



The Vision of Open Arms
The Future of Compassion
2024 – 2026



“For he who has health, has hope; and he who has hope, has everything.”

-Thomas Carlyle



The mission of Open Arms Free Clinic is to better understand and serve with compassion the health and wellness needs of low-income, uninsured, and underserved residents of Walworth County.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Walworth County, Wisconsin is a vacation destination for many in the Midwest, and a great place to raise a family offering positive environments for recreation, business, agriculture, and education. A central part of the quality of life in the county of more than 100,000 residents has been its varied and accessible healthcare system. Two major hospital providers and many physicians, dentists, and behavioral health counselors strengthen the overall wellbeing of the community.



"I lost my job, and I no longer could afford health insurance. I had no clue how I was going to afford my medications for my diabetes and mental health. Then my mom passed away unexpectedly... I was in a crisis ...thank you for everything. I don't know what I would have done without the caring team at Open Arms. You're all true angels in disguise."

– Letter from Brigette

The Impact on the Health of Uninsured is Significant

Individual Impact:

- *Physical symptoms and illnesses go undiagnosed or untreated leading to chronic or terminal conditions later in life.*
- *Dental pain requires high out-of-pocket expenses, reduced work/school, and often needs access to transportation to travel out of the county to get treatment.*
- *Mental health distress without access to counseling or medication therapies can lead to fatal harm to self or others.*

Community Impact:

- *Hospital emergency departments are used for nonthreatening illnesses, taxing resources and not having the ability for reimbursement. This leads to increased hospital costs for all.*
- *Employers lose productive work time to excessive sick days for untreated illness, pain, and distress.*
- *Despite having potentially contagious illnesses, untreated workers may still come into work for fear of loss wages. This practice not only may affect the health of other workers, but the decrease in productivity also costs the employer more with the delayed deadlines.*

Open Arms Free Clinic: The Future of Compassion

Open Arms Free Clinic exists for people like Brigett. Opened in 2012 as the first free clinic in Walworth County, Open Arms began to address these problems by fulfilling its mission to **“better understand and serve with compassion the health and wellness needs of low-income, uninsured, and underserved residents of Walworth County.”** As a result of carrying out its mission, Open Arms has developed a credible reputation for making healthcare accessible for our essential workers and families, and the impact in Walworth County can be described in numbers and witnessed testimony by key partners with local, state, and national organizations.

With ongoing community support since its opening, Open Arms has completed over 65,000 patients visits, dispensed over \$4 million in prescription medications, opened the only Medicaid-certified dental office, and is the bilingual counseling hub for our county and the telehealth network of free clinics in Wisconsin. Today, OAFc provides an integrated and multidisciplinary set of services with 150 volunteers and 30 paid staff on its campus south of Elkhorn.

By the end of 2023, there were over 1200 new patients seeking services at Open Arms and the need is still so great. The committed OAFc mission workers have been creative with outreach to engage partners with co-located service sites and maximizing resources to expand access to healthcare. However, there are still too many who have not been served due to the limited capacity of staff, space, equipment, and programs.

Time is precious for those who are sick and hurting, thus the vision of Open Arms is to prepare for a strong, sustainable future for delivering the mission. By December 31, 2026, OAFc seeks to raise in dollars and/or pledges \$11 million for the following:

Strategic Initiatives

- 1 **Sustain and expand operations: \$6M**
- 2 **Build an expanded campus: \$500K**
- 3 **Create a Legacy Fund: \$4.5M**



This prospectus is presented as a response to the needs of the underserved in our community. This document includes our history about services, patients, and fiscal stewardship, but first, the details for our future goals are presented for your careful consideration. Thank you in advance for being part of our shared vision to make Walworth County a place for everyone to be healthy and reach their full potential.

STRATEGIC INITIATIVE 1

Sustain & Expand Operations Goal: \$6M Over Three Years

Open Arms Free Clinic, Inc. (O AFC) is focused on providing access to health care for those most vulnerable in Walworth County, Wisconsin. In 2012, O AFC opened with 100% volunteers and with primary medical care as its core service. With growing community support, the organization expanded in 2015 to offer dental, behavioral health, and care coordination. To ensure patients have the best opportunity to attain health and wellness, the O AFC staffing model is now a hybrid with paid and volunteer staff. This model has allowed more than 10,000 patients to receive our compassionate care services to date. In 2023, there was a 30% increase in new patients seeking care at Open Arms. The needs of our patients are so great, and there is so much more that can be done.

The vision for a healthy community is dependent on O AFC to continue accompanying those who are unable to pay for health care to access a full range of medical, dental, and behavioral health services. Over the next three years, the following strategic initiatives will both strengthen and expand the quality of care offered at Open Arms.



With \$6 M, O AFC will sustain and expand operations with the following strategic initiatives:

- *Increase services to 5 days a week.*
- *Expand service capacity with community-based efforts (i.e. Medical Outreach & Dental Seal-A-Smile programs)*
- *Create a Wisconsin-Certified Behavioral Health Outpatient Clinic for both uninsured and Medicaid-enrolled patients.*
- *Increase capacity to add additional behavioral health therapists for in-person and telehealth services.*
- *Increase medication treatment options for all behavioral health issues, including substance use disorders.*
- *Enhance partnerships with academic institutions to build sustainable workforce development pipeline in human-centered healthcare.*
- *Improve health outcomes through integrated program interventions:*
 - *Self-monitoring blood pressure*
 - *Diabetic care management*
 - *Oral health care management for chronic disease*

STRATEGIC INITIATIVE 2

Building an Expanded Campus

Goal: \$500K

Within the next three years, there are plans to expand the OAFc services in the current building footprint. The driver of the building expansion is the need for more space for behavioral health counseling, pharmacy, and community engagement. In the past three years, we have witnessed an increase in behavioral health needs of the new patients enrolling. This isn't a surprise, however, for many people of all ages, the pandemic fractured systems that were once designed to support health and safety. Beyond the stress of not being able to care for one's body, for those living paycheck to paycheck there is tremendous difficulty in finding affordable housing, food, and transportation. The sense of hopelessness can lead a person toward self-medication, self-harm, and even harm to others.

There is a severe lack of resources in Walworth County to address the growing behavioral health needs of our community. In Walworth County, there is one counselor for every 1,060 residents, compared to one for every 560 residents in the rest of the state. The county also has data indicating binge drinking is higher than state averages,

along with growing opioid and drug abuse-related incidence. While Open Arms cannot address all the needs of the county, we certainly need to work on strengthening services for those who are uninsured. We can do this with more space for one-on-one counseling, family therapy, group therapy, and direct medication access. The following strategic initiative highlights the need for funding support.

With \$500K, OAFc will expand the current building campus with the following strategic initiatives:

- *Renovate additional facility space for expanded integrated health care services (including behavioral health and pharmacy)*
- *Improve facilities, technology, and software to meet program needs.*
- *Enhance medication access for all patients.*
- *Create dedicated space for community engagement.*



STRATEGIC INITIATIVE 3

Create a Legacy Fund

Goal: \$4.5M Over Three Years

Local donors, foundations, and medical providers have played a vital role in supporting the efforts of Open Arms Free Clinic. As reflected in our audit of 2022, a total of more than \$2.5 million in cash and in-kind services was received and assisted with delivering quality care to more than 10,000 people.

Volunteers and staff have worked tirelessly to communicate the impact and gratitude for the work engaged in by its supporters. As stewards of the community's financial support, OAFC has a vision for accountable and sustainable stewardship for many years to come. To that end, the leadership of Open Arms has set the following strategic initiatives:

With \$4.5M, OAFC will create the Legacy Fund with the following strategic initiatives:

- *Keep a minimum of 6 months operating budget in its operating account.*
- *Increase the number of supporters from our community.*
- *Increase our visibility within the community as a highly respected nonprofit.*
- *Create a sustainable Legacy Fund to serve as a quasi-endowment that can supplement operations and capacity-building programs.*



Tree of Life, artwork by John Larkin

The design was inspired by the clinic itself. The tree top canopy is shown to be growing beyond the frame and is symbolic of the clinic growing beyond its walls. There are seven hearts that represent the clinic's seven years (presented in 2019). Each heart has a nesting dove and is embraced by branches that represent open arms. The uppermost dove is bigger than the others and is meant to symbolize the clinic reaching out to the community.

OPEN ARMS FREE CLINIC TODAY

Clinic Overview: A Community of Compassion

Open Arms is in a unique position to practice a truly holistic healthcare model. Beginning with a core value of dignity, we view the person as more than component physical parts with diagnoses that are focused on the specific symptoms presented. Every team member approaches patient interactions with an eye toward uncovering root causes.

Both the communication structure and the clinic campus facilitate the integrated approach to healthcare. Whether paid or volunteer, team members are in continual communication with one other about the patients they are treating. And because all services are housed close to each other on the clinic campus, patient concerns outside of one discipline can be referred quickly to another discipline within minutes. In some cases, patients can be seen on the same day as the initial visit.

Committed to providing quality care, OAFCC has achieved the highest standard of excellence from both the Wisconsin Association of Free and Charitable Clinics (Gold Standard of Excellence), and the National Association of Free and Charitable Clinics (Gold Standard). Reflecting its strong financial health and commitment to accountability and transparency, OAFCC has also earned the Platinum Seal of Transparency from GuideStar and a top 4-Star rating from Charity Navigator.



Clinic History: A Community of Vision

The vision of a free clinic in Walworth County was inspired by Rev. Daniel Sanders in May 2011. Driven by a compassionate community of volunteers and supporters, the organization was officially formed receiving a 501(C)3 registered nonprofit designation. Gathering space, equipment, volunteers, and donations of cash and supplies, Open Arms Free Clinic opened its doors and treated its first patient on December 6, 2012. With growing community support, the organization has expanded in space and services to address the needs of those who live and work within Walworth County.

Centrally located in the county, the OAFCC campus is south of Elkhorn near the intersection of state highway 67 and Interstate 43. The clinic is currently housed in two buildings measuring a total of 12,000 square feet. Both facilities are owned by the clinic, with no debt.



Bronze statue by Barbara & Jay Brost



Clinic Leadership: **A Community of Dedication**

Open Arms Free Clinic is led by a volunteer board of directors composed of individuals with diverse backgrounds including, but not limited to, business, finance, healthcare, ministry, and social services. Sara Nichols, Executive Director, has led the clinic's day-to-day operations since 2012. Sara came to the clinic with a master's degree in public health and with experience in nonprofit leadership. The organization has experienced significant growth under her leadership. She represents Open Arms at the local, state, and national level, having testified before the state legislature through her involvement in the Wisconsin Association of Free & Charitable Clinics.

“It is my personal mission to provide opportunities for others in fulfilling their life purpose. Through the integrated health care we have created at Open Arms Free Clinic, we provide these opportunities with love and action for patients, volunteers, staff, and supporters. The power of integrated health care IS love. Love isn’t measured on a quality dashboard, but we know when it’s there.”

-Sara Nichols

Clinic Patients: A Community of Courage

Patient qualification criteria includes living or working in Walworth County, no health insurance or enrolled in Medicaid, and household income of 200% of the Federal Poverty Level. The geographic reach includes all of Walworth County, which is in the Southeastern region of the state. The county is primarily rural with no public transportation and the census data indicates over 100,000 residents. The primary industries are tourism, agriculture, and manufacturing. Open Arms Free Clinic serves the essential workers and their families that maintain these industries, which many employers do not offer health insurance.

Prior to the COVID-19 pandemic, there were an estimated 8,000 county residents who would meet the clinic's eligible criteria. Since opening in

2012, Open Arms has provided services for over 10,000 residents to date. At any point in time a person may become uninsured. The patient profile includes a diversity in age, race, language, and nationality. All services are free to qualifying patients, and those patients represent all 20 towns, villages, and cities in the county. Over 75% of the patients are housing insecure, 55% are female, 70% speak monolingual Spanish, and 85% are between 19-64 years old. The driving force that brings people to the clinic is the stress of chronic disease and the economic strain it has on families.

The following illustrates how an integrated approach to healthcare benefits patients with more than just the symptoms that was originally presented.

Open Arms dental clinic serves patients with special needs. A 26-year-old female with cognitive delays was seen for a dental emergency. The dentist was the first to identify that there was more to her story. As they were doing a routine blood pressure screening, the patient's blood pressure was too high, so the dentist delayed the dental treatment to come up with a better plan while gathering input from other staff. The Open Arms medical clinician was available to see the patient the very next day. While her blood pressure was still high, there were other indicators



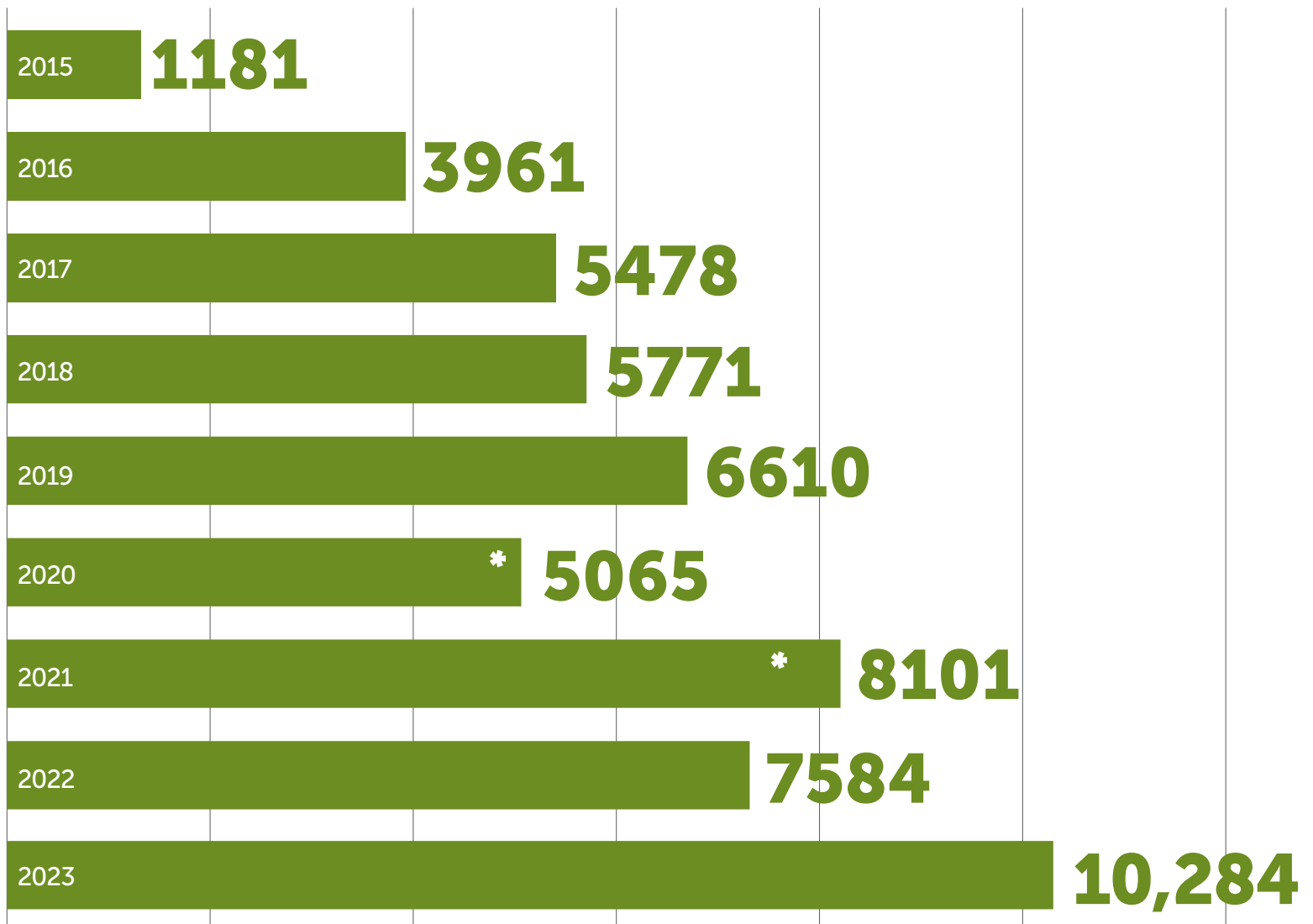
that the patient may have been in distress. The in-house behavioral health counselor was available and completed a wellness psychosocial assessment. As it turned out, the patient was being sexually abused in her home and was willing to report this to the police but didn't know how. The collaborative team contacted the necessary community partners to intervene all while serving the patient in one location - Open Arms Free Clinic. They walked alongside and supported her. Patient is now in a safe home and thriving. She has since completed 2 dental appointments and continues to maintain good oral health.

Clinic Stewardship: A Community of Support

Since opening in 2012, Open Arms Free Clinic has balanced the needs of those served with the available resources the community has provided. For the most recent audited financial report (FY 2022), O AFC received \$1.36M in grants and donations, and an additional \$1.2M in in-kind goods and services. These resources enabled O AFC to serve 2,126 patients with 7,584 completed visits with 14,084 volunteer hours and 20 paid staff. The patient visits grew even more in 2023, as noted in the graph below.



Patient Visits Each Year



*2020- COVID-19 pandemic where we were limited but stayed opened

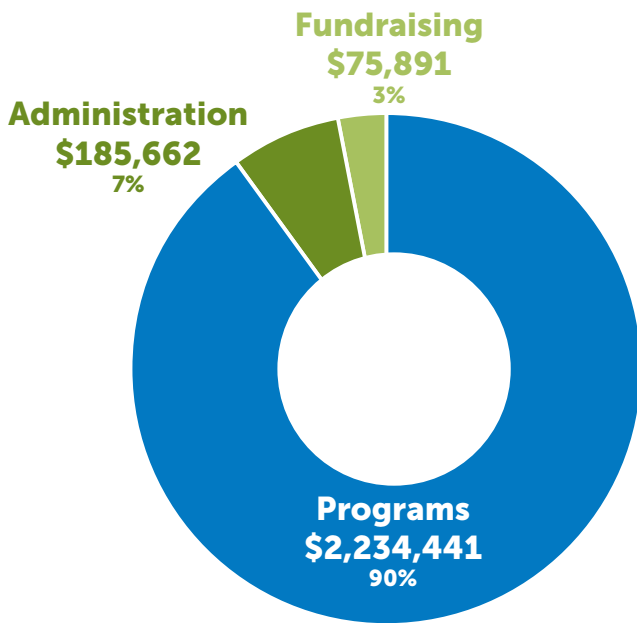
*2021- Open access COVID-19 Community Vaccine Clinics

“It is very expensive to give bad medical care to poor people in a rich country.”

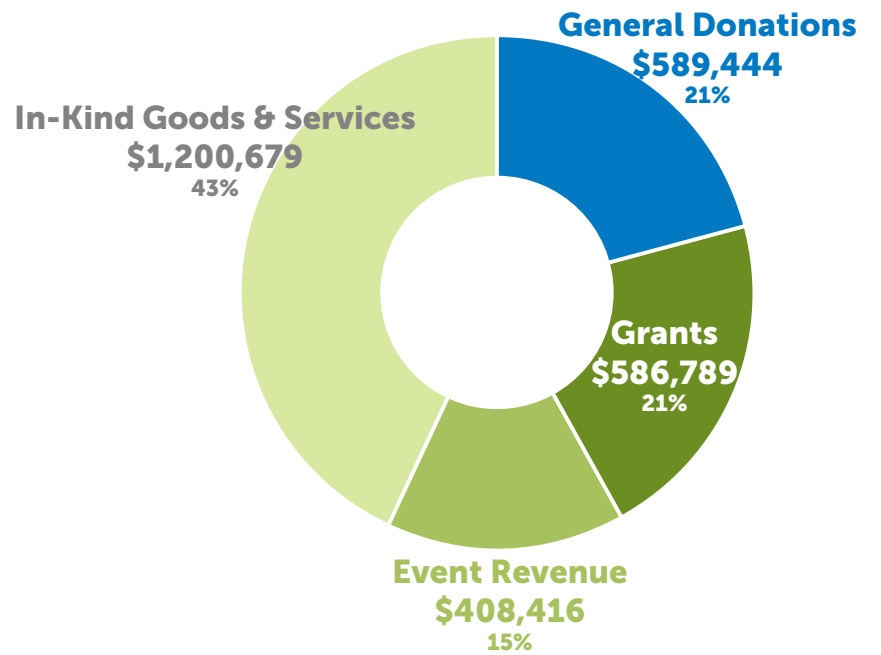
- Paul Farmer

Delivering services efficiently with its limited resources has been a hallmark of the Clinic over the years. The following illustrates the manner in which resources were allocated in 2022.

2022 Functional Expenses



Statement of Revenue 2022



A Respected Partner in the Community

"OpenArmsFreeClinicprovidescriticalservices to uninsured and underserved residents in our shared community. They are a valued partner and serve an important role in our patients' transition of care, as they offer preventive care, disease and medication management services that are often inaccessible to patients without insurance coverage. We are grateful for our strong working relationship under the highly capable leadership of Sara Nichols, her staff and large team of volunteers. We look forward to future opportunities to collaborate and continue to improve health care for residents of Walworth County and beyond as we share in the population health journey."

Robert Miller,
President Burlington/Lakeland
Medical Centers, Aurora Health Care

"Open Arms Free Clinic is a vital component of the safety net that assures Walworth County families have access to medical, dental, and behavioral health services. Without their support many individuals within our community would not have the access they require to lead healthy lives. I am grateful to have the Open Arms Free Clinic as a part of our community."

Elizabeth Aldred,
Past Director, Walworth County
Health and Human Services

"This is a needed service for the underserved people in Walworth County. O AFC delivers medical and dental treatment in a dignified, caring manner!"

Dr. Charles Puntillo,
Volunteer O AFC dentist

"The Open Arms Clinic's commitment to providing life-changing and life-saving health services and its welcoming and compassionate environment make it a beacon of hope and healing for many."

Nicole Lamoureux,
President, National Association of
Free and Charitable Clinics

"Our collaborations with O AFC have yielded innovative strategies to reach our most vulnerable and dramatic improvements to existing programs."

Carlo Nevicosi,
Director of Walworth County
Health & Human Services

"I want to thank Open Arms Free Clinic for helping our employees. We had a group of employees who became more invested in their blood pressure readings and trying to maintain good blood pressure readings. I know at least one mentioned how much better they felt when their blood pressure was within the normal range compared to when it was much higher. This group of employees are seasonal workers, and many do not have health insurance, so Open Arms really helped with the gap in their health care. Thanks again for your help in making some of our employees healthier!"

Deb Nagel, RN
Employee Health, ConAgra BirdsEye (2023)

Open Arms Free Clinic: Core Values



DIGNITY

We believe all humans have a shared intrinsic worth.



TRUST

We build strong relationships by being professional, competent, and accountable.



COLLABORATION

We resourcefully leverage our relationships to maximize opportunities for wellness.



FLEXIBILITY

We are courageously curious to best adapt to the needs of our community.



COMPASSION

We demonstrate empathy in action by sharing the human experience.

SOMEDAY SOON: A SHARED VISION

(The following was created by the clinic staff as they envisioned together what Open Arms Free Clinic might be like for a patient if the presented strategic initiatives presented are achieved.)

It's Monday of the new year, 2026, and my cheerful van driver is pulling into the Open Arms campus parking lot with a boisterous, "Here we are, my friend!" I smile at the sight of the large sign listing all the services I have been able to access at Open Arms in these past six months. To think I would have never met my life-saving therapist, Lucy, had my church not hosted the Open Arms mobile medical service on the same day of my dental emergency!

The building entryway statue has a light dusting of snow and I walk into the warm lobby greeted by my favorite volunteer, Monica. She remembers my name and offers me a cup of tea or lemon water, which always makes me feel welcomed. I relax in the most comfortable lobby chair, taking a deep breath, and listening to the lobby music that reminds me of my grandmother's kitchen

during Sunday family dinners. I hear the phones ring, and the receptionists quickly receive each caller as though they are good friends. I marvel at the beautiful woodwork in the new pharmacy area that has been moved to the center of the building. There are many helpers of different ages, I guess college and high school students, moving in the new space and I make eye contact with the pharmacist through the window. I give a little wave to the angel who has provided me with the free insulin and so much educational information about my diabetes. I believe I will outlive my grandmother with all the health and wellness support that I am receiving at Open Arms.

I appreciate the O AFC van driver being able to get me to the clinic with extra time to relax, and then just like clockwork, it's 1:00 on the dot and my nurse calls me in for my appointment. As I cross the central lobby to the medical center door, a group of college-aged students are exiting the wellness center door with a joyful buzz talking about their many internship opportunities. I hope they can

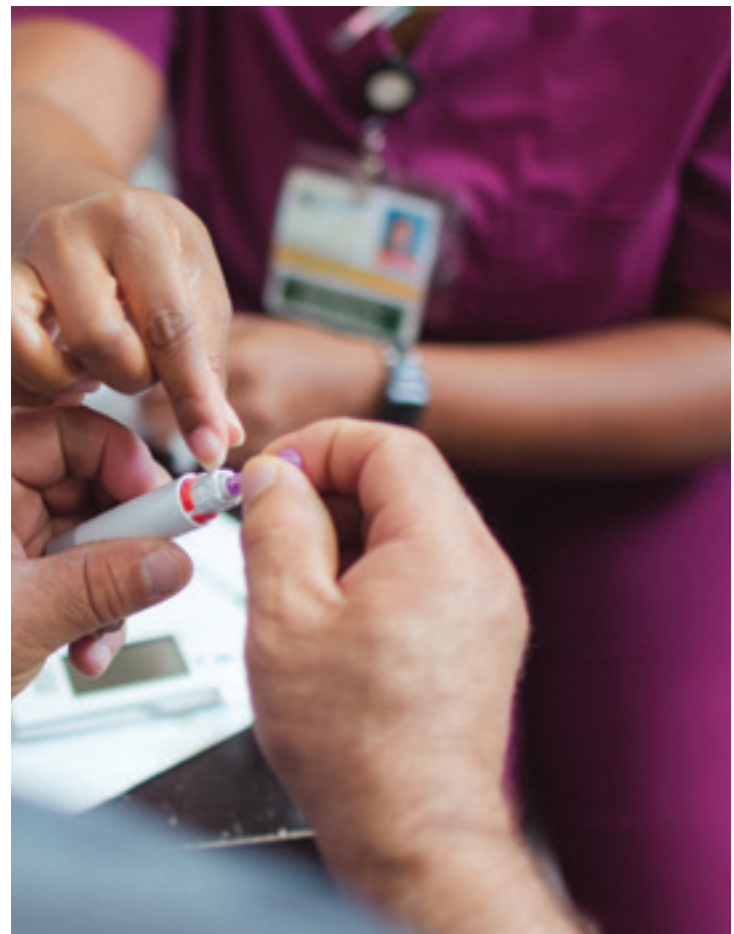


learn from Lucy and the other multi-disciplined therapists in the center. I've never seen such an expansive program that has support groups for mind, body, and spirit all in one place. I smile with the thought of my beautiful Colombian aerobic class instructor that I will be seeing with my new support group friends over in the wellness center at 2:00 today, right after my medical appointment.

My nurse brings me to the exam room, completes the regular vitals, asks me a few questions about how I'm feeling, including the sensitive questions about my stress and sadness. I don't mind that she asks me these questions at every visit since it was how I got connected to Lucy in the first place. She explains a new same-day test to check my blood for hemoglobin A1c and glucose levels and pricks my finger so the doctor will know today how I'm responding to my medicine. She is so gentle and always listens to me as though I'm the only person in her life. I feel safe and seen, and my heart feels lifted just talking with her.

After the nurse finishes, a dental hygienist pops in to check on my teeth. After I had the dental emergency where I thought my mouth was going to explode with an abscess and was so afraid with a young dental fellow working on me, I couldn't believe this kind of follow up still six months later. They took such great care of me and I'm so lucky to smile again. I appreciated the extra follow up during my medical appointments thinking I was special, and then the hygienist said she does it for all the patients in the medical office! I recognized her name, Juanita, because it's the same as my granddaughter's and she had told me this was the same nice lady who gave her sealants on her baby molars in the school this fall.

My doctor comes in and asks if I would mind if she brought in a nurse practitioner student with her. I agree with this lovely learning opportunity. I am hopeful for all the students to learn the Open Arms compassionate way of health care. We spend over



30 minutes reviewing the lab work and discussing the changes I've made with exercise and nutrition. She shares new information about diabetic care management that she read in her recent medical journal and asks my opinion about the new care options. We always leave the appointment sharing hugs and then the nurse returns to schedule my next planned care appointment. I choose to have my medication refill order delivered to my home on Thursday since I still have enough right now, and I always worry about the refrigerated medications on the 25-minute drive home. I walk out toward the wellness wing, give a little wave to Monica as I pass through the lobby, and tie up my new sneakers - the incentive I won last week after attending 3 aerobic classes.

After a lovely day of health and wellness services, the OAFK van driver returns for me. I return home feeling full of hope and blessings. After a lifetime of so many challenges, Open Arms has connected me to many caring people in the community. I'm happy I can belong here in Walworth County.



“Medicine is anything which, in proper measure, moves us toward wholeness.”

-Michele Jennae



