessment – and then the work begins.



Photo: Stuart Lirette

Martina Ramos has lived through difficult times, but her life has become better because of the Patient Care Navigator program. See page 5 for her story.

Martina at the Health Hub

She accompanies patients to interviews with Social Security, housing programs, and immigration authorities; enrolls them in health insurance plans; and, reaches out to charities for rental assistance and donated items, working with partners such as **Canal Alliance** and **Wednesday's Gift**.

It requires strong advocacy, perseverance, and sensitivity. And it can be intense and time-consuming, given the often complex situations and emotional component.

“We meet patients where they are – with no judgment, but being understanding, and focusing on what is important to them,” explains Hannah.

Linda Tavaszi, CEO, estimates that 80% of Clinics patients could benefit from this service. *“We do not charge patients for navigator services and they are not reimbursed by Medi-Cal,”* she explains. *“But, we are fully committed to the program. It's about helping our patients become healthy.”*

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The National Health Care Scene: what it could mean to our patients

By Linda Tavaszi, PhD, CEO

Photo: Stuart Ureitte



A few years ago, Marin Community Clinics sent a strong message to our supporters: with the advent of Health Care Reform and the Affordable Care Act (ACA), things

were going to rapidly change – and we were prepared.

The Act enabled more people to purchase health insurance – and when people are insured, they use more healthcare services. In anticipation, we expanded our Novato Campus, added more dental chairs, and developed new programs to respond to increasing patient demand.

Uncertain times continue

None of us anticipated that the ACA might be repealed, and we were greatly relieved when the recent repeal attempt failed. The ACA has not been perfect, but it is working!

Although it appears that the ACA will be stable for the time being, the situation is fluid. When we went to press in late April, repeal proponents indicated that they were “not giving up on health law overhaul.”

What unraveling the Affordable Care Act could mean to our patients

Close to 6,000 of our patients became insured when the ACA expanded Medi-Cal eligibility.

Assuming drastic changes do occur, the most negatively affected will be our patients.

Imagine what it could mean if these patients were once again uninsured. They might delay seeking care, use emergency departments for the most basic care, or their chronic diseases might not be identified

early on. Some would undoubtedly come to us as uninsured patients, while others might be less likely to use our services.

What a shame it would be for the progress that has been made to fall by the wayside!

Our mission remains steadfast

Regardless of the political landscape, Marin Community Clinics' mission will not change.

In 2017, our focus will be on solidifying and enhancing what we do.

- ▶ Enhancing care to treat the whole person - linking together prevention, education, medical, dental, and mental health care to ensure optimal coordination of care
- ▶ Exploring the use of new technologies, including telemedicine
- ▶ Serving more patients who are already insured and would not otherwise use a community clinic, and helping patients navigate changes in their insurance coverage.



Photo: Tim Porter

It may not be easy to accomplish our 2017 plans given potential changes at the national level. But, we are a strong organization – fiscally healthy, with a strong board of directors and committed staff.

Another key to our continuing success is the long-standing generosity of the community. Not knowing what the future will bring, donations will be more important than ever.

Empowering Patients

Our Patient Education Program

Q&A with Mitesh Popat, MD, MPH, Chief Medical Officer and Associate Chief Executive Officer

Photo: Clinics Staff



Q What type of patient education do you provide?

A We currently provide educational groups in stress management, chronic pain, living with diabetes, safety (from trauma or substance abuse), healthy eating on a budget, coping with neonatal death, and pregnancy nutrition. Because

groups are not for everyone, we also offer one-on-one education.

All of the programs are led by Clinics staff and many are offered in both English and Spanish. Our Walking Groups are part of the program, as are our weekly Health Hubs, which provide free, nutritious food, health education, and screenings.

Q Why does the Marin Community Clinics have a Patient Education Program?

A We are big believers in the value of health education.

The group programs, which are ongoing, give patients more time to engage with our providers, learn about their conditions, and how to stay healthy. Plus, patients learn from each other, which is very powerful. They share what motivates them and what has been successful, and they can absorb information at their own pace. Light bulbs go off!

For many patients, increased self-awareness and motivation can lead to the adoption of healthier lifestyles. The end result: health can be restored or even improved.

Patient education is particularly beneficial to those with chronic conditions like diabetes that require a lot of self-care.

Q Which programs have been most successful?

A We've seen overwhelming success with the Stress Management group. Many of our patients have significant life stressors, such as financial and housing challenges. They report that these groups are helping them find ways to cope and they benefit from learning that they are not alone. We're also seeing great results from the diabetes, pregnancy nutrition, and chronic pain groups.



Photo: Clinics Staff

Q How do patients learn about the programs? Is there a cost?

A Any Clinics patient can participate and some programs are open to community members. A few programs require a referral from the patient's primary care physician, but most are self-referred. Group programs are reimbursed by insurers, but if the patient doesn't have health insurance, we charge a modest fee (\$5 – \$15).

For our Patient Education Program calendar, visit:
www.marinclinic.org/news-events/events-calendar

For More Information about Marin Community Clinics
visit www.marinclinics.org or email info@marinclinic.org

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What's New at Marin Community Clinics?

New Board Chair takes office in July

Jerry Oken, a long-time board member and supporter of Marin Community Clinics, will become the Board of Directors Chair in July, serving a two-year term. Oken, a resident of San Rafael, and his wife Becky have been Clinics donors for over 20 years.



Oken, who has a professional background in finance, accounting, and general management, joined the board eight years ago. He has been involved ever since, including a previous stint as chair. CEO **Linda Tavaszi** reports that he has just the right leadership skills to help guide the Clinics through the uncertain times that are ahead.



Improved Access to Cardiac Care

In another effort to improve patient access to specialty care, Marin Community Clinics and **Cardiology Associates of Marin & SF (CAMSF)** have formed a partnership to provide consultations at our San Rafael Campus Clinic.

Currently, consultations are provided eight hours/week by CAMSF cardiologist **David Hill, MD**. With this new arrangement, Clinics patients with suspected heart problems can be evaluated within a week and be seen in their “health home,” rather having to travel to an unfamiliar medical setting.



Survey of Social Needs

Many of our patients have issues that can become barriers to seeking and receiving care. We wanted to learn how we could better serve them; so, in 2016, we conducted a patient survey. Housing, transportation, and legal assistance were identified as the greatest social support needs.

Consistent with our belief that supporting patients outside the exam room will improve their health and well-being, we are taking proactive steps. We are working with Marin Transit, have formed a partnership with the New Beginnings Law Center, and are exploring a temporary housing program for homeless patients who are recovering from illness.



Telemedicine comes to the Clinics

Marin Community Clinics recently completed a pilot program to test the effectiveness of using telemedicine technology with behavioral health patients. (In telemedicine, clinical experts remotely consult “real time” with patients or other clinicians, using a WebEx platform.)

In the pilot, behavioral health patients came to the Clinics and spoke with their psychiatrist, who was out of the area. Each patient interacted with the psychiatrist via computer, and he was able to prescribe necessary medications through on-line access to the electronic medical record.

Patient satisfaction was very high, so the Clinics is now exploring other possible uses of this technology.



Staff Recognitions

Hannah Bichkoff, Patient Care Navigator, was recently nominated for the 2017 Heart of Marin Award in the category of Excellence in Innovation. The nomination recognized her work in the development of the Clinics' Patient Care Navigator Program and the hands-on guidance and advocacy she provides to patients in need. (See page 1 for more about the program.)

In March, CEO **Linda Tavaszi** was inducted into the Marin Women's Hall of Fame. Tavaszi was recognized for her leadership in health and human service settings and her strong commitment to helping the underserved, as well as her success in community problem-solving and mentoring of young professionals.



Clinician Spotlight: Meet Physician Mai Magliocco, MD

Internal Medicine physician **Dr. Mai Magliocco** has an unusual history with Marin Community Clinics. In 2005, she joined us as a medical assistant; in the fall of 2016, she began full-time work as an adult primary care physician at our San Rafael Clinic.

Life experience points to medicine

An alumna of Drake High School and a liberal arts major in college, she began her career at a science-oriented dot.com company. But a seed had been planted - accompanying her mother (a nutritionist) on volunteer work, participating in a public health project in Paraguay while in high school, and volunteering in a homeless shelter all pointed her in the same direction: medicine.

“Over time, I realized that science ‘from afar’ wasn’t satisfying; I wanted to work directly with people and still be involved in science, so I decided to go to medical school,” she explains.

She began volunteering at free clinics, spent time learning about community medicine in Brazil, and then began working



Photo: Stuart Lirette

with us as a medical assistant. *“Physicians like Dr. Eric Schten knew of my interest, so I had a lot of learning opportunities. The result was that I was well-prepared for medical school.”*

“After working as a medical assistant at the Clinics, I knew it was where I wanted to be after I became a physician.” —Mai Magliocco, MD

Following graduation from the Virginia Commonwealth University School of Medicine, Dr. Magliocco completed her residency in Internal Medicine at California Pacific Medical Center (San Francisco), where she worked as an inpatient hospitalist and also served as Chief Resident.

After medical school, she chose to return to Marin Community Clinics.

“It’s hard work, but very fulfilling,” she concludes. *“Everyone at the Clinics is amazing – going above and beyond to help our patients have healthier lives.”*

Martina’s Story

Thirty-seven years ago, **Martina Ramos** (now 64) came to the Marin from Guatemala to escape domestic violence and civil war. Leaving her six children behind, she came here seeking safety and financial stability for her family. She found work at a dry cleaners (where she worked for 32 years) and eventually brought the children to the U.S.

Today, she is an active participant in San Rafael’s Canal community, has ten grandchildren - and is proud to have recently become a naturalized citizen. However, she is unable to work due to a workplace injury and other medical conditions.

Navigator program makes all the difference

In 2002, Martina became a Clinics patient. Recently, she was seen by our Behavioral Health staff to address issues that stemmed from anxiety related to financial problems. She enrolled in our stress reduction class (with great success) and was also referred to the Navigation Program.

Hannah has since enrolled Martina in Medi-Cal and CalFresh and is arranging for Social Security disability coverage and rental assistance, accompanying her to the agencies to translate and advocate. When Martina’s shoulder pain became unmanageable, Hannah found an organization to donate a rolling backpack.

“Without Hannah, I would have stayed really sad, because there was no one to help me,” she says. *“God has blessed me by putting her into my life, especially since I can’t read. She helps me as much as possible and treats me with respect. I am really appreciative.”*



Photo: Stuart Lirette

Martina and Patient Navigator Hannah Bichkoff

Read more about Martina and learn how the Navigator Program has helped Ethiopian immigrant Zewidoat Temam & her family:

www.marinclinics.org/care-navigation

Your Contributions Make a Difference

Donor Family Profile: Dennis and Susan Gilardi

Read about why two long-time Marin civic leaders support Marin Community Clinics.

Susan and Dennis Gilardi's connection to healthcare and helping those in need goes back a long way.

Susan's father was an old-style physician – a general practitioner and surgeon who did everything from setting bones to delivering babies. One memory that has stayed with her since childhood: her father accepting in-kind payments from patients who were unable to pay cash for his services – boysenberries from their yards, fresh eggs from their chicken coops, or a hand-made quilt. Dennis' grandfather, who ran a butcher shop in Marin, helped people during the Depression when they couldn't afford to buy meat, often not collecting on their accounts.

Family legacies took root

These legacies of helping those in need took root in both of them, as did the value placed on education. Through their association with seniors who lived in their neighborhood, they also become sensitive to the needs of older adults. Given these interests, it's no surprise that the Gilardis' philanthropic efforts have focused on healthcare, education and senior services – all of which dovetail with Marin Community Clinics' mission.

"We're impressed with the mission of the Clinics to help the underserved," explains Susan. "It's come a long way since the early days when care was provided in trailers at the Marin General parking lot. This is a success story we can all applaud."



Credit: Stuart Ureite

Donors Dennis & Susan Gilardi

The Gilardis speak enthusiastically about Marin Community Clinics – how it increases access to care, the strong leadership, excellent multi-lingual staff, and comprehensive services. (In 2015, the Clinics opened its first on-site radiology service, thanks in part to the generosity of the Gilardis.)

They are also very impressed with the cost-effectiveness of the Clinics for the entire community.

"Marin Community Clinics has not only taken a huge burden off hospital emergency rooms, where many clients used to go for basic primary care," reports Dennis, "but also has developed very close working relationships with the rest of Marin's healthcare community."

A plea for helping those less fortunate

Like many, the Gilardis are concerned about the future of healthcare in the U.S. and what it may mean to the poor and disadvantaged. *"We are a nation of immigrants – all of us,"* explain Susan and Dennis. *"Our own ancestors came from Italy, Bavaria, and Switzerland looking for a better life. How can we*

who have means not help those who are less fortunate?

The people served by Marin Community Clinics are part of the fabric of Marin. We need to make sure that

everyone in our community has access to quality health care. And we need to work together to make sure this continues."

"The overall health of the community is improved because of Marin Community Clinics. It is a success story we can all applaud." —Susan & Dennis Gilardi

If you would like to make a donation online rather than through the mail, please visit www.marinclinics.org/support-us. If you would like a tour of our Clinics, please email gifts@marinclinics.org or call 415-798-3169.

Bereavement gifts are a meaningful way to both honor a departed friend or loved one and to support the Clinics. When long time supporter Dr. Gerson Jacobs recently died, he named our Clinics as one of his beneficiaries. We've received a number of generous gifts from his friends and former colleagues, and are most appreciative.

We Need Your Help Now More than Ever

A Message from John E. Boland, III, DDS, MSD, Board Chair



Photo: Stuart Lirette

In the face of sweeping changes that we may be facing in health care, Marin Community Clinics cannot accomplish our

goals alone. We need your help now more than ever.

2016 was one of our most successful fundraising years, setting organizational records across the board, from our Summer Solstice Celebration event to our annual appeal. With your help, we can break all of those records in 2017!



Photo: MCC Staff



Photo: Stuart Lirette

Our 2017 Fundraising Priorities

- ✓ Weekly Health Hubs in Novato and San Rafael
- ✓ Clinical Specialist Staff
- ✓ Expanding programs to give more access to Medicare-eligible patients
- ✓ Closing the potential monetary gap from decreased federal and state reimbursement

Volunteer Profile: Connecting Patients with Community Resources

Larkspur resident **Mary Valente** may not have a lot of personal contact with Clinics patients, but she is certainly making a difference in their lives. For the past nine months, she has volunteered 7-8 hours/week, assisting in the Patient Care Navigation program (see article, page 1). Her assignment: to connect patients with community resources to meet very specific needs – a job that often requires “thinking outside the box.”

“There are an amazing amount of resources out there – it just takes asking, and people really want to help.” —Mary Valente, Volunteer

Here’s how it works. **Hannah Bichkoff**, Patient Care Navigator, contacts Mary regarding a need. Then, Mary gets to work - mostly from her home - researching on the internet, making phone calls, and filling out necessary forms.

Finding creative solutions

Here’s just a sample of what she has accomplished: enrolling a traumatized child in an equestrian therapy program; arranging for a football camp scholarship for an overweight boy; finding a low-cost movement program for a patient with arthritis; obtaining donated sleeping bags for a homeless family; creating

patient resource guides regarding immigration services and swimming programs; coordinating a winter clothing drive; and, making referrals for pharmacy delivery and weight loss programs. Mary also arranges for donations for needed items, such as cribs, car seats, and clothing.

Five years ago, when Mary retired as a human resources manager for a large corporation, she kept busy with her

artwork and some teaching, but soon decided that it was time to volunteer in the community. Her daughter, Clinics physician **Dr. Tracey Hessel** suggested our organization.

“It’s a perfect match for me, and extremely rewarding” reports Mary. “There are an amazing amount of resources out there – it just takes asking, and people really want to help. Plus, there’s a tremendous domino effect: when we discover a new resource, we put the word out to all Clinics providers so that everyone knows about it.”

Our heartfelt appreciation to Mary for her hard work on behalf of our patients!



marin community clinics

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San Rafael, CA 94901

Medical Clinics in

- Larkspur
- Novato
- San Rafael

Dental Clinics in

- Novato
- San Rafael

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www.marinclinics.org

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Summer Solstice: Save the Date



Save the date – it's almost Summer Solstice time again!

Our popular celebration is scheduled for **Wednesday, June 21 from 5:30 p.m. to 7:30 p.m.** at the

enchanting Marin Art & Garden Center. This year's theme is *Homage to the Sunflower*.

The Summer Solstice Celebration is Marin Community Clinics' sole annual fundraiser. All proceeds go towards continuing our mission to improve the health of our patients and community by providing high quality, cost-effective, culturally sensitive, patient-centered health care.

Join the celebration!

We invite you to come along and celebrate a magical evening of food, drinks and jubilation in recognition of the Clinics and fellow community members. Tickets for this event are \$125 per person; invitations will be mailed in May. We also have sponsorship opportunities available starting at \$500 for Individuals and \$1000 for Businesses.



Photo: Jocelyn Knight

CEO Linda Tavaszi with 2016 honorees (L to R) Steve Kinsey, Dr. Tracey Hessel and Dr. Michael Star

To purchase tickets and sponsorships online, please visit
www.marinclinic.org/summer-solstice/2017-summer-solstice.

Get your tickets now before we sell out!

Questions? Contact us by email at gifts@marinclinics.org
or call 415-526-8527.