FROM THE HEART

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We seek to reclaim
the Biblical and historical
commitment of the people of
faith to care for the poor
who are sick. The Clinic
provides quality, affordable
bealthcare and health education to the growing number
of low income, uninsured
working people of Nashville
who do not have access to
primary medical care.

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Primary Healthcare For Those In Need



From the desk of Dr. Tom Henderson

As the Israelites were preparing to enter the Promised Land, God gave them numerous rules and regulations to govern their relationship with him and with each other. In Leviticus 25:36, God said "and if your brother becomes poor and cannot maintain himself with you, you shall maintain him; as a stranger and a sojourner, he shall live with you". In Matthew 25, our Lord Jesus also enjoined us not to overlook or ignore the needs of the hungry, the thirsty, the homeless, or the imprisoned. Obviously, compassion entails trying to meet the needs of our fellowman, whatever that need might be. We are surrounded by those in need and it matters not how productive our IRA is, if we did not extend compassion to those around us who are indigent. One might argue that health insurance is a right and I can see that is debatable. However, I will contend that access to affordable quality healthcare is a right that we should all enjoy.

As medical director of Faith Family Medical Clinic, I have often remarked that one of the greatest perks of being associated with this endeavor is that I get to meet some of the greatest people in the world; whether it is our medical staff, some of whom are paid and some of whom volunteer, and I also get to interact with our volunteer consultants and with friends and supporters. But I suppose one of the greatest jovs is getting to know our patients. Not a day passes that I do not get to visit with an individual whose story amazes me and challenges me to be a better person and to be a better servant and an ambassador for my Lord. Just last week, I had an extended visit with Mary, who presented here as a new patient. Just a few months ago, she moved here from castern North Carolina and she has a reasonably good job selling health insurance for a major company. However, because of pre-existing health problems, namely diabetes and hypertension, she finds it very difficult, and almost impossible, to obtain health insurance. Her personal life is not unlike a lot of folks we see. She had had two marriages and two divorces and only moved here because an old high school boyfriend contacted her, I suppose via the internet, and encouraged her to move here, so that they could see each other and perhaps rekindle their relationship. All of her kids are grown and the only one that is truly dependent on her now (and this is the amazing part of the story) is a 20+ year old stepdaughter, the daughter of her second husband, who is autistic and mentally retarded and Mary is caring for her even though she is not her blood relative. Mary, during her visit here, was intermittently tearful for, I think, a number of different reasons. I think she was initially embarrassed to be here because she was being forced to resort to a "charity clinic" for her medical care. As our visit progressed, I think it became more tears of relief and gratitude. She had been without her diabetic medications, including insulin, for one to two weeks and was a disaster waiting to happen. What a joy it was to interact with her and to be in a position to extend a helping hand to a person of compassion. Life is indeed, at times, a struggle but we are all in this together and I commend all our friends and supporters and praise God for vour involvement.

In Him, Dr. Tom

January 2, 2004

To the Board, Staff, Volunteers and Physicians with Faith Family: From. Edith Costanza

I want to begin this letter by thanking you for health care as I am currently without insurance. For 18 years I owned my own business and was insured for the last five of those years by Tenn Care. Because I took a full-time job over this past year, I lost my Tenn Care. When our training contract with the Department of Justice was dissolved due to budget cuts, our office provider, Caritan, did not Cobra us because we were such a small office. I have Crohn's disease and developed an abscess necessitating outpatient surgery. Thus, I was referred to your agency.



I write, as I said, to thank you for the care and compassion and the willingness of a group of medical personnel who are willing to move beyond money issues into the greater good of providing health care to those in need. My main thrust is to ask those of you with your connections in the health and pharmaceutical community to bring these issues to the powers that be and attempt to make the changes needed by our state an by our country so that all citizens can access affordable health care. I utterly hate to be in this position of being pushed to the wall around needing health care and not having the money needed for services. It is very humbling to be unemployed and I am praying to find a decent training job asap. However, currently I need your services and just wanted you to know how much I appreciate the fact that you are available to people in my circumstances.

> Sincerely, Edith Constanza

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Volunteers Make the Difference

Tina Cohen has been a volunteer at Faith Family Medical Clinic since October. Her bright smile welcomes patients at the front desk each Thursday and Friday. Tina says that "The Clinic Touched Her Heart" when she became a patient and, because she wanted to have a role in helping others who need primary healthcare and are uninsured, she began volunteering.

Tina works at a local restaurant five days each week, but has no health insurance. She and her two children (who are not eligible for Tenn Care) had been without healthcare until they found the clinic. Tina was often tired and after visiting the clinic it was determined that she is anemic. She is now on medication but continues to have her blood tested at the clinic each week. In Tina's words. "We don't know what we would have done without the clinic. Dr. Henderson and Elizabeth Netsch are such a blessing."

Tina and her family are among the 6,800 patients who currently depend on Faith Family Medical Clinic for their healthcare.

