The Colorado Health Foundation™

Breaking the Cycle of Poverty Through Healthcare

If you're already familiar with Clinica Family Health in Colorado, then you know that healthcare can be more than just doctor appointments and prescriptions. Clinica Family Health has been making a positive impact on the community since 1977 and has been showing where compassion and creativity can help break the cycle of poverty.

A Visionary Beginning

Clinica Family Health didn't start as a giant healthcare system. It began as a grassroots initiative, led by Alicia Sanchez, a single mother of seven children who lived in Lafayette, Colorado. Diagnosed with Lupus, Alicia took many trips to the hospital for treatments, so she knew, firsthand, the importance of accessible healthcare. She also made it her mission to help others get to their doctor's appointments by providing transportation with her car. Together, with her daughter, Eleanor Montour, Alicia brought Clinica Family Health to life.

A Place for Everyone

Clinica was never meant to serve a specific population. It was designed to be a place where anyone, regardless of their background, race, or income, could access healthcare without financial barriers. Money would never stand in the way of providing care to those in need.

Initially, Clinica focused on managing chronic disease, but over the years, it expanded its services to include a complete range of primary care, including minor surgical procedures, dental care and pharmacy services. The goal was to create a one-stop shop for healthcare, ensuring that every aspect of a patient's well-being was addressed all under one roof.

Building Trust With Team-Based Care

What makes Clinica truly special is its holistic approach to healthcare. They combine various services seamlessly, recognizing that health isn't just about physical well-being. For instance, if a patient visits their primary care doctor and presents symptoms of depression or anxiety, Clinica doesn't send them elsewhere for therapy. They have a dedicated team of therapists who specialize in behavioral health right there. This gives a sense of community, creates a more personal experience for patients and families, and builds trusting relationships between the medical team and the patient. Clinica teams have discovered that trust leads to better outcomes for the patient because they’re more comfortable sharing other issues they may be dealing with, like mental health or violence in the home. Most importantly, the patient is more engaged with their healthcare goals.

A Creative Space

Clinica Family Health is also a creative space. They've been at the forefront of modernizing healthcare. One example of that is how they introduced same-day scheduling to reduce wait times for appointments. They asked themselves, “Why should someone wait for weeks when they could be seen the same day, or the very next day, while they're not feeling well?”

Breaking the Cycle of Poverty

Clinica brings other elements to improve the lives of their patients. They partner with community food share programs, participate in food distributions, and have little pop-up libraries in their waiting rooms where kids can get their library cards and books (and sometimes given prescriptions to read). Clinica sites have a program called Reach Out and Read where brand new books are provided to families at every well-visit between six months and five years. This supports the importance of reading and early learning in the home – helping break the cycle of poverty.

On the Horizon

Clinica Family Health is continuously expanding its services and facilities to meet the growing demand for quality healthcare. Their innovative spirit drives them to explore new ways of delivering care, making it more accessible and personalized.

Visit their website to learn more about their services, locations across the state, and the difference they're making in the lives of so many.

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