



OPEN DOOR CLINIC

TRANSITIONS MARKED 2022

THE PANDEMIC PROVED that taking health care to the field can be both efficient and effective. ODC received COVID-19 emergency grants through the Vermont Department of Health focused on immigrant workers. We used it to make our outreach to Jamaican H-2A orchard workers more robust, sparked by the COVID-19 outbreak at Champlain Orchards. We worked to receive people on arrival, meeting COVID-19 needs and screening for other health issues. Then, we offered on-site health clinics, offering evening consults with volunteer providers.

ODC'S NEW SPRINTER VAN will be retrofitted to see patients and ready by fall! A major gift from an anonymous local donor and grants from Sylvamo and others made the purchase possible. We are leaning into our learning from the pandemic about the value of on-site, in-depth, private medical consultations and physical health care. For farmworkers and other patients for whom transportation, healthcare cost, and long working hours create barriers to accessing care, we know that having trusted care come to their door can be a game-changer.

WE SAID FOND FAREWELLS to Patient Coordinator Paola Meza, Communications Specialist Christiane Kokubo, and Dental Hygienist Gretchen Dunn. Then we strengthened our team once more, welcoming Dental Coordinator Fernanda Canales and Patient Coordinator Sara Flores-Amper, as well as Communications and Volunteer Coordinator Susannah McCandless. Meanwhile, Alysse Anton began a new role as Wellness Coordinator!

WE MOVED out of our beloved old trailer in August of 2022 and settled into spacious new quarters around the corner, adjacent to our weekly clinic location. We created a welcoming entryway to greet visitors, and even cut a hole in the wall to open up a freer flow of communication among our clinical staff (below right). In addition, our new space hosts physical therapy and counseling appointments during clinics. ODC nurse Savannah Solomon curates a one-room free *mercado*, offering patients a supplemental place to drop in and stock up on dry and canned goods and seasonal clothing essentials.

WE CELEBRATED the culmination of years of work by Julia Doucet, together with ODC staff and an interdisciplinary team (right) for Spanish-speaking immigrant patients to share stories and learning around wellbeing and mental health challenges. These were gathered into the non-fiction comic anthology *The Most Costly Journey/El Viaje Más Caro*. Published in English and now in Spanish, in 2022-2023 the volume became the most-read and discussed Vermont Humanities Council Vermont Reads selection ever. Find your copy at Vermont Folklife!





Wellness Program

WITH SUPPORT FROM a Vermont Department of Health Equity grant, ODC's newly-minted Wellness Coordinator Alysse Anton piloted a women's group last fall, with Dr. Kimberly Walker mentoring. Alysse shares, "We got [a new mom] a stroller, so the group can walk and talk sometimes before we sit down together. Being in motion—physical activity not just at work—is so important. Sometimes we feel able say more when we're not looking into one another's eyes." Feedback to date has been warm:

"Gracias a ti por hacer el grupo y regalarme tiempo."

- Thanks to you for creating the group and gifting me this time.

"Gracias a todas es bueno poder hablar sin temor."

- Thanks to all of you. It is good to speak without fear.

Alysse's goal as Wellness Coordinator is to facilitate support groups for men and women, and coordinate wellness activities in the community to create a sense of connection and belonging among our patients and with the environment they're living in. So far, Alysse has led two women's support group sessions, organized a 6-week yoga series, a late-May fishing day, and an art showing and talk from ODC patient and artist 'El Emigrante de Hidalgo' (see p.1 banner, and p.2 lower right). A men's group is in the works.

Says Alysse, "I believe that the wellness program is crucial to the wellbeing of our patients, many of whom live remotely in the countryside in Addison, far from their country of origin, families, and support system. The program can help build a greater sense of community, self esteem, belonging, and ultimately happiness among people who have sacrificed and left so much behind to be here."

ODC IS HIRING! We seek a dental hygienist, Mondays and/or Fridays in Middlebury. Know anyone open to additional hours? Please ask around--or at your next cleaning!

**In 2022 ODC served
1,162 unique patients
and provided:**

1,613 visits with a healthcare provider
292 visits with a dental provider
268 consults with our health insurance navigator
393 flu vaccines
385 COVID boosters
123 COVID tests
30 COVID vaccines

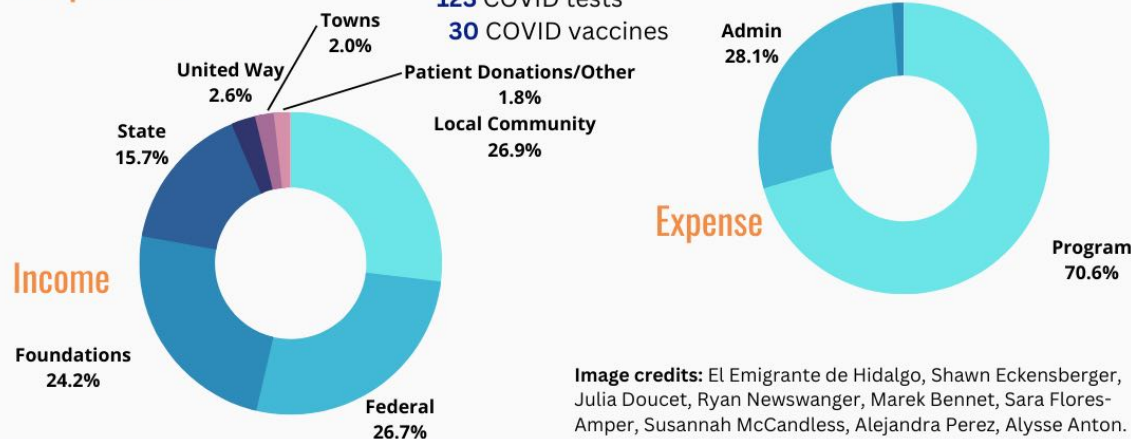


Image credits: El Emigrante de Hidalgo, Shawn Eckensberger, Julia Doucet, Ryan Newswanger, Marek Bennet, Sara Flores-Amper, Susannah McCandless, Alejandra Perez, Alysse Anton.

