

50 Years of Touching Lives Through Health: A Timeline

Health Care is a Right and Not a Privilege

The story of Marin Community Clinics begins in 1972 when a group of local volunteer doctors and nurses founded **Medical Contact Services of Marin**. The mission was simple: to provide free health care and screenings to anyone who needed it.

1972



Medical Contact Services of Marin begins operating out of **Episcopal Church of Our Savior in Mill Valley** and **Fairfax Community Church**

2,300 patient visits provided in its first year of operation



Throughout the remainder of the decade, **free episodic health care & screenings are provided** to people of all ages without discrimination

1980's

Adapting to Meet the Need



Nationally, community health centers gained popularity concurrent with the need for low-cost community clinics dedicated to serving low-income and uninsured people. Statewide, an immigration surge brought profound cultural, economic, and political shifts. In Marin County, the Clinic's patient base shifted as well – with many new arrivals coming from war-torn Central American countries.

1987

By its 15th anniversary, the newly-named **Marin Community Clinic** replaces a largely volunteer team with a paid staff

Embracing cultural awareness and sensitivity, Marin Community Clinic **adds bilingual staff** to better serve the growing Spanish-speaking population



Al Varner, MD, longtime volunteer doctor

"In the 1980s, healthcare was very different. Indigent patients didn't have anywhere else to go except for the emergency room. So, the ER was their first contact in most cases. Oftentimes, people who had trouble communicating or understanding directions fell through the cracks or were too late to receive attention. The ER was their primary care doctor."