



“Solidarity Not Charity”

Solidarity Not Charity

Background

The Common Ground Health Clinic started on September 9th, 2005 just days after Hurricane Katrina devastated the Gulf Coast. Due to the humanitarian disaster and apparent lack of governmental response, two community activists, Sharon Johnson and Malik Rahim put out a call for healthcare workers to help meet the overwhelming need. The clinic started as a first aid station with the arrival of “Street Medics”, which are first responders that gained notoriety through mass mobilizations of the anti-globalization movement. The clinic was originally set up in a mosque, with space being generously donated by the Masjid Bilal. Nurses, physicians, herbalists, acupuncturists, EMTs social workers and community activists came from around the world to volunteer at Common Ground Health Clinic. To date, the clinic has recorded over 40,000 patient visits- all at no charge to the patient.

Mission Statement

The Common Ground Health Clinic is a non-profit organization that provides free quality health care for the greater New Orleans community, and develops and provides programs to address community health care needs through collaborative partnerships.

Goals

- To deliver quality healthcare services for free at the point of care;
- To provide quality healthcare education for preventive self-care;
- To create an environment conducive to patient, staff and volunteer learning;
- To provide quality integrative healthcare;
- To work in an anti-racist paradigm;
- To develop a model for community controlled provision of health services to fill gaps in care exacerbated by the disaster of Hurricane Katrina.

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Healthcare Services

- Primary Healthcare
- Social Work
- Acupuncture
- Herbalism
- Prescription Assistance
- Health Education
- HIV Testing
- Referrals for Specialty Care

Programs and Projects

- Latino Health Outreach Project (LHOP)
- Community Health and Strength Initiative (CH&SI)
- Community Health Needs Assessment Project

Some of our accomplishments over the past two years

- The clinic joined Partnership for Access to Healthcare (PATH), which is a group of ambulatory care clinics working in the greater New Orleans area. We also collaborate with additional free clinics that have started post Katrina, including Odyssey House, The Lower 9th Ward Health Clinic and Covenant House.
- Algiers Community Herbal Garden was started in the Fall of 2005. It is located blocks from the clinic and is maintained by herbalists and community volunteers.
- The clinic has participated in numerous “Undoing Racism” trainings held by the People’s Institute for Survival and Beyond (PISAB). PISAB has worked closely with the clinic in providing mentorship and helping us incorporate anti-racist principles into our organizational structure and culture.
- The clinic received a \$200,000 grant from the Foundation for the Mid South to

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help implement a healthcare strengthening program through community collaboration

- In January 2006, Department of Health and Hospitals extended our emergency credentialing indefinitely. This allows nurses and physicians with out of state licenses to work in our clinic. At this time, we also moved across the street from the mosque to our current location. The new space on 1400 Teche was first converted from its original corner store arrangement by our volunteers. In July 2007 a professional renovation was done. Finishing touches are still being done by our volunteers and staff. Please visit our website www.cghc.org to view the transformation of the clinic space.
- The healthcare provided at CGHC is multidisciplinary, including services such as herbalism and acupuncture. Social work services incorporate a mind- body approach to patient care.
- All of our physicians are volunteer and work at local organizations including, St. Thomas Community Health Center, Tulane University, LSU and Daughter's of Charity. Medical students from local universities complete family medicine and public health rotations at CGHC.
- Even though CGHC started with many volunteers from around the country (and abroad), we have transitioned to accepting most of our volunteers from the greater New Orleans community. We still have a large support network nationally that continues to donate their time, supplies and equipment.
- By our size, visibility, and particular approach to health care, we challenge the way others provide health care across New Orleans and the country. Hundreds of medical students and other health workers have a different perspective on how they thought about health care after spending time at the clinic.
- CGHC is associated with the recently acquired Health and Resiliency Centers of New Orleans through our partnership with the Rapid Evaluation and Access to Community Health in New Orleans Louisiana (REACH-NOLA).

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- Through REACH-NOLA, CGHC has acquired funding to hire a community resource representative who will be responsible for updating, publishing and distributing the Community Resource Guide.
- We hired 7 paid staff including but not limited to an Executive Director, a Nurse Practitioner and a Licensed Clinical Social Worker. All staff positions are funded through grants.
- Since the origins of the clinic, we have continued to serve the growing Latino Population in New Orleans through our Latino Health Outreach Project. LHOP is a mobile clinic that exemplifies patient advocacy and helps to decrease barriers to accessing care. LHOP also collaborates with other community clinics to provide medical interpreters for Spanish-speaking patients.
- Acquired grants to continue to build community capacity through local volunteer education, conferences and trainings.
- Initiated a weekly Diabetes Support Group run by a dietician and social worker. This interactive group is intended for the greater New Orleans community and is not limited to CGHC patients.
- The clinic was included in a healthcare piece in *The New York Times* on July 24, 2007 and featured in an online video at www.nytimes.com called “The Little Clinic that Could”.

Healthcare Projects and Community Services

Latino Health Outreach Project:

LHOP (a project of the Common Ground Health Clinic) is the only offsite clinic currently in operation. LHOP operates one- two clinics per week on Thursday mornings from 6:30– 10:00 am at a day labor corner at Martin Luther King Avenue and South Claiborne. An additional clinic day is held at the monthly Day Laborer Congress hosted by the New Orleans Workers’ Center for Racial Justice. At the Congress, LHOP offers

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the same services plus an educational forum on the potential health hazards inherent to types of work available to day laborers in New Orleans. We are continuing to develop a broad referral network, and when necessary, we accompany our patients to other medical facilities, where we advocate and interpret for them.

Current LHOP services

- Basic medical consultation
- Personal protective gear distribution and training
- Health education
- Referrals
- Interpretation and Spanish-English medical interpreter training

Community Health and Strength Initiative

CH&SI is a grant awarded from the Foundation for the Mid South (FMS) and is being used to implement a healthcare strengthening program through community collaboration. The four areas of focus include education, anti-racism training, social justice and farmers' market collaborations. The grant is to be implemented over an 18 month period.

Primary Community Partnerships

- People's Institute for Survival and Beyond: The first of three "Undoing Racism" trainings with the PISAB took place on April 20-22, 2007 at the Craige Cultural Center. From this training, the Algiers Organizing Committee was formed. This committee consists of members of local churches and long time community organizers focused on progressive social change. The committee also consists of individuals who attended the "Undoing Racism" training and were impressed with its perspective. As a principal partner with local roots and national reach, the People's Institute has been instrumental in leveraging their networks to affect the course of the Community Health and Strength Initiative and to focus the positive impact of the initiative on the Algiers community. The People's

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Institute donated a second training to the community of Algiers that took place on August 24-25, 2007.

- Craige Cultural Center and Hall: This collaboration aims to help facilitate the development of a positive alternative gathering place for local youth as well as development of a place for community strengthening programs such as GED and high school completion coaching, art and entrepreneurial curricula for the advancement of the underserved in Algiers.
- New Orleans Food and Farm Network (NOFFN): NOFFN completed the mapping of the Algiers neighborhood; they continue to work with Common Ground to develop strategies for implementing a quality food equity program in the Algiers community. Currently NOFFN is working on their “Dig This” program which aims to teach participants the process of urban gardening for food production and introduces those participants to the basics; from soil testing and how to dig, to appropriate plants for southern climates. NOFFN participants are identified through Common Ground’s outreach. Garden space is provided with collaboration from Common Ground and Parkway Partners.
- REACH-NOLA: Through this partnership we will be organizing a quarterly community health fair, providing free screenings, health education, immunization, HIV testing, nutrition education and physical activity components. We also plan to use this as a means of engaging the community in finding out creative ways that the community members will become more involved with fund-raising activities that could help in sustaining the clinic and its mission of providing free care to uninsured/under-insured citizens.
- Citizens Action Team (CAT): Provides computer and medical equipment to direct relief organizations. Through our partnership with CAT, we have acquired and are in the process of refurbishing and distributing dozens of used but extremely well maintained computers through out Algiers to our community partners, churches, schools, community groups and families with school aged children.

Community Health Needs Assessment Project

Beginning in September 2007, we will begin a community health needs assessment to direct us as we strengthen and increase our programming and establish a firm long term presence within the Algiers Community.

Goals

- To collaboratively work with community members to create an environment where community members are involved in identifying their own healthcare needs
- To inform CGHC volunteers and staff in the promotion of a holistic, culturally acceptable clinical and health education services that best meet the community's needs.

Objectives

- To recruit at least 30 community members to participate in 3 or 4 focus groups and/or key informant interviews
- To conduct at least 100 surveys in and around the Algiers Community
- To identify key community members who will take leadership roles in forming a CGHC Community Advisory Group

Our Community Health Needs Assessment will be considered to be successful when we have concrete data suggesting which programs and organizational changes we should implement over the next couple of years. In addition, through the on-going community dialogue, we will better understand how to improve the health of our community, we will better understand what community accountability means, and we will have a stronger network of relationships with patients, other community members, and local organizations.

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Conclusion

CGHC would like to thank all those that keep the clinic true to its vision and continue to work towards fulfilling our mission and Goals. For more information about any of the programs and projects mentioned above, please call the CGHC Office at 504-365-8800 or email healthalgiers@yahoo.com

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The Board of Directors

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Nurses

Kristina Don- Jordon, LPN

Patricia C. Judd, RN

Acupuncturist

Quang Kim Huynh, ACA

Social Worker

Amy Lee Wilson, LCSW

Herbalists

Amy Seifert

Katya Chizhayeva

Rachel Reeves

Wendy Hounsel

Clinic and Administrative Support

Amy Wolf, EMT	Outreach
Andrea Gonzalez	Clinic/LHOP
Bahiyyih Khelghati	LHOP
Bay Love,	Administrative Assistant
Beverley Richard	Volunteer meals
Coleen Murphy	Resource Guide Editor
Edwin Burkes	Front Desk Manager
Emily Venema	Clinic/LHOP Intake
Fredrique Jacque	LHOP
Gina Lutz,	Clinic Manager
Gloria Gillard	Outreach/Community Garden

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Greg Griffith	Program Manager CH&SI
Lanette Williams, RSW	Outreach Coordinator
Jennifer Whitney	LHOP Coordinator
Justin Stein	Outreach
Marie Romeo	Outreach
'R' Noah Morris, EMT	Clinic intake
Rebecca Mintz	LHOP
Rodrigo Gamarra	LHOP
Wesley Samms	LHOP

Partner Organizations

Catholic Charities
Citizens Action Team (CAT)
City of New Orleans Health Department – HIV/AIDS Latino Health Outreach
Craig Cultural Center
Common Ground Relief
Department of Health and Hospitals
Greater Morning Star Baptist Church
Hispanic Forum
Jerusalem Gospel Church
John's Seafood
Latino Health Access Network
Los Promotoras de Salud of Hispanic Apostolate
Louisiana Department of Health
Louisiana Public Health Institute
Louisiana State University
Mary Amelia Community Women's Health Education Center (MAC)
Masjid Bilal
Mijoba Communications

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Monte de los Olivos Lutheran Church
N'R Peace
National Association of Free Clinics
New Orleans Food and Farm Network
New Orleans Women's Clinic
Non Profit Central
One Torch
Ova Da Riva (The Cultural Village)
Parkway Partners
Partnership for Access to Healthcare (PATH)
People's Institute for Survival and Beyond (PISAB)
REACH-NOLA
St. Anna's Medical Mission
St. Mary's Catholic Church
St. Thomas Medical Center
Toute de Suite
Tulane Community Health Center at Covenant House
Tulane School of Public Health and Tropical Medicine
Whitney National Bank
Youth Leadership Discovery

To the many individuals and groups, (too numerous to mention in this document) who have supported and worked with us in the past two years, we at Common Ground Health Clinic say thank you for your contribution towards establishing this Free Community Clinic.

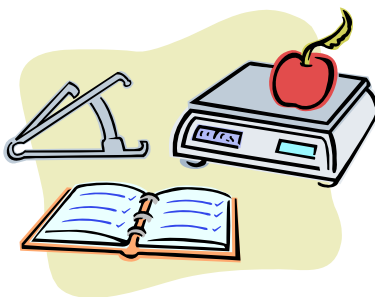
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HAVE QUESTIONS ABOUT

DIABETES? BLOOD SUGAR? INSULIN? DIET?

*PATIENTS AND COMMUNITY ARE INVITED TO
ATTEND*

**COMMON GROUND HEALTH CLINIC'S
DIABETES AND WELLNESS SUPPORT GROUP**



EVERY SATURDAY

BEGINNING SEPTEMBER 8
9:30-10:30 AM
1400 TECHE STREET

For more information, call Amy Wilson, Social Worker, 504-722-5017

Common Ground Health Clinic
Health on the Ground; Two Years' Anniversary Progress Report
September 8, 2007

**For more information or to donate, please contact us
at**

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