



connecting for Health

New Hips Give New Life Collaboration Makes Dream Come True

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In his mid-30s, Marin Community Clinics’ patient Jorge Magaña was suffering from unbearable pain. “I would put my hands on my hips to support them, and shuffle at an angle to walk,” explains Jorge, who was working at a gas station. “I was in a lot of pain.”

In 2005, doctors told him that the cartilage in his hip joints was wearing away due to arthritis. Hip replacement surgery was his only hope. But there was one problem—Jorge was uninsured and having surgery performed on both hips would cost thousands of dollars.

Five years later, Marin Community Clinics, Novato Community Hospital, and a surgeon came together to help Jorge. Today, he is living a better, pain-free life.

“I’m a new man!” beams the now 40-year-old. The goal of providing for his family, including twin boys and a daughter, keeps him motivated. “I have dreams like any other father. I want to take my kids to Disneyland.”

Here’s how the story unfolded.

By 2010, the pain and stiffness were so extreme that Jorge could not work. He came to Marin Community Clinics for help.

“Jorge was trying his best to deal with the worst hips I’ve ever seen,” recalls Leslie Cunningham, a volunteer physical therapist at the clinic. “Nothing helped. It was just bone on bone.”

Jorge then met retired orthopedic surgeon Dr. Kevin Harrington, another of our volunteer specialists, who became his strongest advocate. Harrington had a list of patients who needed in-hospital surgery, and he moved Jorge’s name to the top.

But the team hit some obstacles. “We tried to get the local orthopedic physicians to see Jorge and perform the surgery at no cost, but weren’t having any luck,” explains Linda Tavaszi, CEO. “It is just not fair to ask patients to put their lives on hold.”



Jorge Magaña (center) with family and Jennifer Lehr of Sutter Health (far left), Leslie Cunningham (second from right) and MCC Referral Coordinator, Ricardo Montero (right). Photo by Bob Menkin

And then, even worse, Dr. Harrington, Jorge’s greatest champion, passed away unexpectedly. Tavaszi and her staff decided to turn their grief into action – they refused to give up. Tavaszi approached administrators at Sutter Health’s

Leading Voices

Letter from Bill Kerr, Board Chair and Linda Tavaszi, CEO



Marin Community Clinics' mission – to improve the health of our patients and community by providing high quality, cost-effective, culturally sensitive, patient-centered health care – is not just a phrase found on our website and brochures or on a sign on our walls. You can find it in those places, but more than that, it is demonstrated every day in the actions of our clinicians, staff, and volunteers.



Our mission statement was carefully crafted and each word precisely chosen, as with most mission-driven organizations.

We know that improving the health of individuals contributes to the health of the community at large. We also know that high quality, culturally sensitive, patient-centered health care must be cost-effective in order to be sustained over time. Conversely, cost effectiveness alone cannot sustain our health center – the patient experience must be positive in every arena, from scheduling the appointment, to walking into a clean and pleasant environment, to being received at the reception desk and then taken to the back office, to seeing their medical, dental or behavioral health provider, to receiving appropriate discharge information, to talking to the billing department if a need arises.

Maintaining high quality standards – such as having a high percentage of patients receive appropriate cancer screenings – is not achieved in a vacuum. Patient care must be delivered with sensitivity, and access to services must be adequate for desired quality outcomes to be achieved.

The interactions of clinicians, staff, and volunteers with our patients and with one another illustrate our organizational values – integrity, respect, diversity, competency, and teamwork – to create an excellent experience for our patients. Having a collective commitment to ethical behavior, conveying mutual respect, promoting and respecting diversity, committing to the highest level of accountability in demonstrating our abilities in providing quality care, and promoting teamwork and collaboration are all vital elements in carrying out our mission.

The Affordable Care Act means that more of our patients now have health insurance, and that is a welcome change. However, there remain a significant number of patients who are not eligible for insurance.

Our mission remains the same, whether a patient has insurance or not. And your continued support is crucial for Marin Community Clinics to continue to deliver outstanding health care to all who turn to us for high quality, culturally sensitive, cost-effective, patient-centered health care.

Orthopedic solutions— continued from page 1

Novato Community Hospital (NCH), who agreed right away to the surgery. But they still needed a surgeon for what would be a complex surgery.

Brian Alexander, NCH's administrator, finally found a willing partner in Dr. Robert Mayle, who was brand new to the community. He immediately agreed to perform the surgery. "Hip replacements can dramatically change someone's life," said Dr. Mayle. "Jorge couldn't stand up straight. He was in so much pain that he couldn't even play with his kids."

Jorge's dream came true when he underwent bilateral hip replacement surgery in October 2013, and following a short rehabilitation, he's now walking his way into a better, pain-free life.

"I'm a new man!" beams the now 40-year-old. And the goal of providing for his family, including twin boys and a daughter, keeps him motivated. "I have dreams like any other father. I want to take my kids to Disneyland."

"It is a wonderful thing when health care providers come together like this," said Tavaszi. "My hope is that, with the Affordable Care Act, people like Jorge will no longer have to wait to get the care they need." Jorge is now back at work and enjoying life again, and he now has health insurance under the Affordable Care Act.

Contributions by:

Kathryn Graham, Sarah Ordody, Lily Tung Crystal

What else is new? Visit our website for:

- ❖ Spotlight on Community Champions: Leslie Cunningham, PT, and Joseph Greenberg, MD
- ❖ **We Need BOOKS!** Our "book ladies" in the Novato and San Rafael clinics tell us that we desperately need donations of books for children. Our greatest need is for books for children 5 years of age and younger. Bilingual English/Spanish books are especially appreciated.
- ❖ Don't forget to LIKE us on Facebook!

www.marinclinics.org

Health Care Reform becomes a reality in Marin

By Meilyn Santana, Outreach & Enrollment Director and Referral Department Manager

Health Care Reform and the Affordable Care Act are now a reality. This is a historic time in our nation's health care and Marin Community Clinics is contributing to its success.

March 31st was the deadline for individuals to enroll in Covered California, the health insurance exchange that offers a variety of affordable insurance options to under-insured and uninsured residents. In Marin, over 13,000 residents qualified for Covered CA or the expanded Medi-Cal program.

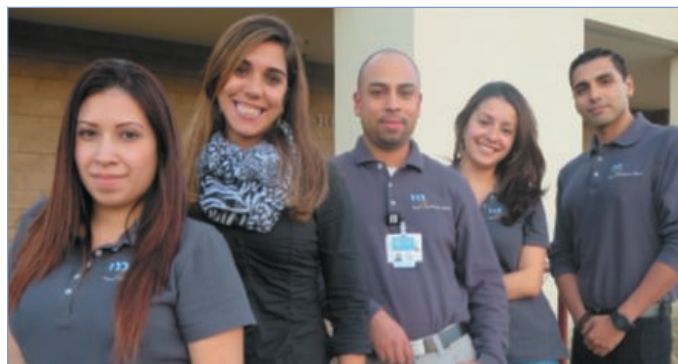
The enrollment process has not been an easy one. It has required extensive community outreach and hands-on counseling to educate people about the existence of the Affordable Care Act and what it means to them, to assess their eligibility, and to explain their options.

When enrollment began in October 2013, we knew that Marin Community Clinics, as Marin's largest safety net provider, would play a major role. We also knew that special effort would be needed to ensure that our existing patients and the community at large were informed and that they enrolled on time. (For qualified individuals who missed the Covered CA deadline, enrollment will be open again in October 2014. There is no deadline for Medi-Cal enrollment.)

Health care reform is here!
Call, qualify and enroll
for free or affordable health coverage.

First, with the help of a government grant, we increased our enrollment staff. Then, in addition to sending two letters to our patients, we opened an insurance hotline, made presentations at local churches in English, Spanish and Portuguese, participated in the College of Marin Health Fair, spoke to local non-profit organizations with a large base of uninsured clients, and participated in other events throughout the county. We collaborated with Marin's other community health centers and the Marin County Department of Health and Human Services to maximize outreach and enrollment efforts.

Our hard work has paid off. As of the end of March, Marin Community Clinics has assisted over 6,000 people with information about Covered CA or Medi-Cal.



Enrollment Counselors (from left) Irma Gonzalez, Meilyn Santana, Armando Cerros, Vanessa Monsebaiz, and Hugo Moreano. Photo by Luisa Ayala

Vanessa Monsebaiz is one of Marin Community Clinics' certified enrollment counselors. She's had a full plate – returning telephone calls and emails from our hotline and personally meeting with people at the San Rafael clinic to assist them with the process. Like others on the team, including Hugo Moreano, Armando Cerros, Irma Gonzalez, Patricia Tobin, and Vitor Coral, she has seen a variety of clients – people who are unemployed, self-employed, or employed by businesses that provide limited or no health insurance.

“People who have never had health insurance are incredibly relieved after we meet with them,” reported Vanessa. “You can see it on their faces. I make sure they are eligible and explain their options. It's a lot to absorb. Often we do the online enrollment together right on the spot. It's a gratifying experience to help those who have been struggling with not having adequate insurance.”

We've learned some lessons since this journey started.

- Many of those who inquire about coverage were in fact eligible for Medi-Cal before Reform took place, but were unaware of its existence.
- Despite the experience reported state-wide, the Latino community in Marin has shown significant interest in learning about insurance options.
- Women have played a key role in spreading the word.
- Those who had been denied coverage because of pre-existing conditions anxiously awaited Health Care Reform so that they could finally have insurance and are now extremely relieved to be insured.

The Affordable Care Act is not perfect, but it is certainly better than the system we had before. It will go a long way towards increasing access to health care and will help Marin Community Clinics carry out its mission – to improve the health of our patients and the community by providing high quality, cost-effective, culturally sensitive, patient-centered health care.

Community Champions – to be honored at Summer Solstice Celebration



Judie Shaw is an extraordinary person who has dedicated her life to the service of others through volunteer work and community involvement.

Raised in San Francisco, Judie attended Lowell High School and volunteered at Mt. Zion Hospital as a candy stripper. She attended UC Berkeley and UCLA where she took on her first of many political roles by running a fellow student's campaign. Along with her husband Leonard, in the 1960's she brought her good nature, talents, and charitable spirit to Marin County. In the 1970's, while raising her three children, Judie worked hard to preserve the county's open spaces by organizing a group of local Novato residents who convinced the owners of the Marin Country Club to donate ridge top land for all to enjoy.

For 40 years Judie has been deeply committed to the Marin community by working on local election campaigns and volunteering for the American Cancer Society, Jewish Family and Children's Services, and the Margaret Todd Senior Center. Passionate about improving the lives of others, she is known as "the Book Lady" at Marin Community Clinics, she keeps the bookshelves filled with donated books to ensure that pediatric patients can take a book home after visiting their doctor.

"Before Judie became involved in the book program, we barely had enough books for our young patients", says Novato Clinic Director, Susan Wiebers. "Thanks to her commitment we are now able to offer a book to every child visiting our clinic, patient or sibling."



Dr. Albert Varner has been a volunteer gastroenterologist at Marin Community Clinics for over 25 years. He started volunteering when we were providing health care in church basements in Mill Valley and Fairfax, before we opened our Greenbrae clinic. In addition to

providing GI consultative services, Dr. Varner also served on Marin Community Clinics' *Building a Healthy Future* Capital Campaign Committee, tirelessly seeking donations for the historic – and successful – initiative to build our San Rafael and Novato clinics.

In his words: "I've enjoyed my work at MCC and found it to be very rewarding in many ways. I encourage my colleagues to give it a try in hopes they'll like doing it as much as I do. The patients are grateful and the staff is wonderful. Marin Community Clinics is truly one of the county's greatest assets."

A graduate of Davidson College and Harvard Medical School, after internship and residency at UCLA Medical Center Dr. Varner spent a year as Chief Resident at the American Hospital in Paris. Upon his return to the U.S., he completed a fellowship in gastroenterology at the UCLA-Wadsworth VA Combined Program. In 1980 Dr. Varner entered private practice in Marin County and joined the clinical faculty at UCSF. He was a founding member of Marin Gastroenterology and Medical Director of the Endoscopy Center of Marin until his retirement in 2013. During his career, he served as Chief of Medicine and member of the Medical Executive Committee at Marin General Hospital.

New This Year: Youth Volunteers to be Honored



Keila Itzun, a senior at San Rafael High School, has shown extraordinary academic determination, as well as passion for improving the health and well-being of underserved communities. After working with the Huckleberry Wellness Academy* as a freshman, Keila interned with LIFT-

Levantate where she educated elementary school children on the benefits of drinking water instead of sugary drinks. She later presented the same information to Wellness Academy parents in Spanish. While Keila was nervous to be presenting to a group of parents, she realized that parents play a key role in their children's health. The following summer, Keila completed an internship for Ceres Community Project where she learned about the healing power of food. She worked alongside Ceres' chefs and other high school interns to learn to prepare healthy meals for individuals and families struggling with serious illnesses. Whether she pursues a career in health or education, Keila is determined to work towards improving the lives of children and families.



Jocelyn Lezama, a student at San Marin High School, has contributed energy and enthusiasm to her community through Huckleberry Wellness Academy* since 8th grade. As a volunteer tutor at a Novato church, she has learned the value of education as a tool to improve the living

conditions in her community. Jocelyn has been an active volunteer with LIFT-Levantate including staffing a weekly food bank in Novato and informational health fairs throughout the county. As a Peer Health Educator in the Novato Wellness Center and an intern at Marin Community Clinics' Novato site, she has gained experience working with youth and underserved populations in a medical setting. Jocelyn's commitment to her Marin neighbors is especially admirable considering that she is involved in two college access programs that support her eligibility for a 4-year university following high school graduation. Her goal is to better herself so that she can continue to make an impact in underserved communities.

*Huckleberry Youth Program's college access program prepares first generation, college bound students to fill a growing demand for a diverse health care work force.

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**Please contact us at 415-526-8527
or give online at www.marinclinics.org**

Creative Contributions

Microsoft's Holiday Spirit –

The 30 employees of the new Microsoft store at the Village in Corte Madera pooled their own donations, and Store Manager Rebecca Casto and Vitra Davis lead several employees on a field trip – shopping for toys to give to the youngest patients of Marin Community Clinics. According to Vitra, "Giving back is a HUGE part of our company culture at Microsoft and something the store manager Rebecca is really passionate about!"

Saint Raphael Students give back –

Mrs. Murray's first grade class at Saint Raphael School made several baby blankets in their class project and donated them to the newborns at our San Rafael Campus clinic during the December holiday season. The students not only learned how to knit their own creations, but they also gained a life-long spirit of philanthropy.

More Holiday Gifts

Once again, the youngest patients of Marin Community Clinics are grateful to the students of St. Anselm School for hundreds of lovingly selected and wrapped Christmas gifts, and to the families of Congregation Rodef Sholom who creatively and fashionably dressed hundreds of teddy bears on Mitzvah Day. We are truly blessed that so many of our neighbors, from diverse faiths and backgrounds, all agree that caring for others is the greatest gift of all.

Cahill Vision Fund established

Through the support and vision of Jerry Cahill and the rest of the Cahill family, a Vision Fund has been set up to help our optometry patients pay for eyeglasses. After the passing of our dear friend Helen "Peggy" Cahill in January 2013, Marin Community Clinics received many memorial gifts to honor her memory. And, to complete the circle, the family has donated the remainder of her philanthropic donor advised fund to support our new optometry services. Eye exams are being provided in collaboration with the U.C. Berkeley School of Optometry, but many of our patients cannot afford the eyeglasses that they need. From now on, those patients can apply for a grant from the Cahill Vision Fund to help them achieve perfect vision. On behalf of those patients, we are grateful that Peggy's family is so thoughtfully sustaining the mission that she believed in.



Optometry intern checks eye health of pediatric patient. Photo by Jocelyn Knight



marin community clinics

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Summer Solstice Celebration: Joie de Vivre!

Summer Solstice is a joyful time for celebration of the sun’s revitalizing energy, a perfect time to share hope for health and well-being for all. **Celebrate the solstice with friends of Marin Community Clinics at the historic Marin Art and Garden Center in Ross on Wednesday, June 25th, 5:30 – 8:00 p.m.**

This year’s event will honor 2014 Community Health Champions: Judie Shaw, the “book lady” of Novato, and Dr. Albert Varner, well-known gastroenterologist and volunteer. This year we will add a new award – Youth Community Champion – honoring two high school students who have contributed their time and energy to the health and well-being of their entire community. (See page 4 to learn more about our Champions.)

Joie de Vivre, the delight in being alive, is our French-inspired theme this year. Because honey is a sweet symbol of the Summer Solstice, Marshall’s Farm Honey will offer a special honey tasting for our guests. Delicious food by Stacy

Scott and the Art of Good Taste, tantalizing wines and festive solstice activities will all have a French flair. You will have the opportunity to make a colorful solstice herb wreath to take home, and the popular photo booth will welcome your creativity with berets and playful props.

Begin the summer with hope and joy, support Marin Community Clinics, and honor our Champions. **To purchase tickets, see the list of our generous sponsors, and learn more about the honorees, visit our website at www.marinclinics.org.**



Tom Peters, President and CEO of Marin Community Foundation (left) and Dr. Linda Clever. Photo by Jocelyn Knight