

# **FERN CARE FREE CLINIC, INC.**

751 E. 9 Mile Road, Suite 2, Ferndale, MI 48220

Appointments and Information: 248-677-2273 Fax: 248-291-6731

[www.ferncare.org](http://www.ferncare.org) [info@ferncare.org](mailto:info@ferncare.org)



**2019 - 2020 Annual Report**

**July 1, 2019 - June 30, 2020**

**Providing Free Health Care to the Uninsured**

Submitted by Dan Martin  
Executive Director

**Table of Contents**

Introduction	Page 3
Board of Directors	Page 4
Financial Review	Page 5
Highlights since June 1, 2019	Page 6
Fundraising	Page 7
Community Outreach	Page 8
Medical Equipment / Medication Collection	Page 9
Clinic Statistics	Page 10 - 11
Summary and Future Plans	Page 12

## ***Introduction***

The past year has been anything but boring for FernCare Free Clinic, Inc. In its 12<sup>th</sup> year of operation FernCare has experienced leadership change, pandemic striking our country, various restrictions on operations and significant financial challenges. As always the volunteers and staff at FernCare has risen to the challenge and I a please to report that at the end of the 2020 fiscal year, FernCare continues to thrive.

FernCare was created from a group of community activists who identified the growing need to help people who did not have equal access to the healthcare system due to lack of insurance. Under the umbrella of the community organization Citizens for a Fair Ferndale, FernCare was born with the mission of providing medical care to anyone regardless of race, creed, sexual orientation, gender identity, citizenship status or income. Simply put, as long as there is no insurance coverage FernCare sees anyone between the ages of 19 - 64.

Volunteers with FernCare saw its first patients on August 7<sup>th</sup>, 2010 at the Kulick Community Center in Ferndale, MI. Fast forward to 2020 and 2 locations later, FernCare is making a bigger impact than ever, having provided direct care to over 3,000 patients since its inception.

FernCare's programming this year has been adjusted to address community health conditions, including the COV pandemic. The look of our operation has changed radically but the quality of care provided, largely form a volunteer team, and has remained high quality and effective in serving the most vulnerable in our community.

Our volunteer base has remained present sand strong, our community partners continue to stand with us and FernCare is strongly poised to meet its mission or creating healthcare for all as long as the community needs are present.

Thank You,

Dan Martin

Executive Director

**Board of Directors**

***Executive Committee***

Rudy Serra, Board President

Brian Wohl, Secretary

Barbara Winter, Vice President

Sheryl Stubblefield, Treasurer

***Board of Directors***

Mindy Cupples

Randall (Randy) Caballero

Irenita Goedert

Dennis Whittie

Kristie Lee

***Employees***

Dan Martin, Executive Director

Edie Harold, Bookkeeper

Pamalar Burnette, Clinic Manager

Cindy Willcock, Fundraising

Carolyn Barr, Office Manager

***Liaisons to the Board and Board Emerita***

G. Christopher Popp, Medical Director

Ann Heler

Kate Baker

John Sterritt

***Honorary Board Member***

Melanie Piana, Mayor of Ferndale

## **Financial Review**

The Board of Directors takes the responsibilities of patientcare very seriously – while working to maintain a solid financial position. FernCare uses a financial planning and analysis process that keeps the Board aware of cost drivers and allows longer term decisions to be based on known financial factors.

The clinic derives funds from various sources, including grants, local fundraisers, larger community events and individual donations. The largest fund raiser of the year is the annual dinner, which unfortunately had to be rescheduled this year due to the COVID Pandemic. In fact, most of the event fund raisers for this fiscal period have had to be cancelled. While it has been challenging FernCare has been supported and been able to continue operations through government assistance programs specific to cover COVID losses and increased individual donations in response to direct appeals.

FernCare relies heavily on in kind donations to help provide care. FernCare has received over \$287,000 in in kind revenue from pharmaceuticals to labor to medical supplies. The generous in kind donations further contribute to our financial and operational stability.

FernCare currently carries assets valued at \$342,829. The 990-ES tax filing is available on FernCare's web site [www.ferncare.org](http://www.ferncare.org). FernCare is a registered 501©(3) non-profit Michigan Class C corporation. FernCare has now completed two independent annual audits and is now commencing its third.

## Highlights

### Board of Directors

- Brian Wahl, Board Secretary retired from the Board of Directors after 10 years of service. Matt Nowaceck also left the Board after his second tour of duty as Board Treasurer.
- Sheryl Stubblefield, Kristie Lee and Melinda Cupples all joined the Board this program year. Sheryl will be serving as Board Treasurer.
- On April 1<sup>st</sup>, 2020 Ann Heler, FernCare's former Board President and co-founder, retired as Executive Director. In March 2020 the Board hired Dan Martin as its second Executive Director.

### Clinic Operations

- In 2019 FernCare implemented the use of electronic medical records through Athena Health. Implementation and proficiency continued to progress into this program year.
- The COVID pandemic had a significant impact on clinic operations. In March 2020 the clinic implemented pandemic protocols requiring social distancing, screening procedures and use of personal protection equipment. Staff was sent to work from home with the exception of a small window for patients to pick up prescription refills. Enrolment assistance was suspended and the clinic closed to new patients. For the duration of the pandemic FernCare continued to hold clinic hours for existing patients and extended drug refills to 60 days.

### Collaborations

- FernCare continued its affiliations with teaching institutions during this fiscal year. Medical students from Michigan State University, Ascension Family Practices (the public health rotation) and the School of Pharmacy at Wayne State University all had students matriculate through the clinic.
- Basha Imaging continues to partner with FernCare for radiology services. They have been a partner to FernCare since its beginning, and offers services at a very generous rates.
- Physicians and clinics partner with FernCare supplementing services that are not offered here:
  - Hazel Park Urgent Care has handled all of the COVID Testing referred by FernCare for free.
  - Dr. Randolph Kaplan, Podiatrist, has partnered with FernCare since 2008.
  - DermHouse, a dermatology free clinic operated by Dr. Robert Singer.
  - Affirmations, the LGBTQA Community Center in Ferndale, has partnered with FernCare for HIV / STD testing and case management.
- FernCare is a member of the following organizations and collaborate with National Association of Free Clinics, Michigan Association of free Clinics, Ferndale Regional Chamber of Commerce and the Madison Heights /Hazel Park Chamber of Commerce.

## Fundraising

Fundraising was especially challenging this year due to the COVID Outbreak. The dinner, the largest fundraiser of the year, was rescheduled to December 2020, outside of the present fiscal year. All summer fundraisers, accounting for \$10,000 in revenue, were cancelled as well. Individual donations were higher for the year, but not enough to make up for the significant revenue loss.

Fortunately, two COVID relief programs were of significant assistance to FernCare. The Small Business Administration's Payroll protection Loan was awarded to FernCare in April. This is a forgivable loan designed to stabilize payroll funds and keep people employed. In late June FernCare also received a COVID Stabilization Grant that assisted in filling the fundraising hole.

The fundraising committee creatively engaged to find fundraising opportunities in the new environment. Their accomplishments include:

- Hiring Cindy Willcock to work on the annual dinner and other fundraising efforts. Cindy has also been taking the minutes for Board Meetings.
- Proposed 3 new fund raisers that can be conducted with low risk for exposure and ease of facilitation. These fundraisers will be implemented in the next fiscal year.

**FernCare #tbt**

**FernCare First Annual Dinner**  
April 2, 2009  
6:00 – 9:00 pm

Royal Oak Elks Lodge  
2401 E. 4<sup>th</sup> at I-75 Service Drive

Help Us Open The Clinic Doors!

[www.ferncare.org/annual-dinner](http://www.ferncare.org/annual-dinner)

**Recognition Awards**

- Stephanie Loveless
- Citizens for a Fair Ferndale
- Fanning Howey  
*Jim Moll, Jim Mumby,  
Alivia Stalnaker, Anthony Sikora*
- Cathy Malone
- Michael Lary and Cori Sutton
- Jeffrey McIntyre

**FernCare Free Clinic, Inc. Board of Directors**

Ann Heler Board President  
John Sterritt Recording Secretary, Historian  
Bob Babut Treasurer

Kate Baker Derek Smierka  
Denise Lillvis Rene Weeks  
Matt Nowaczok Joann Willcock  
Andrea Nelson Dick Willcock

**Honorary Board Members**

Craig Covey, Mayor Stephanie Loveless  
Fat Bruner James, CFF Bob Porter

## Community Outreach

FernCare continues to participate in community events, setting up information tables and engaging the public where they gather. In addition, FernCare continues to be a major resource of community information on how and where to access the social safety net within Oakland County and beyond. Carolyn Barr, office manager handles over 4,000 calls per year providing assistance. In addition to the phone inquiries:

- FernCare provides a resource library for patients featuring assistance on over 20 topics, from food pantries to housing assistance.
- The Little Free Library continues to operate providing free books to the community.

In 2019-2020 FernCare began escalating its social media outreach by posting twice a week on average so far doubling the number of people reached online. The posts come in two formats, one promoting highlights of volunteers (The Volunteer Spotlight) and one focusing on informational content and / or fundraising solicitations. We have also started to incorporate video into our social media posting with the assistance of Board member Kristie Lee.



The graphic features a green background with a decorative border of various green leaves and plants. In the top left corner is the FernCare logo, which consists of a circular emblem containing a caduceus (a staff with two snakes) and the word "FERNCARE" above it. To the right of the logo, the words "Volunteer Spotlight" are written in a large, green, sans-serif font. Below this title are three square portrait photographs of volunteers. Underneath each photo is the name of the volunteer in a green, sans-serif font. At the bottom of the graphic, the website address "www.ferncare.org/annual-dinner" is displayed in the same green font.

**Volunteer Spotlight**

Sheryl Stubblefield      Melinda Cupples      Dennis Whittie

[www.ferncare.org/annual-dinner](http://www.ferncare.org/annual-dinner)

## No Longer Used Medicine / Medical Equipment Collection Sites

When FernCare receives donations of no longer used medical equipment, our first priority is to donate them to our patients for use. If we do not have an immediate use for the equipment, we partner with area organizations to make sure the donations make it to those who need it. The following partners were engaged with us in managing donations of new / used medical equipment:

- World Medical Relief is a collection site for no longer used medical equipment. Most of our medical equipment goes to this agency. We did 28 drop offs this year to World Medical Relief. Justin Teays is a volunteer who continues to make these deliveries for us,
- Dr. Howard Crane is a local optometrist and Lions Club Member, accepts all of our no longer used glasses hearing aids and supplies. In this fiscal year we have donated over 50 pairs of glasses to Dr. Crane.
- The Metropolitan Detroit Diaper Bank distributes adult diapers throughout Detroit. They picked up donated adult diapers 10 times last year.

It is important to note that COVID has dramatically changed the equipment donation program that we run. From March 2020 through May 2020 FernCare took n no donations of medical equipment. FernCare resumed taking these donation again in July 2020. FernCare also permanently stopped taking medications and pill bottles over COVID-19 concerns.



*Clinic Highlights*

In the last fiscal year, FernCare had...



**Range of Services:**

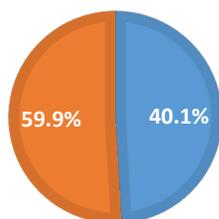
Primary Care	Generic and Over the Counter Medications
Lab Testing	Wellness Coaching
Health Resource Information Line	Podiatry, Acupuncture, Chiropractic Care through Referral

# Who Are Our Patients?

## 2019-2020 Patient Demographics

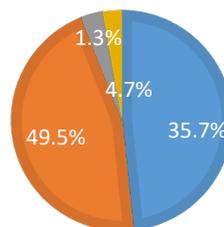
### GENDER

Male Female



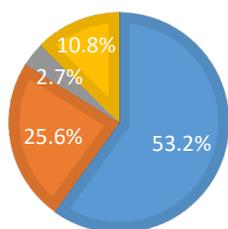
### ETHNICITY

Caucasian African American  
Hispanic Asian



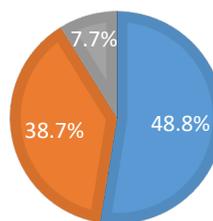
### MARITAL STATUS

Single Married  
Partnered Divorced



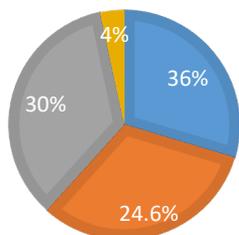
### INCOME CATEGORY

Under \$16,000 \$16,000 - \$32,000  
Over \$32,000



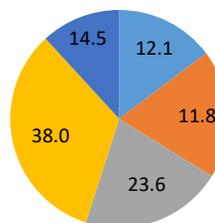
### EMPLOYMENT STATUS

Part Time Full Time  
Unemployed Retired



### AGE

19-29 30-39 40-49 50-59 60-65



## **Future Plans**

Healthcare delivery in the United States has changed dramatically over the past 6 months, and that applies to free clinics as well. FernCare's future plans are very much shaped by the environmental reality we are facing. Future plans include:

- Implementation of Telehealth to handle routine, follow up care for patients virtually. Providers will be able to work remotely and the clinic will adjust lab hours for patients to come in and have requested testing completed before the visit. Ultimately, Telehealth will increase capacity up to 40%.
- FernCare will continue to increase business relationships in other geographic areas where we draw patients from to diversify our funding base. Specifically, increased outreach to nearby municipalities and the City of Detroit.
- Continue to increase our social media presence to use as a source of volunteer recruitment and fundraising.
- Pivot the annual development plan to accommodate the new reality of fund raising, emphasizing safety for event participants.
- Technology review to update what we have available at the clinic and improve our versatility in supporting initiatives more broadly with IT support.
- Examining expanded care models to include behavioral health either internally in the clinic or through community partners.

## **Summary**

In summary, this past year has highlighted the creativity, flexibility and commitment of volunteers and staff. It has also demonstrated that there has never been a greater need for organizations like FernCare. FernCare's strength has always been the grass roots foundation of its support, and the efficacy of that model came forth this year.

As we look forward to the next year, the commitment of the organization for the care of basic human needs, like healthcare, will continue to be the priority.