

# connecting for Health

# Expanding Our Health Services to Meet Growing Needs of Our Patients

For the past three years, Marin Community Clinics has steadily and carefully expanded its comprehensive primary care services for thousands of Marin County children and adults. The Board of Directors and Executive Management Team successfully conducted a capital campaign and managed organizational growth that have allowed the clinics to step up to further fulfill its mission to provide the full range of Federally Qualified Health Center services. In 2009 over 20,000 patients received care at Marin Community Clinics – up from 13,500 in 2007. Our three clinics – modern facilities in San Rafael and Novato and the original site in Greenbrae adjacent to Marin General Hospital – have added new medical staff to meet the growing needs of Marin's low-income individuals and families.

Recently Marin Community Clinics began offering dental, behavioral health, and reproductive health care to enhance pediatric and adult primary care services. With these additions, our patients have the distinct advantage of having all of their health care provided at their "medical home". These expanded services will enhance patient satisfaction and convenience. Our proven track record and agility in meeting increasing needs caused by the economic downturn have translated into confidence and community support for our medical and dental services. Marin Community Clinics provides an excellent example of the value of Federally Qualified Health Centers in the community.

Women's Health

In 2009, Marin Community Clinics made great progress in meeting the need for gynecology care for women in the county. We began operating Teen Tuesday clinics at Huckleberry Youth Program in San Rafael. Later, Courtney Benedict, an

experienced certified nurse midwife, joined our medical staff to become Women's Health Director. Under her direction, we have greatly expanded the Women's Health program at all three of our clinics and, in addition to Huckleberry Youth Program, the Novato Wellness Center.

Breast health has been fully integrated into primary care services, which greatly benefits patients.

Expanding Our Services — continued on page 2



Courtney Benedict, CNM and Rose Mary Albujar, PA, Women's Health Specialists

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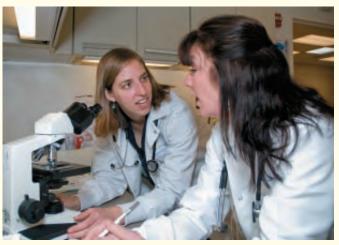
#### Expanding Our Services — continued from page 1

Susan, a Marin Community Clinics patient, is an example. Susan became alarmed when she realized the lump in her breast was still there weeks after she first found it. Having lost her job and insurance, she delayed making a medical appointment. Uncertain of where to turn, she contacted Marin Community Clinics – her first time seeking assistance from a community health center. When she arrived for her first visit, she did not know what to expect or how she could afford a mammogram or other testing. Our staff enrolled her in the Cancer Detection Program, in which she received free diagnostic testing. Luckily, she was found to have a noncancerous growth in her breast. Susan told her provider that she came to her first appointment feeling like an outsider, afraid of what community health care would be like. She said she was relieved to find "a group of warm, caring, and resourceful folks that made sure I wasn't alone in this frightening process. I realized that I wasn't an outsider at all, but that I had absolutely landed in the right place with the right people." Susan has since had other necessary medical appointments, and she and her provider have established a great relationship.

Patients' responses to receiving gynecology services at Marin Community Clinics have been overwhelmingly positive. Women who previously were referred to other providers for gynecology services are thrilled to have the convenience and continuity of care they now experience.

More women's health specialists – obstetricians, nurse practitioners, certified nurse midwives, and case managers – will be recruited in the coming months for expanding care, including obstetrics. Marin Community Clinics is very proud to offer full–scope care for women. It is rewarding to know that we are making real differences in our patients' lives.

Expanding Our Services — continued on page 3



Cara Gutterman and Susan Hollander, Nurse Practitioners

#### Strengthening Our Role in Marin Health Care



LETTER FROM THE BOARD PRESIDENT Jennifer Loucks

Springtime fills our senses with signs of renewal – the sight and scent of colorful and fragrant blossoms, the sounds of songbirds, the tastes of seasonal fruits

and vegetables. These are just a few of the delights we experience. In addition to those joys, Marin Community Clinics' volunteers, staff, and patients are experiencing other types of renewal which are uplifting and encouraging.

Early in April, we celebrated the first year anniversary of the opening of our new Novato clinic where patients continue to comment on how welcoming the space is and how caring their doctors and other staff are. In just a few months, Marin Community Clinics' dental services will extend to Novato, adjacent to our Novato clinic. Currently available only in San Rafael, essential oral health services will be available to more children and adults in a new six-chair dental clinic.

Thanks to the generous support of Sutter Health's donoradvised fund administered by Marin Community Foundation, adults who earn less than 200% of the federal poverty level will be able to obtain oral health care at the Novato dental clinic, which is expected to open in July 2010. Novato resident Alicia says, "My family goes to doctors at Marin Community Clinics in Novato. It's close to home and our son's school, and we like our doctors. To see the dentist, we go to San Rafael. It will be great to have all of our health care in Novato."

Every day our staff hear patients' personal stories. Sometimes the stories are of growth and success; sometimes of struggle and loss. At our Greenbrae, Novato and San Rafael clinics and satellite sites (Huckleberry Youth Program and Novato Wellness Center) Marin Community Clinics staff work together and with other community-based organizations to help our patients achieve positive health outcomes and improve their lives.

The support of individual, business and foundation donors is crucial to the continued renewal that Marin Community Clinics is experiencing. We are growing because of the increasing demands due to the many Marin residents being affected by the economic downturn. That we are able to meet this increased demand is because of the tremendous community support. This newsletter shares examples of the growth in our services. We need your support in order to continue meeting the needs of our most vulnerable neighbors.



#### Novato Community Hospital and Marin Community Clinics Partnership Increases Cancer Screening for At-Risk Patients

**Diane Emler** 

An agreement between Dr. Barbara Nylund, Chief of Staff of Novato Community Hospital, and Marin Community Clinics makes it possible for our patients to receive much-needed colorectal cancer screenings in 2010. This new program officially kicked-off in March and patients immediately began receiving screenings.

Colon cancer affects about seven percent of the U.S. population. According to the American Cancer Society, colorectal cancer is the second most commonly diagnosed cancer in Hispanic men and women. It is the second leading cause of cancer deaths in Hispanic men and the third leading cause of cancer deaths in Hispanic women, due to insufficient screenings, poor diet and lack of exercise. From 2001 to 2005, Hispanic male colorectal cancer incidence rates were higher in Marin County than other counties in the Greater Bay Area. At Marin Community Clinics, efforts are underway to increase screening among at-risk patients of all ethnicities to insure early detection and treatment.

Marin Community Clinics is very appreciative of Dr. Nylund and Novato Community Hospital. This partnership will help patients who otherwise would not be screened. If you have questions about this program, call Diane Emler, **Director of Specialty Referral Services**, at 415–499–4274.

## *Introducing* – New Website Feature:

# SPOTLIGHT on Community Champions and Our Volunteer Clinicians

Our new web page, SPOTLIGHT on Community Champions, will offer rotating biographies of some of the volunteers and donors who have supported our programs.

Our first SPOTLIGHT features Dr. Patrick Bennett and Dr. Albert Varner. Both are medical specialists who have been volunteering their time and expertise for many years and were also instrumental in the success of the *Building a Healthy Future* capital campaign.

www.marinclinics.org

We wish to express a special thank you to the Joanne & Peter Haas Jr. Fund for its contribution to a recruitment and training fund to advance the capabilities of Marin Community Clinics' medical providers.

#### Expanding Our Services — continued from page 2 Behavioral Health

One of the biggest challenges our patients face is finding mental health services. This has been true for many, from long-time patients who suffer from chronic mental illness to new patients who recently turned to Marin Community Clinics for health care after losing their jobs and health insurance.

Since the summer of 2009, Marin Community Clinics' licensed clinical social workers and psychiatrists have treated patients with symptoms of depression in an early intervention program. This program provides short-term intensive counseling which develops coping skills and fosters resiliency. Leah, a middle-aged woman, visited the program in January and scored high on a depression screening. After a few counseling sessions, her score was significantly lower. Leah continues to participate in counseling and complete "homework" to achieve her goals. Her social worker recently received a thank-you letter for their work together and the tremendous improvement in Leah's sense of well-being. This one story is representative of the successes of the program.

In addition to patients who are well-served by early intervention, there are a large number of patients who require long-term psychiatric services and counseling. Chief Medical Officer Dr. Georgianna Farren notes, "Many of our patients with mental health problems also suffer from chronic diseases like diabetes and hypertension. Their situations are even more alarming when substance abuse is involved. Our approach in caring for these patients is to expand our behavioral health professional team, integrate behavioral health with our primary care services, and to partner with community agencies, like Center Point, with expertise in treating substance abuse. Thanks to the Sutter Health donor advised fund at Marin Community Foundation, we can begin to develop an integrated primary care-behavioral health program at our clinics."



### Our Community Champions Dr. Melvin Grais and Annine Untiedt

#### Facilities Expansion Seeded by Grais and Untiedt Family Gifts

The generosity of many donors of the *Building a Healthy*Future capital campaign made it possible for Marin
Community Clinics to build new facilities in San Rafael and
Novato. The Board of Directors and staff are grateful for each
donation. Before that campaign even began, there was a
crucial donation that served as a springboard for the success
and expansion that would follow.

In 2007 Dr. Melvin Grais and Mrs. Annine Untiedt, real estate partners and surviving spouses of the late Dian R. Grais and Warren M. Untiedt, donated a jointly-owned property on South Eliseo Drive in Greenbrae to Marin Community Clinics. We are grateful to have been selected for this very generous gift from a list of potential beneficiaries. The property was sold, and the proceeds were the foundation of our capital campaign. The importance of the Grais

and Untiedt gift was not solely monetary; it also forged a partnership among MCC, Sutter Health's Marin General and Novato Community Hospitals, Kaiser Permanente, Marin Community Foundation, the County of Marin, and the larger Marin community, to raise \$9.1 million for two brand new clinics.

Over 15,000 patients each year are now receiving vital health care services at the Dian R. Grais Health Center in San Rafael and Warren M. Untiedt Health Center in Novato. The Board of Directors and staff of Marin Community Clinics extend their gratitude to these special families for the confidence they put in our ability to use their contribution wisely to meet the health care needs of the community. We are proud to have their names on our clinics.

#### The Connie and Bob Peirce Physicians' Fund

Marin Community Clinics is pleased to announce the establishment of The Connie and Bob Peirce Physicians' Fund. This new fund for our medical staff was made possible by a very generous gift from Connie and Bob Peirce of Belvedere.

The purpose of this special fund is to enhance the recruitment, retention, and training of our physicians. The Fund is an essential component of Marin Community Clinics' strategic plan. Patients' needs require expansion beyond pediatric and adult primary care medicine to include mental health, gynecology, obstetrics, and geriatric services, supported by specialized programs such as obesity control, chronic disease management, and pain management. These services will require additional physicians and an improved network of specialists.

Marin Community Clinics has built a medical team that is unsurpassed, comprised of 27 physicians, nurse practitioners, physician assistants, and certified nurse midwives supported by nurses, licensed clinical social workers, and volunteer specialty care physicians. Yet the single greatest challenge we face in meeting the growing need for low-cost health care is recruiting and retaining qualified, committed and culturally sensitive physicians.

This Fund will enable MCC to recruit physicians and offer student loan repayment plans in exchange for long-term employment commitments. In addition, based on patients' needs and trends in medicine, further training and continuing medical education will be offered to our physicians. Dr. Georgianna Farren, Chief Medical Officer, said "We are so grateful to the Peirces for their generous gift. This exciting program will give current and new physicians opportunities to build on their knowledge and skills, renewing interest in their field as well as benefitting our patients and enhancing Marin Community Clinics' overall services".

Additional contributions are needed to fully fund this program. If this opportunity interests you, please contact Kathleen Clark, Director of Leadership Gifts, at kclark@marinclinic.org.



Judith Flannery, NP, Dr. Andrea Gray, Dr. Kathy Chang, Dr. Alicia Suski, and Dr. Erik Schten

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6100 Redwood Boulevard Novato, CA 94945 (Near Rowland Blvd.)

3110 Kerner Boulevard San Rafael, CA 94901 (Near Irene Street at The Loop)

To make an appointment: 415-448-1500

www.marinclinics.org

#### Celebrating Our Children's Health



Dr. Michael Grogan, Dr. Marisol Muñoz and Dr. Howard Rosenfeld to be Honored at 8th Annual Summer Solstice Celebration

Celebrate the beginning of summer with your friends and colleagues at the 8th Annual Summer Solstice Celebration – an evening of good food, good wine, and good company – all to benefit Marin Community Clinics' Pediatric Program. We'll gather in the light-filled Autodesk Atrium, 111 McInnis Parkway in San Rafael, on Thursday, June 17, 5:30 – 8:00 p.m. Honorary Co-chairs Supervisor Susan L. Adams, Supervisor Steve Kinsey, and Senator Mark Leno will be on hand to celebrate the 2010 Children's Champions: Michael Grogan, PhD, Marisol Muñoz-Kiehne, PhD and Howard Rosenfeld, MD, FACC.

Dr. Tracey Hessel, Marin Community Clinics' Lead Pediatrician, emphasized the commitment of the honorees chosen for their dedication to the well-being of children. As Director of Jeannette Prandi Children's Center, Dr. Grogan works with multiple agencies to investigate child sexual abuse and has created a child-friendly environment and specially trained team for conducting this difficult work; he is also active in the community promoting internet safety for children and teens. Dr. Marisol Muñoz-Kiehne, well-known in the community for hosting *Nuestros Niños*, her lively radio program featuring health and parenting topics, is a clinical

psychologist skillfully working with children, individuals, and families. Pediatric cardiologist Dr. Howard Rosenfeld is a tremendous advocate and resource for Marin Community Clinics' young patients, especially in his efforts to strengthen access to vital specialists and services at Children's Hospital Oakland.

Eight years ago Supervisor Susan L. Adams hosted a summer celebration to raise money so that Marin's uninsured children would receive health care. Each following year she and Children's Health Initiative supporters gathered at the time of the summer solstice to celebrate the achievements of outstanding professionals who contribute to the health of our children and their families, and insure that all children in Marin have access to health care. Last year Supervisor Adams asked Marin Community Clinics to begin hosting the event and we were pleased to do so.



You won't want to miss this opportunity to support Marin Community Clinics and to honor these talented and dedicated members of our community. To purchase tickets, see a list of our generous sponsors, or learn more about the honorees, please visit our website at www.marinclinics.org.

Connecting for Health is a publication of Marin Community Clinics Editors: Judith Snead, MPH and Dee Katson Design: Robin Brandes Strategic Graphic Design and Strahm Communications Printing and Mailing: Strahm Communications