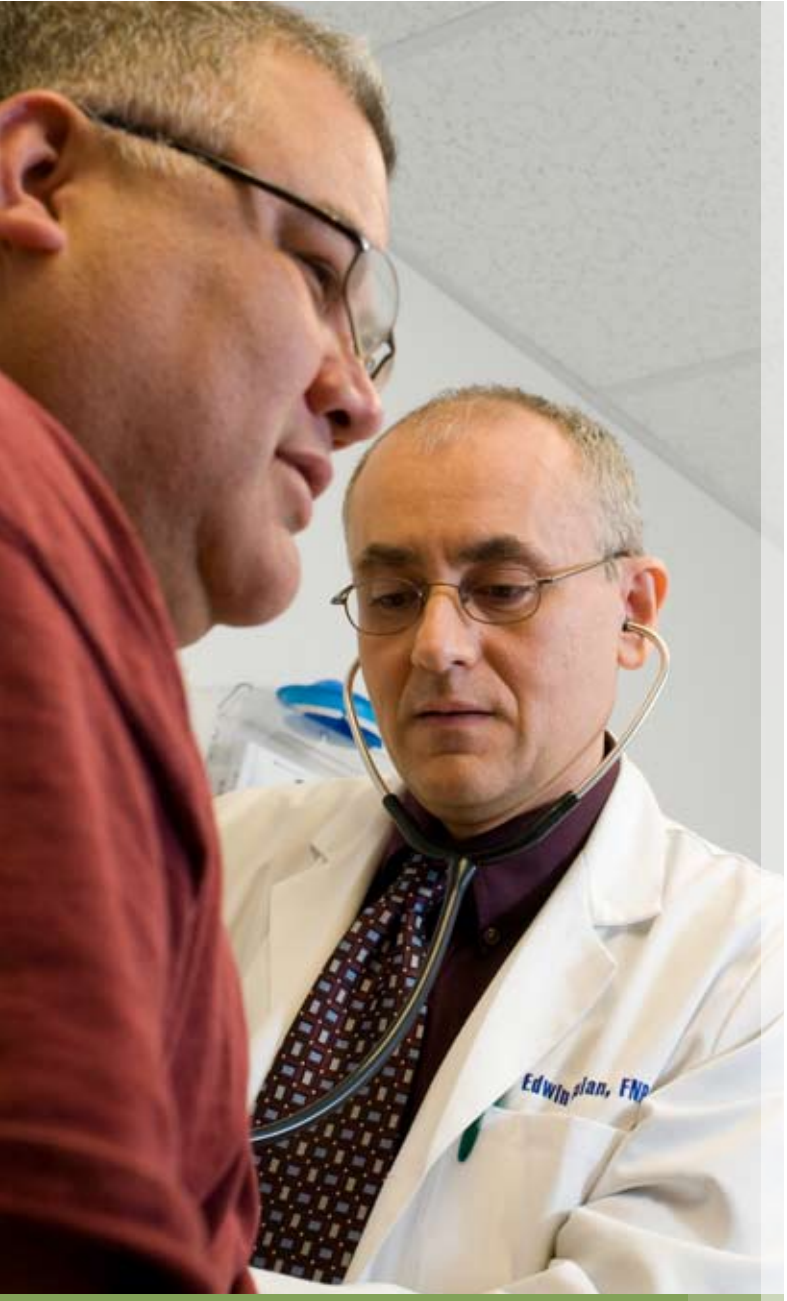


Because of the high rate of diabetes, every Thursday is designated for diabetic care. In order to improve services for diabetic patients, the clinic has medical providers, a nurse educator, a dietitian, physical therapist and a nurse practitioner specialist in diabetic foot care on hand for exams and consultation.

SAFETY NET

Silver City Health Center is a provider of primary medical care for poor and uninsured residents of Kansas City, Kansas.

The clinic serves more than 2,200 children and adults a year for close to 3,600 annual health visits. Silver City's patients are representative of the challenges that affect the community – low income, limited education and largely uninsured. These factors contribute to the community's high rate of chronic illnesses, such as diabetes, hypertension, cardiovascular disease and asthma.

Silver City, which received a $100,000 grant, provides a range of primary care and prevention services – from well baby/well child care to urgent care, vision and hearing screenings, physicals, immunizations, medication management, physical therapy and more. Silver City operates the only diabetic foot care clinic for safety net patients in Wyandotte and Johnson counties in Kansas.

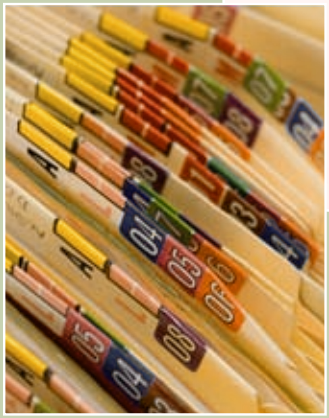
Jesus, an Hispanic man in his 40s, is representative of many of the clinic's patients. He has high blood pressure and a family history of heart disease and diabetes. He has been experiencing shortness of breath, but hasn't taken blood pressure medicine for several months because of the cost. Ed Galan, one of the clinic's family nurse practitioners, examines Jesus, notes his high blood pressure and weight gain, and prescribes medication. He schedules Jesus for another health visit in two weeks, during which time he'll see the clinic's dietitian and a nurse educator.

It's a multidisciplinary approach to health care that goes beyond treating acute conditions, and an approach Galan says is necessary to improve the overall health of low-income residents in this community.

In 2007, the REACH Foundation funded an array of programs and health centers that aim to improve the health of low-income and vulnerable individuals.

SAFETY NET FUNDING

For hundreds of thousands of Kansas and Missouri residents, good health is hard to come by. Following national trends, the number of uninsured and medically underserved individuals in the foundation's service area has risen, placing greater importance on supporting a viable health care safety net and basic access to health care. Community health centers, public health departments, federally qualified health centers and multiple other health providers are being called upon to meet the complex health care needs of populations that have more chronic health issues, fewer resources and less access to comprehensive health care.



Every Thursday, Silver City has a nurse educator, nutritionist, physical therapist and diabetic foot care specialist on hand to see the clinic's patients with diabetes and other chronic diseases.

In 2007, the REACH Foundation funded an array of programs that aimed to improve health for low-income and vulnerable individuals, from infants to adolescents to adults and seniors. Projects that received funding demonstrated measurable commitments to reducing barriers to care, addressing health disparities among minority and low-income populations, overcoming language and cultural barriers, and adjusting operations for better patient-centered care. The Foundation supported service expansions, referral networks that link patients to donated specialty care, training for primary medical providers and efforts to direct patients to the most appropriate source of care.

Over the course of the year, we also explored with safety net clinics and nonprofit health organizations the benefits of the medical home model, and launched a new initiative with our partners' help to assist safety net clinics in adopting key components of the model.

The clinic's health providers talk with patients about their medications in order to improve their compliance. When resources are tight, medications are among the first necessities patients forgo, so the clinic helps connect patients with prescription assistance programs.