



N.E.W. Community Clinic Celebrates 50 years

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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(Green Bay, WI) It started as a U.W. Green Bay (UWGB) class project in 1970, becoming the foundation for what, 50 years later, has become the N.E.W. Community Clinic, providing essential health services for low-income and uninsured individuals and families in the greater Green Bay community.

“Celebrating 50 years is an incredible milestone and our history has an amazing beginning that demonstrates what one person with a great idea can accomplish,” said N.E.W. Community Clinic CEO Kim Franzen.

It all started in 1970 when college student, Linda Pratch, who was serving an internship in a social change group at UWGB, researched various human services in the Green Bay area. She identified a gap in the availability of medical services those who were uninsured or low-income. She focused on creating an alternative health care delivery system and, in July 1971, the N.E.W. Community Clinic, under the name Green Bay Area Free Clinic, opened its doors for the first time.

The clinic was housed in a second-floor apartment, staffed entirely by volunteers and provided basic health care services and referrals for other care to those who lacked health insurance. Growing from its humble beginnings, the clinic was moved to a two-story house in 1972 and, in 1974, the organization hired its first administrator. Funding was provided by state and federal grants. By 1975, the Brown County Medical Society endorsed the clinic and all three hospitals (HSHS St. Mary’s and St. Vincent and Bellin at that time) began accepting lab work completed at the clinic free of charge.

Over the years, the need for the clinic continued to grow and a major fund drive resulted in the construction of the current 6,782 square foot primary care facility, which was completed in 1987. In 1992, an outreach healthcare program was implemented for those experiencing homelessness and, in 1997, a dental program was initiated in collaboration with the Northeast Wisconsin Technical College (NWTC) and its dental hygiene courses.

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Clinic anniversary cont'd

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The clinic continued to identify needs in the community and, in 2006, a second medical clinic in Green Bay was opened to provide easier access to its services. In 2012, N.E.W. Community Clinic was designated a Federally Qualified Health Center, creating opportunities for increased federal funding and eligibility to receive Medicaid reimbursement for certain services. This allowed for expansion of the dental program which included the employment of a dentist and the conversion of a NWTC classroom into the N.E.W. Community Clinics full-time dental clinic in 2013.

Today, the clinic serves more than 10,100 area residents annually, operating in five locations in the Green Bay metro area, providing low-cost or free health care services to men, women and children of all ages. Services include dental care, lead screening, and the W.I.C. women's and children's nutrition programs to the uninsured and homeless.

"The clinic has an amazing legacy and, in a few weeks, we'll be making an announcement about another expansion," said Clinic Board President Heidi Selberg. "We are focused on what we can do to continue serving our community for the next 50 years and beyond."

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