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Free Clinic Appreciation Month

A Free clinics are an important provider of primary care services for many Ohioans. Some free clinics have transformed their practices into Patient-Centered Medical Homes. Free clinics provide for the health care needs of their patients using cost-effective strategies, such as in-kind services and donations of health care resources and time. These strategies mean that every dollar invested in free clinics brings nearly \$18 in care for patients.

Free clinics provide access to care for many who find themselves temporarily unemployed or unable to obtain employer-based health insurance.

In 2016, the fifty free clinics in Ohio provided more than 67,000 visits to 58,000 patients, keeping uninsured and underinsured Ohioans out of emergency rooms. Free clinics provide primary medical care, laboratory and diagnostic services, prescription medications, referrals and specialty care, mental health treatment and counseling, dental care, wellness screenings, and referrals to other community resources.

The Ohio Legislature, through H.B. 320 of the 130th General Assembly, designated December as Free Clinic Appreciation Month in Ohio. As part of Free Clinic Appreciation Month, the Ohio Association of Free Clinics and the Ohio Department of Health are recognizing the accomplishments of Ohio's Free Clinics through the presentation awards. Each year, awards are presented for Free Clinic of the Year, Free Clinic Physician Volunteer of the Year, Free Clinic Nurse Volunteer of the Year, and Free Clinic Dentist Volunteer of the Year.

The 2017 free clinics award recipients are:

- **FREE CLINIC OF THE YEAR:** SOAR Student Run Free Clinic in Rootstown. SOAR first opened its doors in September 2016. Not only does the clinic provide outstanding care to its community, but it also serves as an educational opportunity for medical



The Ohio Patient-Centered Primary Care Collaborative (OPCPCC) is a coalition of primary care providers, health professionals from the medical neighborhood, insurers, employers, consumer advocates, government officials and public health professionals. They are joining together to create a more effective and efficient model of healthcare delivery in Ohio. That model of care is the Patient-Centered Medical Home (PCMH).

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OPCPCC Annual Conference



The 2017 OPCPCC annual conference was held on Friday, October 27 at the Pinnacle Golf Club in Grove City, Ohio. The theme of the 2017 conference was *Overcoming Challenges in Primary Care: A Better Understanding of Value and Outcomes*. This 6th annual OPCPCC conference examined challenges in delivering comprehensive high-quality, high-value primary care and strategies to overcome those challenges.

This year's keynote speaker was Farzad Mostashari, MD, ScM, who presented, *Transition from Volume to Value: The Paradox of Primary Care Leadership*. The keynote presentation was followed by a thoughtful discussion with the reactor panel, comprised of Ohio healthcare leaders who offered varying perspectives on primary care in Ohio. A few other highly-recommended national experts will presented at the conference and the day concluded with a presentation from Shari Bolen, MD, MPH from the Better Health Partnership regarding their successful initiative aimed at eliminating disparities in diabetes care in northeast Ohio. Slides from many of the presentations are now posted on the [OPCPCC conference webpage](#).



In order to plan the best possible conference for 2018, the OPCPCC conference planners need your input. The OPCPCC Coordinating Council is asking all OPCPCC members to complete a brief [on-line survey](#) of less than eight questions. Member input from both conference attendees and those who did not attend the conference is valued.

Health Professions Workforce Programs Open for Applications

The Ohio Department of Health (ODH) Primary Care Office works to improve access to primary care, dental and mental health services by identifying underserved areas and coordinating state and federal workforce programs to assist in meeting identified community needs. Application cycles recently opened for the following programs.

The Ohio Physician Loan Repayment Program, the Ohio Dentist Loan Repayment Program, and the Ohio Dental Hygienist Loan Repayment Program assist health professionals in repaying outstanding health professions training debt through full-time or part-time practice in an underserved area for a minimum of two years. Eligible providers include primary care physicians, general or pediatric dentists, and registered dental hygienists who practice at sites that provide services to all patients regardless of their ability to pay. Up to \$120,000 may be repaid through four years of service in the programs. Applications for the state loan repayment programs will be accepted until January 16, 2018.

The Ohio State 30 J-1 Visa Waiver Program allows foreign medical graduates to remain in the United States after completing residency/fellowship training in exchange for a three-year commitment to practice full-time in an underserved area. Applications for primary care and behavioral health placements in Health Professional Shortage Areas and certain Medically Underserved Areas will be accepted until June 30, 2018. All other applications must be postmarked by March 31, 2018.

More information and applications are available at http://www.odh.ohio.gov/odhprograms/chss/pcrh_programs/recruitment/pcrecruit1.aspx

For more information, contact the Primary Care Office at (614) 644-8508 or HealthPolicy@odh.ohio.gov



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students, pharmacy students and residents from NEOMED and other local programs through the integration of volunteerism and community work in to the core training of future healthcare professionals.

- **FREE CLINIC PHYSICIAN VOLUNTEER OF THE YEAR:** Melanie Finkenbinder, MD from La Clinica Latina. Dr. Finkenbinder has a passion for helping the underprivileged, especially the immigrant population. Her fluency in Spanish allows her to connect with patients on a deeper level, fostering a level of care many would not be able to receive elsewhere. Due to her passion and hard work, La Clinica Latina is able to offer women's health services after she identified needed resources.
- **FREE CLINIC NURSE VOLUNTEER OF THE YEAR:** Susan Bell, RN from Lake County Free Clinic. Ms. Bell has volunteered with the Lake County Free Clinic since the day after it's opening in 1971. Her knowledge and flexibility is unmatched and she volunteers time as the clinic's nurse, phlebotomist, pharmacy tech, compassionate ear and ambassador.
- **FREE CLINIC DENTIST VOLUNTEER OF THE YEAR:** Alan Kiefer, DDS from Viola Startzman Clinic. Dr. Kiefer has volunteered for Viola Startzman for nearly 23 years. He began as part of the original task force who created the clinic and has since served in many roles. He currently serves as a member of the board of directors and provides dental extractions for countless patients. He has single handedly taken on the task of researching, designing, an implementing a denture program within the clinic.

For more information about free clinics in Ohio, visit the [Ohio Association of Free Clinics website](#).

Announcements and Upcoming Events

OPCPCC Activities and Events

- **Tue., Jan. 23 at 11:00 a.m.** OPCPCC Center for Provider and Patient Engagement call
- **Tue., Feb. 27 at 12:15 p.m.** OPCPCC Patient Engagement webinar

December is Free Clinic Appreciation Month in Ohio. [Learn more](#) about free clinics in Ohio.

January is Cervical Health Awareness Month. Cervical Health Awareness Month is a chance to raise awareness about how women can protect themselves from HPV (human papillomavirus) and cervical cancer. About 79 million Americans currently have HPV. Many people with HPV don't know they are infected. And each year, more than 11,000 women in the United States get cervical cancer. [Learn more](#)

February is American Heart Month. Heart disease is the leading cause of death for men and women in the United States. Every year, 1 in 4 deaths are caused by heart disease. The good news? Heart disease can often be prevented when people make healthy choices and manage their health conditions. Communities, health professionals, and families can work together to create opportunities for people to make healthier choices. [Learn more](#)

March is Colorectal Cancer Awareness Month. Colorectal cancer is the fourth most common cancer in the United States and the second leading cause of death from cancer. Colorectal cancer affects people in all racial and ethnic groups and is most often found in people age 50 and older. [Learn more](#)

If you have ideas or would like to contribute an article for an upcoming newsletter, please send your ideas to PCMH@odh.ohio.gov or call Amy Bashforth at (614) 644-9756.

OPCPCC Provider and Patient Engagement Toolbox Updates

The OPCPCC Patient Engagement Toolbox contains a wealth of information and resources to help practices engage patients in their own care. For example, the toolbox includes more than 30 resources related to self-care goals on many topics including depression, sleep, medications, and exercise. You can access these valuable resources through the [OPCPCC Toolbox website](#).

Recent additions to the toolbox include diabetes resources for providers and patients, a short video about LGBTQ cultural competency and the archived OPCPCC patient engagement webinar on the topic of self-care skills for medical professionals. The toolbox is updated monthly by the OPCPCC Center for Provider and Patient Engagement, to ensure that new resources are made available in a timely manner. Users may submit tools for consideration for inclusion in the toolbox. Be sure to visit the [toolbox](#) regularly to access new resources!

OPCPCC Membership

The Ohio Patient-Centered Primary Care Collaborative (OPCPCC) invites you to become a member of OPCPCC and join us in spreading PCMH throughout Ohio. **Membership in OPCPCC is free** and benefits include:

- Notices of conferences and networking opportunities
- Quarterly Newsletters
- Ohio PCMH Weekly updates

Please complete the [on-line membership form](#), to ensure that you will receive updates about OPCPCC and PCMH activities in Ohio. Please call (614) 644-9756 with any questions regarding membership in OPCPCC.