

Improve Access to Care

Western Tidewater Free Clinic Partners with Eastern Virginia Medical School Students and Residents

by Terri W. Babineau, MD, EVMS Associate Professor of Family and Community Medicine, Director of Community Outreach, Office of Student Affairs

Thanks to support from the Obici Healthcare Foundation, EVMS and the Western Tidewater Free Clinic have forged a unique partnership that provides much needed care for uninsured patients while offering vital learning opportunities for up-and-coming physicians.

The school's work with the clinic ties in directly with the community-focused visions of both EVMS and the Obici Healthcare Foundation. Together, we are expanding access to high quality care while also providing invaluable experience for EVMS students and residents, who learn clinical skills and gain an appreciation for community service. Thanks to a hands-on, personal approach to care, the partnership also encourages physicians-in-training to consider Western Tidewater when they enter practice.

In the program's first year, our team of EVMS faculty members, residents and students saw 268 patients for a total of 529 visits. All patients are uninsured, and most have income at or near the federal poverty line.

"Working at the clinic has given me a better appreciation of the issues this population faces, the social and economic factors that influence their health care decisions and the ability to provide medical care to a population with limited resources," said third-year EVMS medical student Clay Nelson.

"This experience has helped me go beyond treating illness specific problems to providing more holistic, patient-centered care, which I truly believe has helped me grow as both a physician in training and a person in general."

The EVMS team serves as the primary-care provider for those they see at the clinic, utilizing the "patient-centered medical home" model to form a strong doctor-patient relationship. Rather than addressing a single illness or concern, EVMS incorporates the entire spectrum of health into the care provided — from managing chronic conditions to educating patients on how to maintain long-term wellness. Under this philosophy of care,

EVMS delivers care that is on par with stringent national standards for high-quality outcomes. For the clinic's patients, access to this kind of care can be life changing.

"Dr. Babineau and the Western Tidewater Free Clinic make me feel loved," said patient Tiffany Fleetwood. "She and my family encouraged me to improve myself by going back to school... I start nurse's aide classes next week," Miss Fleetwood reported.



FUTURE NURSE'S AIDE -Tiffany Fleetwood (center) receives a check up from Terri Babineau, MD, EVMS faculty member, and Clay Nelson, EVMS third-year medical student.

Who Needs a Medical Home? by Lula Holland (COL Ret) MSW, BSN

The medical home is both old-fashioned (introduced in 1967) and thoroughly modern. It is a blend of the personalized, comprehensive care that family physicians have been offering for decades and from which individuals with insurance continue to benefit greatly.

Today, new technology also helps insured patients make sense of the increasingly complex healthcare system.

Individuals have a primary care physician specially trained to provide first contact, continuous and comprehensive care. This physician directs the team responsible for the ongoing care and the patient is cared for at all stages of life: acute care, chronic care, preventative care and end of life care. This healthcare is accessible, patient-centered, personalized, continuous, coordinated, compassionate and culturally responsive.

All information goes "home" - to one place - for review by the patient and the doctor. The medical home uses modern conveniences, such as e-mail communication, quality ratings and pricing information and secure online tools to help manage health information. E-mail reminders are used for appointments and screenings.

Other support helps both the patient and his/her family manage chronic conditions such as diabetes or hypertension.

Patients are active participants in their own health and well-being. They choose their healthcare providers (doctors, pharmacy, therapists, nutritionist, personal trainers etc.) who all collaborate with one another.

The Medical Society of Virginia estimates that tens of thousands of uninsured Virginians do not have medical homes. How do we close that divide and reduce disparities in care?

The best resources are the free clinics and the community health centers, and support of their efforts to build medical homes is crucial.

These organizations provide care for patients regardless of the patients' ability to pay.

Improving the quality of healthcare delivered by safety net providers can have a significant impact on disparities by promoting equity and ensuring access to high-quality care.

"EVERYONE needs a medical home."

“*EVERYONE needs a medical home.*”



Mrs. Holland is a member of the Obici Healthcare Foundation Board of Directors.

So You Want to Apply for a Grant **Technical Workshop** for healthcare nonprofits new to the Foundation
Tuesday, October 30, 2012, 1:00 p.m.

Obici Healthcare Foundation, 106 W. Finney Avenue, Suffolk, Virginia

RSVP by Friday, October 26th by calling 757-539-8810

Request for Proposal - Round 12 *Be the Change...*

If you are in search of funding for your good idea to improve health, join us at the **Request for Proposal Announcement Breakfast**. Our grantmaking seeks to improve the health status of the people living in Western Tidewater and Gates County, NC.

Round 12 RFP Breakfast (nutritious option)

Tuesday, November 13, 2012

9:00 a.m.

Hilton Garden Inn

100 East Constance Road, Suffolk

DISCUSSION:

The Future of Healthcare Reform

Linda Wilkinson

Executive Director

Virginia Association of
Free Clinics

Neal Graham

Executive Director

Virginia Primary Care
Association

PRESENTATION FROM THE FIELD:

Kim Schwartz

Chief Executive Officer

Roanoke Chowan Community Health Center