

Seeking Investment for Health Care Access and Equity

IN THE UTICA/
MOHAWK VALLEY
REGION



Upstate Family Health Center (UFHC) is a high-performing federally qualified health center serving Utica and the Mohawk Valley. Operating successfully for more than six years, UFHC strives to deliver the best long-term health outcomes to patients who face great challenges.



*Upstate Family
Health Center, Inc.*

*Building a
Healthy Community*

Vital Care for the Most Vulnerable

UFHC provides access to primary care, pharmacy, and wraparound services for Oneida and Herkimer County residents who do not have access to health care, particularly the 31.7 percent of service area residents living at or below 200 percent of the Federal Poverty Level. Our community has high rates of uninsured residents, minorities, and non-English-speaking refugees. Those seeking health care face multiple barriers to access, including a shortage of providers willing to care for the uninsured/publicly insured, overall lack of public transportation in rural areas, and diverse cultures and languages.

In addition, major health disparities exist in the community, including high rates of diabetes, cardiovascular disease, cancer, asthma, poor prenatal outcomes, and behavioral health issues. The community has also been deeply impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic.

Despite UFHC's efforts to raise awareness and provide access to affordable health care, a tremendous amount of unmet need remains in the community. Fewer than 12 percent of low-income residents are current patients of UFHC.

Going the Extra Mile to Better Health Care Outcomes

UFHC treats patients holistically, going beyond what is traditionally delivered in a standard medical visit including access to food, transportation to medical appointments, necessary prescription medicine, and even short-term housing in special cases. This results in UFHC ensuring its patients can achieve better long-term health outcomes, reduce emergency room visits for primary care, and manage their chronic conditions. However, this investment in better health outcomes comes at a cost.

UFHC goes “the extra mile” for patients, providing non-medical services to achieve a healthier community and lower health care costs for everyone.

Annually, UFHC invests more than \$600,000 annually to provide:

- More than \$450,000 for live foreign language translators to ensure care is provided in a culturally and linguistically appropriate manner;
- More than \$100,000 for patient transportation via Lyft to ensure patients and their families can keep their appointments on schedule and don’t spend excessive time in waiting rooms;
- More than \$75,000 for free pharmaceuticals for patients who are unable to afford the cost of their medicine; and

Many of our patients are food insecure and arrive at our health center hungry. UFHC employees personally donate food and meals for patients who face food insecurity.

Enabling Better Access

In addition to UFHC’s health center sites, UFHC proactively enables access to health care for everyone in the community by:

- sending staff to provide primary care services onsite at homeless shelters and HIV/AIDS organizations;
- operating school-based health centers that provide free comprehensive primary health care to students who might otherwise not obtain medical care;
- utilizing local paramedics to provide some care for patients at home, e.g., tests and monitoring of vital signs. (This approach reduces stress, alleviates transportation issues, and ensures chronic conditions are managed, and is especially helpful for those with autism and intellectual and developmental disabilities (IDD) who are more comfortable at home); and,
- establishing a special clinic to offer services to veterans and those with IDD.

Going to the Patients Who Need Us Most: Mobile Medical Unit

\$85,000 is needed to purchase a mobile medical center to expand UFHC’s mobile health care program and outreach to underserved parts of the community. (Estimated cost of \$85,000 plus insurance and gasoline.)

Focus on Special Populations

\$500,000 is needed to equip a special clinic in Deerfield, NY that would focus on delivering services to veterans and persons with intellectual or developmental disabilities.

Basic Medical Equipment Needed

\$75,000 is sought for critically needed basic medical equipment, such as exam tables, scales (both adult and pediatric), an electrocardiograph, and monitors for vital signs.

Invest in Better Health for Our Community

Please join UFHC in creating better health outcomes in Oneida and Herkimer counties. Your support for our organization will ensure access to health care for the most vulnerable in our community and allow UFHC to continue to manage patient care holistically.

We invite you to visit www.upstatefamilyhealthcenter.org to learn more or contact John.Milligan@ufhcinc.org.



Building a Sustainable Financial Structure for the Future

While it is commonly expected that reimbursement rates will cover all of an operator’s costs, the features of the Utica/Mohawk Valley community and its unique mix of patients put pressure on that assumption. Moreover, UFHC’s emphasis on access for everyone and its holistic approach to meeting each patient’s needs requires additional funding, beyond what medical reimbursement rates can cover—even as that approach is reducing the overall cost of health care system wide. And as the demand for their services grows, so too will the costs for UFHC.

Toward that end, and in addition to its efforts to gain increased grant support, UFHC is undergoing the creation of a philanthropy program, seeking investment from individuals, foundations, and corporations that share our commitment to better access to care, greater equity, and a healthier community for all.