

Queen Street Clinic: *Family Practice Medicine for the Uninsured*

The Challenge:

Many among the growing number of Americans without health insurance (estimated at nearly 50 million in early 2008) have limited financial resources to pay for care out of pocket. Without affordable, quality medical services, there is a strong potential for chronic illnesses to develop in ways that eventually drive up the cost of care – and also endanger the quality and/or length of life. (According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, in 2005 more than 40 million U.S. adults did not receive needed services because they could not afford them.)

The Goal:

Provide affordable medical services to people who either are not offered insurance by an employer or who have that option but choose to pay out of pocket for care of acute or chronic conditions, or whose pre-existing conditions have led to denial of health insurance coverage.

Where To Learn More

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An Innovative Solution:

Provide affordable care that allows and encourage patients to seek care when they need it – and provide it without state, local or federal funding.

What It Is

- An independent clinic, operated by a family nurse practitioner, providing health services for the medically uninsured in Alexandria, VA, and surrounding areas of Northern Virginia.

What It Does

- Helps patients avoid the backlog of appointments often encountered in conventional public clinics. (Many patients cannot wait for care and, consequently, often make multiple trips to an emergency room – in turn, flooding those facilities with non-emergency cases that take medical personnel away from critical emergency cases.)
- Serves an average of 120-150 patients per month. In all, has treated more than 20,000 patients since opening in 2001.
- Provides a full range of services, including: diagnosis and treatment of acute and chronic conditions such as diabetes, high blood pressure, infections and injuries; prescription of medications and treatments; and management of patient care.
- Serves a patient population that is 63% female, with a broad base patient mix of a multi-cultural population
- Meets all family practice health care needs, including acute and chronic conditions – everything from hypertension to diabetes and annual examinations for women.

Edge Runners



How It Stands Out

- First Family Practice Clinic in Northern Virginia established without government funds; has not accepted any government funds since its founding in 2001. Operated by a sole practitioner who chooses not to work with insurance companies as part of the strategy to keep office visit costs to a minimum. Clinic has received some donations from local churches – but that money is increasingly hard to obtain in a tight economy.
- A fee-for-service facility with no eligibility or residency requirements for treatment.
- Has provided essential primary care services for approximately 11,400 patients in the City of Alexandria, this has been done for a fraction of the cost that the emergency room would charge per year.
- For City of Alexandria residents, free screening and diagnostic mammograms are available through the local hospital. For non-residents, a deeply discounted fee is charged for screening and diagnostic mammograms.
- The typical clinic patient who makes five visits to the facility in a year spends a total of \$850 for treatment. The same patient, treated in an emergency room, would incur charges of approximately \$15,000.
- Works with patient assistance programs to order medications that otherwise would be cost prohibited to the patient through pharmacy companies.
- Queen Street Clinic's office visit charge of \$60, multiplied by 20,000 patient visits for primary care, represents a total cost for care of \$1.2 million. In contrast, if the same number of patients had gone to a hospital emergency room, where the minimum per-visit charge is \$600.00, the cost would have been \$12 million. This demonstrates a huge savings – \$10.8 million – for the health care system if patients are able to afford the \$60 clinic visit.