



Northern Neck – Middlesex
FREE HEALTH CLINIC
P.O. Box 1694, Kilmarnock VA 22482

Newsletter

2022

The power of a non-profit...

... Equals the power of its community support.

The Northern Neck – Middlesex Free Health Clinic begins its 30th year this October 7. We are finding – through all the changes in health care, the impact of the pandemic, and the number of new patients seeking services – that the Clinic is needed now more than ever.

So too is community support.

These last two years presented enormous challenges. The Covid-19 shutdown meant a reduced staff, far fewer volunteers, canceled fund-raising events, greater economic restraints, and considerably limited fund-raising appeals. Still, the Clinic stayed open every working day. The stretched staff doubled up their duties. New surgically-clean air filtration systems were purchased and installed. Protocols were put in place for patient visits. Temporary doctors, dentists, and nurse practitioners were hired to keep up with the demand. Outdoor vaccine clinics for everyone in the community were created and continue to this day.

The world appears to be opening up once more, and as it does the Clinic is committed to being there for our most vulnerable populations. Please join us in our work to build the health of the community, one individual at a time, and maintain it through whatever new challenges surface in the future.

All donations are both needed and deeply appreciated. They add even more beauty to this beautiful corner of the world, as neighbors help neighbors with compassion and care.

G. Scott Graham
Board Chair

The power of partnerships



Leigh Blakiston

In the early months of the Covid-19 pandemic, the Dental Clinic operated on an emergency-only basis, per American Dental Association guidelines. By July of 2020 the Clinic hired the first of five dentists over the next year to address the backlog that was created.

Two of the five had been students at the VCU School of Dentistry years earlier and were in rotations at the NNMFHC. They were happy to return to help meet the patients' needs until student rotations resumed in early 2021.

Leigh Blakiston, DDS (shown with one of the surgically clean air filters installed throughout the Clinic) was the first to step in and see patients during the second half of 2020.

Hui Zhou, DDS, also joined the team beginning in 2020 and continues to come in when she can from her practice outside the area.



Hui Zhou

More powerful partnerships

Other partnerships include those with the **Healthy Harvest Food Bank** and the **Extension Service**. Before Covid, in-person cooking classes were held with Clinic patients using food donated by the Food Bank. Cooking expertise was provided by Extension agent Glenn Sturm. The classes were popular and effective in improving health measures, and will be resumed once gatherings are again safe.

Meanwhile, **Bill Westbrook** built and with his wife Susan installed a “Little Food Pantry” in the Clinic lobby with the simple message to “take what you need, leave what you can.” It’s been well used. To supplement that during the holidays, the Food Bank, through the efforts of Deb Lockhart, gave 300 food boxes to also make available to those in need.

VCU student David Russell (pictured) took note of it all during his rotation in the Dental Clinic and purchased more food boxes on his own for those in need.

“I have always enjoyed working and volunteering in the free clinic setting,” Russell said. “I was able to volunteer/work at a free clinic in Richmond for a few years before starting dental school. I saw firsthand how impactful these clinics are for their patients. I have had the same experience here in the Northern Neck. The patients are so grateful for what we are able to provide them and it is a cool and gratifying experience here.

“When I saw the front office staff handing out meal boxes to patients I wanted to help out also. We are blessed and fortunate to be in a profession like dentistry where we are able to help others. You never know what people are going through, especially during the holiday season, and I just wanted to help out in a small way if I could.”



Our patients make a difference

Two other students related the profound affect that Clinic patients can have.

“On my last day of the 2-week rotation I met a 75-year-old woman who really left an impact on me – a lovely woman who spoke of the state of her teeth and how they desperately needed to be cleaned,” said Nick Clayton. “She must’ve thanked me 20 times during the procedure. It re-solidified and reminded me why I was here and why this is the path I chose. A fellow student in the operatory next to mine told me that after I left for a moment the woman was praying aloud, ‘Thank you Lord for helping me get my teeth cleaned.’ This moment spoke to me more than any other situation I’ve experienced so far in my short healthcare career. It is this feeling that drives and motivates me. This situation recharged my battery and revives my motivation for what I do.”

Another student, Jennifer Ahn, recalled a patient who “had old fillings on her front teeth that were cracked and stained. She was embarrassed to even open her mouth and show me. After talking and getting to know her, she finally let me take a look.

“She had cavities and failed fillings on all of her upper front teeth. I told her I could do two of them at that appointment. When I showed her the end result in the mirror, she immediately started crying. She said, ‘This is what my teeth are SUPPOSED to look like.’ Such a simple procedure to changed one person’s whole smile and self-confidence. My experience at the NNMFHC showed me that this is why we do what we do.”



The Medical Clinic staff now includes (left photo, l-r) Linda Davis, RN, Dr. Paul Sutherland, and assistant nurse practitioner Tamara Hall and Medical Director Dr. Charles Maresh, pictured at right.



NNMFHC’s Medical Clinic staff expands

The Northern Neck – Middlesex Free Health Clinic Medical Director, Dr. Charles Maresh, is pleased to announce key additions to the Medical Clinic.

Linda Davis, RN, with years of hospital and emergency room experience, joined the Clinic staff in 2021 and helped the Medical Clinic navigate through the pandemic along with nurse practitioner Tamara Hall and Dr. Maresh.

In 2022, medical assistant Michele Fulcher joined the team full time. Dr. Paul Sutherland, also with years of ER experience, began working at the Clinic in April for a full week each month. His addition helps fill critical provider gaps and assures continued quality of care, Dr. Maresh noted.

Massey Center awards grant for oral cancer checks

The Clinic has received a community seed grant from VCU’s Massey Cancer Center to increase awareness of oral cancer for patients served by the Medical Clinic.

Grant funding will allow patients to receive free oral cancer screening in the Dental Clinic, addressing Massey’s mission of reducing the state cancer burden for all Virginians through health promotion and prevention through community action. The grant presents an opportunity for patients to benefit from a new collaboration between medical and dental services. Targeted information about oral cancer will be provided to all medical patients, and patients will be encouraged to take action for prevention by making a screening appointment in the Dental Clinic.



From left are Linda Davis, RN, Raven Davis, Mary Fox, Dr. Debbie Bryant of the Massey Cancer Center, Clinic CEO Jean Nelson, Darlene Cox, Anne Kornegay, Jasmine Blue, and Brianna Starks.

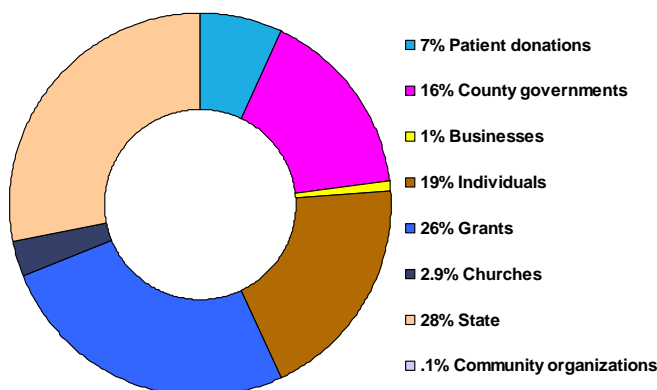
Tobacco use, age, and prolonged sun exposure from outside work all increase oral cancer risk. The screening process is quick, simple, and pain-free. VCU dental and dental hygiene student providers will perform the screenings, and referrals will be made to VCU for any areas of concern. Patients who complete the screening will be eligible for a comprehensive dental examination and x-rays.

During 2021, the Clinic delivered \$6.85 million in health care services

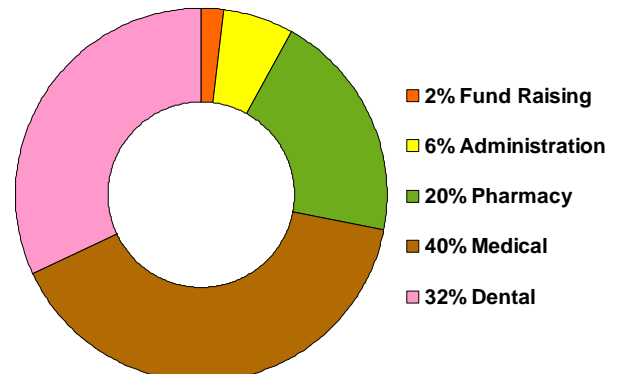
- **1,628 individuals** visited the Clinic for health-care services
- **747 patients** were seen in the Medical Clinic, where they made 4,043 visits to a provider, and obtained referrals, CT scans, x-rays, mammograms, and labs. The value of medical services totaled \$1,750,000.
- **1,087 individuals** were seen in the Dental Clinic, visiting 3,591 times. The Dental Clinic performed 8,937 procedures and delivered \$1,383,258 worth of services.
- **14,053 prescriptions** valued at \$3,722,442 were filled by the Pharmacy, where patients made 3,098 visits.
- **15 Clinic patients and their families** enjoyed Thanksgiving or Christmas dinners, courtesy of donations of turkeys and hams from Tri-Star and Food Lion, and from Clinic employees who contributed for the side dishes.
“Thank you so much for the turkey and other provisions I received through your Thanksgiving drawing,” one recipient wrote. “What a surprise it was! Your kindness and generosity are inspiring. With gratitude and best wishes.”

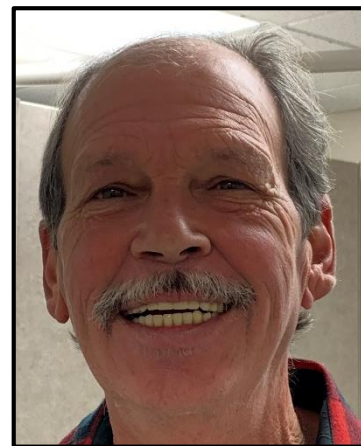
Services were provided on a \$1.6 million budget:

Income



Expenses

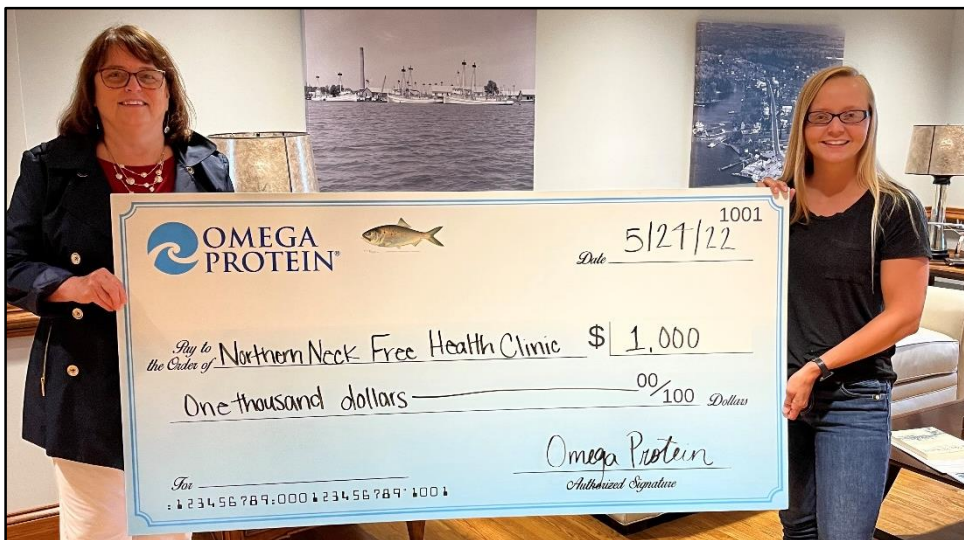




Loving those smiles

93 sets of dentures were delivered in 2021, and about 40 more were in process at the start of 2022.

"I am so happy with my new teeth. Everybody is professional and very nice here. I have my smile back and the cost was the best I could have gotten anywhere. Thanks for all the care and help." - Rusty Mayo

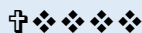


Business support

Omega Protein started their fishing season with a charitable donation to the Northern Neck – Middlesex Fee Health Clinic. From left are Clinic CEO Jean Nelson and Ashley Dawson, Inside Sales Manager at Omega Protein. The Clinic greatly appreciates this and any other support area businesses are able to provide.

Comments and thanks

Thank you, to all, for the wonderful experience I've had being your patient all these years. Thank you for your patience, professionalism, concern, promptness, great teamwork. As far as I'm concerned you rate 5 stars on a 1-5 scale (Example: During Covid you were the most on point, thorough and efficient).



We thank the Clinic, its staff and volunteers for our Covid-19 vaccinations. We were truly impressed with the way the Clinic did this. Everyone was so helpful and wonderful. Thank you. Thank you.

- Louis and Mary Freeman (with \$200 donation)



I don't really know how to say it, but everyone in this dentist office was amazing. I'm so happy they didn't treat you like a number. They treated you like a person. Everyone was amazing. I have never seen more nicer people than all in here. The dentist was great, he was caring and always so awesome. I thank each and everyone.

- OS



3,255 vaccines to 1,549 people

Outdoor vaccine clinics continue weekly at the Clinic. Recipients stay in their cars while the paperwork, vaccines and providers come to them, and volunteers keep track of time and check in with everyone for any side effects. The vaccine clinics are open to everyone in the community. Among those pictured inside are Ginger Houck (behind the pharmacy window), Nicole Lester (seated), and Sandi Sutherland, who with Robin Kimmeth administered the shots.



Looking for a meaningful way to enjoy Tidewater living?

The Northern Neck – Middlesex Free Health Clinic (NNMFHC) has been serving vulnerable populations since its founding in 1993. For the past 29 years more than 17,000 individuals have made the NNMFHC their health-care home.



We are looking for paid providers – both medical and dental – and we are flexible. If you would like to help make this land of pleasant living a land of healthy living for everyone, read on.

Our Medical Clinic operates with a full-time nurse practitioner, a part-time Medical Director physician, a part-time doctor, an RN, a medical assistant, and volunteers who step in during the day and for evening clinics. Four specialists in urology, nephrology, and gynecology also volunteer monthly.

Our Dental Clinic operates with a part-time staff dentist and final-year dental and hygiene students from the VCU School of Dentistry, who rotate through three days a week. The staff dentist provides student oversight and manages a robust denture program. Often, people are able to chew without pain and smile without shame for the first time in years.



Bottom line: We need another provider on staff in both the medical and dental clinics.

Full-time would be great. Part-time works too. Do you want to help out but only have a certain hours or days available? We're all ears. Retired and want to stay active in the field? Give us a call. Able to step in when our staff providers need a break? We'd love to hear from you.

The NNMFHC is a state-of-the-art facility, fully equipped with HEPA air filtration systems. The Medical Clinic includes five exam rooms, a lab, and nurses' station. The Dental Clinic has five operatories and a lab. The Pharmacy supports both departments.

Best of all, the NNMFHC is a melting pot for the Northern Neck and Middlesex County. Volunteers, patients, and staff all come from diverse backgrounds to work together for the health of the community. We're non-profit. We're here to provide health care for those who ordinarily lack access to it. That is our mission and our bottom line.

To be a part of our mission, give us a call at 804-435-0575, drop us a line at P.O. Box 1694, Kilmarnock, VA, 22482, visit us at 51 William B. Graham Court in Kilmarnock, or take a look and communicate with us at www.nnmfhc.org.

Northern Neck – Middlesex

FREE HEALTH CLINIC



Bridging the
health-care gap
since 1993

The Northern Neck—Middlesex Free Health Clinic's Mission:

We embrace health and wellness as the foundation for quality of life, and we dedicate ourselves to providing the highest level of health care to all those who ordinarily lack access to it within our community.

Two Locations in Kilmarnock

Main Facility at 51 William B. Graham Court:

Medical, dental, and pharmacy services
5 days and 2 evenings per week

Phyllis Smith Building at 115 DMV Drive:

Patient education, and group patient care

In Syringa

Freeshade Community Center:

Outreach Office every Thursday
12:30 to 4:30 pm



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Since 1993

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