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Instant message

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Today's question: **How much of an impact do you think the new Volunteers in Medicine clinic will have on our community?**

I think VIM will have a wonderful and much needed impact on our community. I applaud these generous volunteers for filling the vacuum left by our country's lack of national, universal health care.

-Betsy Caulfield, Bloomington

I think it is a very important small step forward towards the ultimate goal of universal health care; but providing basic health care to everyone solely through volunteers simply is not feasible or practical; so let's not think the problem is solved with this wonderful first step.

-Robert Goldstein, Bloomington

Bloomington is a high-rent low-wage area, for those who aren't professionals, so I expect the clinic to have a lot patients!

-Ginny Jones, Bedford

VIM will add significantly to the free work already done by our professionals, but without compensation for their supplies, their support personnel and their time, will they continue? Some will, and some may drift away. At that point, government should step in and keep a reasonable service going for Monroe Country residents.

-Martin C. Spechler, Bloomington

It will be excellent! I am a nurse based in the same building, and everything I hear is good. Now, if we could just get Bush and Daniels to fully fund state and federal health care programs, so that hospitals won't keep losing money on them ...

-Marvant Duhon, Bloomington

People want to live in a place that provides health care for all its members, affirms the arts, values education, and has thriving businesses. Bloomington is becoming more and more that kind of place all the time. It's lively, it's vibrant, it's all of us!

-Michael Shermis, Bloomington

Even if this should turn out to be much less than the original hopes for it, it energizes the community and dissipates the dogmas regarding what is possible. Given the hope it generates and the generous pledges of the volunteers, we are likely to witness a paradigm shift.

-James G. Hart, Bloomington

We have two similar programs in Austin: Caritas and People's Community Clinic. These have been extremely effective in providing health care and prescriptions to people who might not otherwise receive medical care. I hope Bloomington's Volunteers in Medicine clinic is as helpful for Bloomington as our programs have been in Austin.

-Mark Carpenter, Austin, Texas (formerly of Bloomington)

I think the need is great here in Monroe County for a free medical clinic, with some 16,000 residents unable to receive adequate health care. I commend Dr. Rajih Haddawi for making his dream a reality, and to all the caring personnel who will volunteer their services.

-Donna Foose, Bloomington

I think it will have a tremendous impact. The clinic will help those who really need medical care, plus it will raise awareness about the need for affordable health care for everyone.

-Linda Harl, Ellettsville

The VIM clinic will have a tremendous impact on our community. Congratulations to all who are involved and give support.

-David Sabbagh, Bloomington

Having a medical clinic in our community that helps the people who cannot afford medical insurance and who are in need of medical treatment makes me feel pure joy and humbles me. The blessings this gives to the sick, the frightened, the volunteers and ... will bless the entire community. ...

-Dixie De Cooper, Bloomington

I think it is long overdue. If they keep it free and keep the cost of the medications low it could help a lot of people who really need it.

-TJ Malkemus, Bloomington

I think it is a wonderful thing. Community taking care of its own. Though I currently have insurance, I know many do not and this service is greatly needed. Great things happen when you give unconditionally. Thanks to all who make it possible!

-Marcia Deckard, Bloomington

I believe a huge impact! So many people lack medical coverage of any kind, so hopefully this will help to fill that void. What would be wonderful is if this would cause a domino effect throughout the state of Indiana and our nation.

-Denise Riffel, Martinsville

Without having to re-design, over many years, the national health care system, this is best. A few thousand folks need it, and will use it. The H-T should do follow-up profile stories on it. The dental care is extremely important for bad-mouthed homeless people who cannot afford pay-as-you-go dentists.

-Fred Cornwell, Bloomington

The ceremonial opening of the VIM Clinic last week was inspiring. With continued broad-based community support, the clinic will change lives by bringing much needed health care to people without insurance.

Volunteers may also find that they change as they become advocates for greater access to health care.

-Kathy Byers, Bloomington

The fine people who donate their time, effort and financial support to the clinic have an immensely positive impact on the community. Everything I've heard and read about the clinic confirms to me that Bloomington is a community of high standards and I am proud to be associated with it.

-Harry Hopkins, Nashville

The important thing is to offer REAL alternatives for those who need it; offering \$20 off an otherwise \$100 service that is worth only \$30 dollars in the first place, is its own form of quackery.

-Lee Nading, Bloomington

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