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More than 60 doctors volunteer for free clinic

Free health care to be offered to low-income patients starting in '07

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H-T Report

So far, 61 local primary care physicians have committed to volunteering at the free Volunteers in Medicine medical clinic when it opens in the spring or summer of 2007.

Dr. Eric Bannec, medical director of the new clinic, said in a prepared statement this week that the involvement of volunteer physicians — both working and retired — is a crucial component to the success of the new clinic.

“The more health-care providers involved, the better our ability to successfully provide free, quality health care,” he said.

The clinic, which will be at 333 E. Miller Drive in the space now housing Bloomington Hospital’s Community Health Access Program, is modeled after a national program that relies on medical and lay volunteers to deliver care to patients.

The clinic organizers hope to provide primary and preventive care for acute and chronic illnesses to the estimated 16,000 individuals in Monroe and Owen Counties who lack health insurance and the ability to pay for health care.

Why docs are volunteering

One of the volunteer doctors is family practice physician Rick Schilling.

Schilling said in a prepared statement that he learned from his father and grandfather — longtime Bloomington physicians Dick Schilling and Frank Tournier — that compassion and medicine go hand-in-hand.

“Becoming part of Volunteers in Medicine is just the right thing to do,” he said.

When Dr. James Ray retired two years ago after 35 years as a family practice physician, he had a hunch an opportunity would come along that would enable him to use his medical skills again.

“I look forward to volunteering in our clinic,” he said in a prepared statement. “I believe this will be very worthwhile for our community.”

Bloomington internist Caitilin Kelly said in a prepared statement that she likes the idea of combining the efforts of retired and working physicians.

“There are 46 million Americans without health insurance nationwide,” she said. “Until we solve this situation on a national level, communities can partially address the problem locally with programs like Volunteers in Medicine.”

Not just physicians

Volunteer physicians, registered nurses, nurse practitioners, social workers and lay volunteers will work four-hour shifts in the clinic, Monday through Friday.

Physicians at Southern Indiana Pediatrics have offered to provide free care in their offices for the children of adults visiting the VIM clinic.

“Our community should be proud of the wonderful endorsements and continued support from local medical groups and Bloomington Hospital for the Volunteers in Medicine initiative,” said Dr. Raj Haddawi, chairman of the board of directors, in a prepared statement.

“This is a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to truly make a difference in the lives of thousands of our neighbors who are in need of quality health care.”

More help needed

Physicians and other medical professionals and lay volunteers interested in working in the Volunteers in Medicine clinic may send an e-mail to: info@VIMMonroeCounty.org.

Is your doctor a volunteer?

Physician volunteers for Volunteers in Medicine clinic:

- Robert T. Adams
- William Anderson
- Eric Bannec
- Brad Bomba
- Bradford Bomba Jr.
- Rebecca Brewer
- Colin Chang
- Mark Ciancone
- Rebecca Judith Cohen

- Wendy Conger
- Jean Creek
- Diana Ebling
- David Esarey
- Jared Alexander Fialkow
- Beth Florini
- Heather Franklin
- James Frasure
- Jonathan Hart
- Jerry Headdy Jr.
- Thomas Hollingsworth
- Bonnie Houff
- Frank Hrisomalos
- Tom Hrisomalos
- Melissa Hullinger
- Dwain Illman
- Lisa Jerrells
- Caitilin Kelly
- Judith Klein
- Priya Kumar
- John Raymond Labban
- Lois Lambrecht
- James Laughlin
- Richard Malone
- Cristen Mazzella

- Danilo Vittorio Mazzella
- Debra McDaniel
- Lee McKinley
- Scot Moore
- Mark Moseman
- Michael Porvaznik
- Wesley Ratliff
- Larry Ratts
- James Ray
- Corinna Repetto
- Lawrence D. Rink
- Albert Ripani
- Marcus Rogers
- Elizabeth Sabga
- Rick Schilling
- Robert Schimmelpfennig Jr.
- Thomas Sharp
- Jason Simmonds
- Amy Simpson
- Owen Slaughter
- Robert Stone
- Lori Thompson
- Garry Dean Tinnes
- Jacqueline Trueblood
- Mary Van Kooten

- Peter Wallskog

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