**Annual Report 2021**

**as submitted by the Board President**

**Prepared for the 18th Annual Meeting and Conference May 21, 2021**

**Updated FCOM history**

Free Clinics of Michigan (FCOM) celebrates two anniversaries this year. The group was founded in *1996* as Michigan’s official organization representing Michigan’s free clinics to the Free Clinics of the Great Lakes Region (FCGLR) Association. **We are 25 years old this year.** The official Articles of Incorporation and therefore the official legal creation of FCOM were filed in December, *2006* and the non-profit status was granted in May, *2008*. And lastly, I have found documents as far back as *2003* indicating yearly meetings of the members with board meetings two or three times a year. This is our **18th year of FCOM convening an annual meeting and get-together.** I am continuously looking through old documents to nail down dates, former board members and annual meeting agendas. This may well change as I continue the search.

**Snapshot of FCOM**

We currently have **8 people on the Board**. If you are interested, contact me know or put it in the chat on this ZOOM.

Our only **income** currently is from membership fees.

We belong to the National Association of Free and Charitable Clinics, the national advocacy assoication. I represent Michigan on the State Manager/Board President NAFC subcommittee.

**Clinics**

As of May 1st this year, we have **46 clinics** offering direct service medical care and **3 referral and resource center**s that provide information on low cost if not outright free healthcare services and do not provide direct healthcare services.

We have **29 official member clinics** (63% of the clinic roster!) with one of those clinics operating at two different sites. This is the largest number of paid memberships since 2012.

Just a reminder, there are more than 46 free clinics and clinics in Michigan that offer services at a minimal cost. I have not received any permission to add them to our list or send any communication to them BUT they are listed on the “Find A Clinic” on the website. If you know of a clinic in your area, please send me their contact information and I will contact them.

**Year in Review**

1-The MI **HHS 2020 – 2021 appropriation was $400,000**. This has meant an $11,111 state grant to the 35 clinics that successfully applied. The appropriation for 2021 – 2022 is also $400,000 at this moment. I am watching the Health Policy and Appropriations House and Senate committees to make sure there are no negative changes to this.

2-We are actively involved in the **PA 136/PA 386 electronic script issue**. The Board of Pharmacy and LARA have at committee level approved the language for paper scripting. We are waiting for the public comment and final approval. Christine Rainey, DPharm, a longtime volunteer at FernCare Free Clinic is watching this for us and her draft language was incorporated into the bill.

3- Last December was the FIRST time the state recognized our work in a **proclamation.** The proclamation was recognizing the long standing BCBSM Safety Net conference and free clinics were honored through that.

**Clinics Adaptations to COVID-19**

The majority of our clinics were open with specific safety precautions, some physically closed but were available by phone, telehealth and text to patients.

8 clinics applied and approved or are currently administering COVID vaccines.

ALL of the clinics incurred unexpected costs due to COVID….telehealth, PPE equipment, IT upgrades or new equipment at the very least. SOME clinics received monies from their counties from the CARES ACT and some wrote successful grants to cover portions of that cost.

NO clinic closed permanently due to anything related to COVID.

**Member Relations**

1-You have received **a monthly update from** the office since May last year.

2- You have received a number of **emails regarding issues and information** I felt would be helpful to pass along in addition to the monthly updates. Summation of liability issues, a local advocacy “how to” packet, NAFC updates, notices of grants or information as examples.

3- We coordinated with **NAFC** for the clinic data survey. Clinics that belonged to both us and NAFC got to use their NAFC clinic data survey as ours….they just sent a copy over to Jeff Compagner, Board Secretary.

4- We held two **ZOOM information meetings**: advocacy for clinics and information regarding the Quality Standards. There will be more of these in the coming year.

5-We have re instituted the **regional meetings.**

6- We are voting today on a new possible membership requirement: a **Quality Standards** survey done yearly in addition to the Clinic Data Survey. The Quality Standards is a thumbnail sketch of the each clinic’s effort to maintain a Best Practice clinic by level of service, financial transparency, Board and administrative responsibilities. Dr. Barbara Saul is our Quality Standards Ambassador and has offered help any clinic with any aspect of the QS document. I will put her email address in Chat following this report.

**Website**

1- The **website** was updated. This was a major overhaul coordinated by Jeff Compagner, Board Member and ED for Holland Free Clinic and Emerson Ross, Admin at Holland Free Clinic.

2- The **Find A Clinic tab on our website** has every free clinic we can find period. We have 1300+ hits on that website page MONTHLY.

3- Carolyn Barr, Board President administrative assistant **answers all of the contact page questions/requests daily.**

**Board work**

1-We continually **update and strengthen the Board**. We completed the first of yearly internal Board of Directors Evaluation. Information from this will strengthen the Board in terms of internal communication, new member training and Board tasks.

2-We continuously **review the By-Laws**. We are becoming much more active as a Michigan healthcare oversite organization and want the organization’s paperwork to reflect that.

3- We have completed a significant # of 2020 – 2021 **Strategic Plan goals**. Next year’s Strategic Plan and goals will be updated at the Board meeting following this meeting. June 9, 1 – 2:30 virtual. Remember any member can attend the Board meetings. Christine now sends the ZOOM log in for all Board meetings to all members.

**NAFC major projects for 2021 – 2022**

As members of NAFC, FCOM supports their 5 major advocacy projects for 2021 – 2022:

 1- Legislative language/action to improve access to the uninsured and underinsured to affordable, accessible and portable health insurance

2-Include free and charitable clinics and charitable pharmacies/dispensaries in the 340B drug pricing program. (Working on this for 10 years)

3-Expansion of the FTCS to include entity coverage. (Working on this for 7 years)

4-Protect the current funding levels for both the NurseCorps Loan Repayment program and the National Health Care Service Corps and continue to count volunteer free clinic work in debt repayment reduction amounts

5- The creation of a Medical Underserved Population and Health Professional Shortage areas automatic designation for Free and Charitable Clinics and Pharmacies. (Working on this for 4 years)

**Looking Forward**

1- As COVID draws down, we will begin to look for an “official” traditional office. Currently, Carolyn and I are working out of our homes.

2- We want to expand board membership with at least two more members.

3- We begin to reach out for grants as a “pass through” to eligible clinics, to support an Executive Director and to establish an “official” office.

4- We will continue searching for free clinics across the state.

5- We continue to offer clinic assistance in terms of strengthening the clinics internal organization and sustainability, and outreach in their communities.

**Recognizing outstanding members and supporters within FCOM**

1. **NAFC Map to Health Equity Project** **Christine Plummer**, Clinic Manager at City On A Hill Medical clinics and FCOM Board member and **Justin Bro**x, ED at Dr. Gary Burnstein Community Health Clinic and FCOM Board member continued their work with this national project. Both are involved in the beta testing of the NAFC QS survey.
2. **Jeff Compagner**, **Emerson Ross**, website total reconstruction work.
3. **Carolyn Barr** website contact page follow-up
4. **Christine Rainey** PA 134/386 advocacy
5. **Dr. Barb Saul** QA ambassador to clinics.
6. **Karen Kaaschoek** – BCBSM Safety Net conference planning team. Karen continues to sit on our Board but now as the FQHC representative. Catherine’s Health Clinic, so long a free clinic is now a full FQHC. Karen is one of the original founders and board members of FCOM.
7. **Jody Buttery,** Executive Director, Love In Action Health and Dental Clinic and FCOM Board member and now **Christine Plummer,** Clinic Manager of City On A Hill health clinic and FCOM Treasurer as managers of the ZOOM virtual conferencing. The cost of ZOOM was and is being donated by their respective clinics
8. **Joyce Hardy, RN**. Retired as ED and Program Officer from Helen M. Nickless Free Clinic in March. One of the original founders of FCOM. She is our first person to become a Board Emeritus to the Board of Directors. We do not want to lose all of her free clinic history.
9. **St**. **Francis Cabrini Clinic** celebrates it’s 71st birthday in continuous operation as a free clinic. Oldest free clinic in Michigan and one of the oldest free clinics in the country.

Congratulations!

All will receive a Certificate of Recognition

Believe you are a vital part of the healthcare fabric of Michigan. In the words of NAFC Board President and CEO, Nicole Lameroux who is with us this morning– “we are the safety net below America’s safety net”….. be proud.

 It has been my pleasure to serve again as your FCOM Board President.

Thank you.

Ann Heler