

GENNESARET FREE CLINIC

Volunteer Medical Services for the Homeless

"And all those who touched Him were healed." Mark 6:56

Vol. 3, No. 1

February, 1990

Mission Statement

We are health professionals of Indianapolis who have heard a calling to offer our talents and training to the homeless and indigent. Through our volunteer effort, we endeavor to provide competent, accessible, and compassionate health care to the needy. Our faith moves us to show special respect and dignity to those who have been neglected; for we realize that it is in such a healing encounter that we are all made more whole by God.

Letterman Gift for Homeless Children

We have just received a generous gift from David Letterman for the medical needs of homeless children. The money will be used for one of our 1990 goals: to provide every homeless child of Indianapolis with a vitamin supplement for every day of the year. We can also purchase much needed childrens antibiotics and equipments with these funds.

Annual Meeting

The 2nd Anniversary Celebration for GFC will be February 8, 4:00-5:30 at the Governor's Residence. We hope to have a fitting celebration for all volunteers and spouse. Also we will announce our 1990 goals (and what a surprise). Please try to arrive in time to enjoy all the festivities. To attend you must RSVP and carry your personal invitation for admission. If you have not received an invitation for your 1989 GFC volunteering, call Nancy Gregori at 293-9864.

New Forms

We have started using new forms in January. These forms are standardized for GFC and Peoples Homeless Initiative Program (HIP) and were developed by Dr. Ann Zerr and Dr. Mat Vega. Most of the information is history to build a data base on medical issues amongst the homeless. The clerks or medical worker obtaining the history should obtain the pertinent information regarding the illness and allow the patient to answer the questions for the data compilation privately. If the patient needs help answering the questions, please go over the questions in such a way as to preserve the patients dignity, especially since many of the questions are of a very private nature.

Requests for equipment

Donna O'Donnell and her co-workers have done such a splendid job organizing all of our medical supplies and cabinets that we are truly amazed at how much more efficient practicing medicine has become in our clinics. We hope to provide a better service at each of our sites. But please remember that everyone involved with GFC is volunteering during their free time too. Therefore, if you need special equipment or notice some missing basics, let Donna know of your need at 924-5444 and please be patient. Donna asks us to note that the old notebooks have been thinned in time for the 1990 records. Also, clerks or nurses at the clinic, please fill in the inventory sheets after each GFC session so that we can restock appropriately.

Committee meetings

GFC will begin this new year with two committees for policy decisions. Often a question about what types of services we should provide eg. pelvic examination, blood testing, or alcohol aversive medication is raised. Likewise, questions about medication standardization, varieties of medications covered eg. seizure medications, and cost of providing equipment come up. In order to make these decisions on a representative and appropriate basis, GFC will start a Medical policy and a Pharmacy/Equipment committee. Each committee will have as many as are interested to help with these decisions. Please consider using your special talents in nursing or medicine on these committees. These committees will meet infrequently for short periods of time. If you can help, call Dr. Jim Trippi at 924-5444.

Health Fair at Shelters

Follow-up on our screening for tuberculosis in the fall continues to come in. The findings are quite interesting; they will be presented by Dr. Ann Zerr at regional and national meetings in the near future. Of interest, our results show that the incidence of TB to be very low in the family shelters and nearly absent amongst children. The percentage of skin test positivity in the male population is very high (around 20%) and no different than any very large city. Similar statistics were found in New York City and Boston; however, active cases here were much less frequent than reported elsewhere. It is suspected that active cases were not prevalent here because of better health care, lower incidence of AIDS, or more active health department surveillance. Members of Marion Co Health Department, HIP, and GFC all feel that this past TB screening was a good start on

preventative health. Next year we hope to emphasize the positive aspects of screening for disease and immunization. Instead of "TB Screening" we will offer a more comprehensive and positive image as a "Health Fair." Also we hope to offer rewards for screening that will provide more incentive (like money).

Did you Know?

+ Several volunteers have been giving their time as well as their resources. One volunteer who works in an ECG department is obtaining old ECG machines and equipment; a previous salesperson is providing old samples of medical supplies; a person in government has allowed us to purchase surplus office equipment at very low prices.

+ Methodist Hospital has offered GFC the opportunity to purchase our medications through their volume program. This will provide a substantial discount even over wholesalers. Even so medications are extremely expensive in the quantities we need.

+ GFC was recognized for the second straight year on Ch 6 WRTV Sharing Gifts program. All should be proud of the healing work that you are doing in Christ's name.

+ Preparations are being made to send the out-dated medicine we have collected to missions in Haiti and Pakistan.

+ We hear of a good soul who read about our clinic in the Indpls Star. She was so moved by our work with the homeless that she has added our concerns to her prayers. Support like this, even from strangers, keeps us going.