

The Pulse

of The Neighborhood Christian Clinic

RESTORING HEALTH & RESTORING LIVES • DECEMBER 2013

The Body of Christ

by Paul Lorentsen, Medical Director

When we opened the clinic nearly 15 years ago, God raised up a core group of primary care doctors to provide care to this community. As you would expect, they were trained in family practice, internal medicine, pediatrics, and gynecology, all with experience handling the common types of medical issues seen in a typical outpatient clinic.

Over time, the reputation of the clinic grew. Satisfied patients brought in family members. Patients who experienced dramatic healing told their stories, inspiring concerned friends to bring in those suffering with unusual illnesses, hoping that this place would provide the answer that other clinics couldn't.

God saw this coming. I would get calls from specialists offering to volunteer. At first they surprised me, and I would nearly turn them away. "What? You want to volunteer as a neurosurgeon? Um, we haven't ever had someone with a brain tumor here!" But I learned that as soon as the new volunteer would begin, God would bring in patients needing their particular specialty. So I changed my tune. "You do psychiatry? OK, come on down, let's talk!"

Now, on any given day, there may be a dermatologist biopsying a skin nodule. The physical therapist might be mobilizing the paralyzed limb of a stroke patient. The gynecologist could be accomplishing testing that a patient at risk for cancer couldn't afford at a nearby government funded clinic, or the pulmonologist may be testing the blood oxygen level of a patient dependent on



oxygen due to chronic lung disease.

To see such a gifted and committed group of people come together to advance the Kingdom of God is inspirational to me as well as to the patients who receive their care. I have an advantage that I can pass along to you; I get to hear these patients share with me on a daily basis how God has used this place to bless them.

From head to toe, from mental health to podiatry issues, the body of Christ represented by a host of Christ followers is treating an array of health conditions that would have challenged the resources of our little clinic 14 years ago. We pray that our patients would see that it is Christ, and His body, that care for them enough to bring health to their bodies and souls.



The Power of a Prayer

by Gina Thorley, Dental Director/Dentist

Be anxious for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God. And the peace of God, which surpasses all comprehension, shall guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus. Phil 4:6-7

As Dental Director of the Neighborhood Christian Clinic, I treat many patients who are very fearful and anxious about receiving dental treatment. They often anticipate a painful, uncomfortable experience.

I recently treated a patient who was extremely anxious about her visit. Her fear and trepidation were palpable and I was concerned it would be a difficult appointment. I tried to comfort the patient by explaining how I would be treating her and what she could expect. This did little to ease her anxiety.

I then offered to pray with the patient. I prayed that the appointment would go well, that the Lord would grant me wisdom and guide my hands. I prayed for the patient's comfort and that the Lord would take her fears and relieve her anxiety. As I finished the prayer, a



sense of peace and calm came over the entire room. The patient began breathing deeply and I could see the stress leaving her body. I also noticed that I felt relaxed, confident and ready to begin the treatment. The appointment went well; the patient left the clinic with a new and improved smile.

An encouraging scripture verse and prayer can go a long way in easing a patient's anxiety. It is clear that doctors, staff and volunteers are also blessed by praying with patients.

This is but one example of the many times that patients, staff and volunteers personally experience the power of a prayer. I have worked in other settings where a patient's fear and anxiety would be addressed with distraction techniques or completely ignored. It is such a blessing to work in a place where the Lord uses me to address not only the physical needs of a patient, but their spiritual needs as well.



Current Clinic Stats

	Patient Visits	Volunteers	Hours	Turn Aways
August	929	119	980.4	74
September	758	104	724.6	89
October	893	104	863.8	78

Meet Sara LeSturgeon, MD.

As a girl I loved studying about international missions. These missionaries were seeking every opportunity to share Christ with those who did not know Him in a land far from home. In medical school I had my first opportunity to use my newly acquired skills to serve in such a capacity.

I spent two months at Sanyati Baptist Hospital in rural Zimbabwe caring for medical needs while sharing the grace of Christ to those who were both impoverished and poor in spirit. In the next few years I had the privilege of serving on several more international medical mission trips, but that season of life changed as my husband and I welcomed a son into our family.

Through God's provision I have been able to serve the needy domestically in Community Health Centers. This has allowed me to continue to care for people with great physical and financial needs, which often opens a door to share the gospel. Despite these openings, I find it is more difficult, in a secular practice setting, to share the reason for the hope that I have (1 Peter 3:15).

Upon moving to Phoenix, I was excited to learn about volunteer opportunities at The Neighborhood Christian Clinic. It brings me such joy to join the physical care that I am able to give to patients with spiritual care that can have an eternal effect. This model of care reflects that of Christ, who saw that the greatest need of the paralyzed man was forgiveness. The man's physical healing bore witness to the power of Jesus in his life (Luke 9:17-26).

It is a blessing to work with an entire team that is empowered by Christ to focus on both medical and spiritual needs of patients. The freedom to offer prayer to every patient and remind them that there is comfort that does not come from medicine and peace that brings hope to hopeless situations, these are the reasons that I volunteer at TNCC.



Volunteer Update

With the opening of three additional clinic shifts in mid-2012, there was a need to staff those shifts with more volunteer providers. So... over the past year, we implemented strategies to attract licensed health-care professionals in Phoenix to volunteer and help build the Clinic's capacity. It has been incredible to see God bless those efforts. We were able to fill critical voids in our volunteer database by specifically seeking medical providers, dentists, dental hygienists & dental assistants.

The Clinic was able to add 15 medical providers and five dental providers

The persistent advocacy of our volunteers and donors, along with focused, online recruiting, the Clinic was able to add 15 medical providers and five dental providers. This is more providers added than ever before in a twelve month period. Additionally, a new Physical Therapist volunteer has allowed the Clinic to reopen PT services after a six month interim. Assuming these volunteers are faithful in the commitments they made, the Clinic would be able to facilitate an additional 1,764 patient visits annually.

Finally, an increasing number of patients with mental health issues are presenting to the Clinic; hence, the need for mental health professionals is acute. God answered prayer with one dedicated Psychiatrist already; and in mid-November another Psychiatrist signed up. The two of them will make a huge difference in our capacity to care for this growing patient demographic.

Volunteers are such a critical component of the Clinic's ministry and it is so encouraging when new volunteers sign up. Please keep this aspect of the Clinic in your prayers. If you know any providers, please encourage them to contact us.

Note: about 80% of the Clinic's patients speak only Spanish and most healthcare professionals do not. Please encourage your bilingual friends to volunteer as an interpreter. We are praying over Malachi 3:10 and trust that God will continue to bless us with volunteers and "open the floodgates of heaven and pour out so much blessing that there will not be room enough to receive it."

Thinking About Estate Planning? Did you know that you can name the Clinic as a beneficiary on a life insurance policy? Ask us 602.254.0445 or AZ Community Foundation 602.381.1400. Please help secure the future of the Clinic.



The Arizona Charitable Tax Credit for the Working Poor.

Taxpayers filing in Arizona have the unique opportunity to actually redirect a portion of their state income tax to organizations that minister to the working poor; at no financial cost to themselves! It's "giving without giving"!

For many, handling their finances and tax obligation is a matter of stewardship. What better stewardship is there than to give your tax dollars to a qualifying charity like TNCC rather than to the state. Dollar-for-dollar, your tax liability is reduced by what you donate.

The Bonus: you can take advantage of all three tax credits simultaneously each year AND your donation may be deductible on your federal returns.

Note: You no longer have to itemize to take advantage of the AZ Charitable Tax Credit.

More information about the credit is available at: www.azdor.gov. Donate online at: www.TheChristianClinic.org or download a form to mail-in.

	Individual	Couple
Working Poor	\$ 200	\$ 400
Private School	\$ 1,031	\$ 2,062
Public School	\$ 200	\$ 400
Combined Total	\$ 1,431	\$ 2,862

Used Cars: Have a used car? Want to donate it to the Clinic? Give us a call at 602 254-0445 or e-mail gplooster@tnccclinic.org. We will arrange for pick up and handle all the paperwork. It's a great way to support the Clinic and receive a tax deduction.



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The Neighborhood Christian Clinic

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