

DIRECTOR'S MESSAGE



We ended the year on many high notes: strong numbers, full clinics, and another successful outreach season where we visited 55 farms, orchards, and small businesses. As has been our well-honed tradition, we once again provided health screenings, education and vaccines, but for the first time

year, we are also able to provide medical visits in our exam van to all who expressed an interest in having one. One afternoon, I accompanied our team on a visit where we happened to uncover a significant amount of untreated hypertension. If a worker received an elevated screening result, we could encourage and directly refer him to see our provider on site. Being able to immediately address patient needs like this was wonderful and underscored the effectiveness and efficiency of having a warm, dry, comfortable and confidential space available to see patients when in the field. It was so gratifying to see the capacity of our new van come to life...as a former board member used to say, a vision operationalized!

Melanie, our tenured and tenacious health insurance assister, saw a banner number of people this year, in part due to the Medicaid unwind. She helped well over 325 individuals understand their insurance options and enroll in plans. Our wellness coordinator Alysse held multiple successful support groups, and organized many opportunities for our patients to explore the outdoors, try new forms of recreation and exercise, and further develop their sense of place and belonging here in Addison County.

Providing support around social determinants of health, such as food access, our nurse case manager, Savannah, held fundraisers and clothing drives and was able to stock and restock our mercado, our tiny in-clinic free market, which so many of our patients have appreciated accessing for extra desirable food, a warm jacket or pair of gloves.

Communications and volunteer coordinator Susannah has worked arduously to recruit many new volunteers, notably some general administrative volunteers who've been supporting our internal operations, and whose energy is contagious and fun!

Through the combined efforts of ODC dental coordinator, Fernanda, our amazing team of employees, volunteer externs, and volunteer dental director, Dr. Fasoli, our dental program continues to be a sought-after resource.

We feel so grateful to be doing this vital work in such a supportive and generous community.

We know, too well, the dire oral health needs of so many community members. While we're meeting a only a fraction of the need, we are proud we can address some part of it through our innovative model of care.

We're seeing an increase in newly arrived Latinx women who have multifaceted needs, as well as a shift in places of employment from dairies to include roofing, landscaping, food, service, and the like. These trends urge us to think strategically around next steps and what potentially additional services we can provide to meet both growing and changing needs within our patient populations. We remain grateful for our community partners with whom we can readily meet to discuss how we can best support our mutual patients and one another.

As we anticipate the year ahead, we look forward to a new collaboration with Charter House, and continued planning on how we will expand upon our fieldwork with our new exam van. None of this could be accomplished without the tremendous commitment from each of you, our many community partners, our incredible Board, and diverse cohort of volunteers. We feel so grateful to be doing this vital work in such a supportive and generous community.

May 2024 be filled with good health, peace, and light

~ heidi

ODC BY THE NUMBERS, 2023



We saw **1,233** unique patients for **1,453** medical visits, **343** Vermont Health Connect consults, and **284** dental visits.



During those **343** insurance consults, we enrolled **128** people in Blue Cross/Blue Shield or MVP, and **88** in Medicaid. Others met with Melanie, then completed their own enrollment.

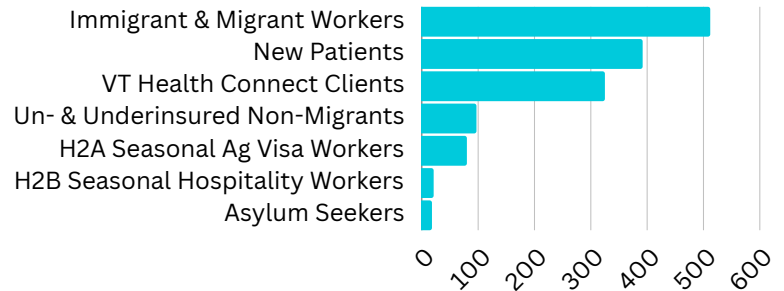


We administered **807** vaccines, **709** during outreach: **52%** flu vaccines; **40%** COVID boosters, and **8%** Tdap vaccines.

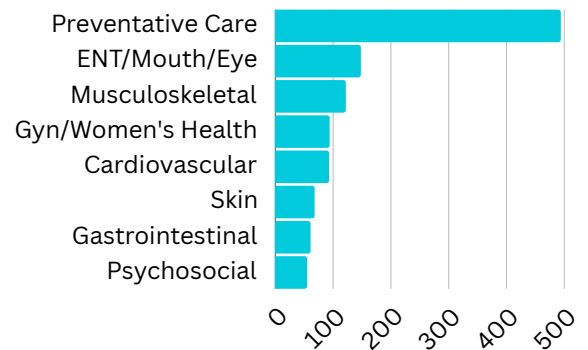


Volunteers and staff interpreted **1,950** clinic and outside specialist visits for **487** patients.

PATIENT POPULATION*



TOP MEDICAL DIAGNOSES*



*Some patients may fall into more than one category

MAKING INSURANCE ACCESSIBLE: CARL'S STORY

Carl is a hard worker. Since he was a teenager, he's always had a job and has been proud of the fact that he has taken care of himself. Doing this sometimes meant working extra hours and taking on jobs that put strain on his body, but he always pushed through the aches and pains to get the job done. At 62 years old, back pain, shoulder pain and knee pain were now part of Carl's daily life, and something had to change. He knew he was probably going to need major surgery; the only question was how he was going to afford it. Despite working so hard, Carl only had a little bit of money left after all his bills were paid each month. He had heard something about there being financial aid for insurance available through the government but was doubtful it was going to be enough to make his healthcare affordable.

As is the case with many of our patients, Carl heard through word of mouth about the services offered by Melanie, ODC's Vermont Health Connect Certified Application Counselor. He contacted Melanie and they set up an appointment to meet. Together, Melanie and Carl went over Carl's finances and found that he was going to be eligible for a plan that would cover his needs for less than \$50 a month. Between his health insurance and the sliding fee scale he was going to qualify for through the hospital, Carl was likely going to be able to get all his healthcare needs covered for less than \$1,000! Carl didn't have a primary care provider, so Melanie provided him with a list of practices accepting new patients, as well as the hospital's financial aid application. Carl had come to our clinic skeptical and anxious, and was leaving excited that he had a plan in place to help him get the health care he desperately needed.

~shared by Melanie Clark

TRANSITIONS

Dear ODC Supporters;

It is with mixed emotions that I share news of life transition for me. I have made the difficult decision to leave the Open Door Clinic and venture into new nursing opportunities. I have accepted a nursing position with UVM Medical Center in Infectious Disease, which I will start in mid-March. I hope to continue with ODC on a per diem basis to continue supporting the mission and work ODC does for our community.

I learned about the Open Door Clinic in the summer of 2021 reading the Seven Days issue about Pandemic All-Stars, of whom Julia Doucet was one. I read her interview and thought, “who is this woman and what is this place? I must work here!” I did a little Googling and came to learn ODC was looking for a Nurse Case Manager, and timely enough, I was looking for a change. I was incredibly intrigued about this place, whose purpose aligned with my personal mission. I had wanted to be a nurse in the non-profit world, but didn’t know if such opportunities existed until I learned of the ODC. As a generational Vermonter myself, growing up around dairy farms, I was especially drawn to the care being provided to farm workers and farmers, and to having a presence on the farms. Also, given my passion for local food systems - growing, buying, and cooking locally – it felt as if my two worlds, nursing and local food systems, had collided and presented me with an opportunity I had to pursue. I applied, interviewed, and joined the team soon after.

Throughout my 12 years as a nurse, I have worked in various fields of medicine. I have been drawn to work with vulnerable populations and care for those who need it most. I find that patients of the ODC have been some of the most vulnerable and diverse populations I could and have worked with, and for me that has been very fulfilling.



As I reflect on my 2 ½ years with ODC, I feel proud of what I’ve accomplished, learned, participated in, and the healthcare that I’ve provided. I’ve learned about new populations, learned a new language and cultures, gained broader curiosity about the world, and have been able to fulfill a mission to provide free health care.

I’ve met incredible healthcare providers, nurses, community members, and others who believe in the work that is being done. I’ve been honored to care for our patients, which include generational Vermonters, those from Latin America, and seasonal workers from Jamaica. Working with these populations has made me want to have an even more far-reaching impact.

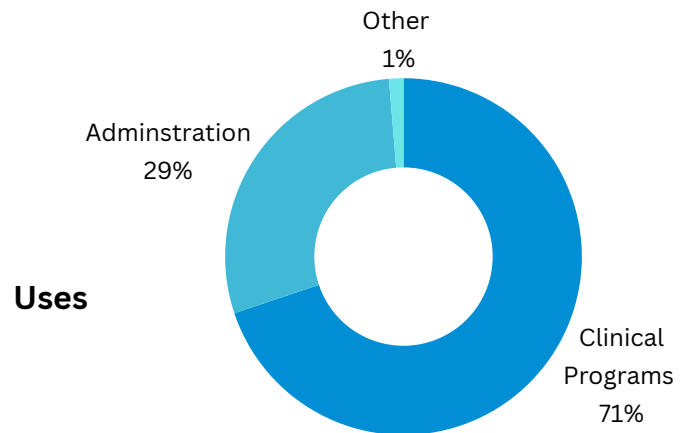
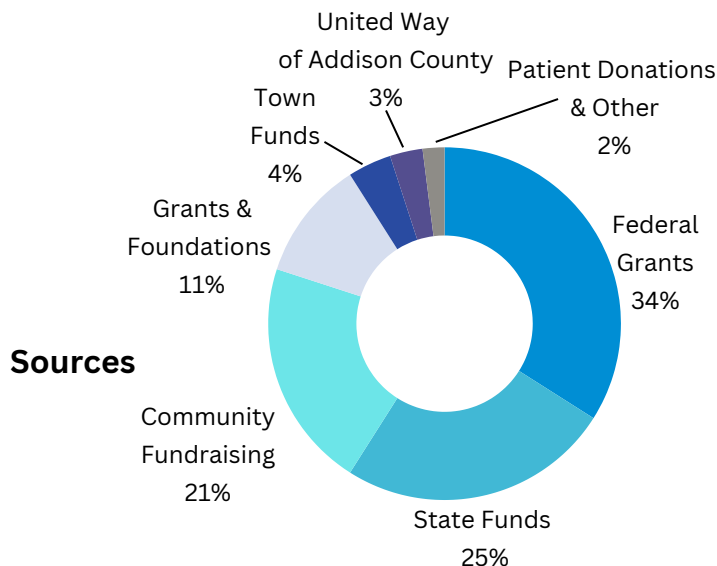
Years ago, I read the book *The Moment of Lift* by Melinda Gates, and while reading that, I thought “this is what I am called to do”: I want to have an impact on the world that uplifts populations out of poverty, creates gender equality, reduces barriers to health, improves social determinants of health, and prevents communicable disease and deaths. All the steps in my career, including working with the Open Door Clinic, have lead me here and to my next career move with Infectious Disease.

I am grateful for my experience here at ODC and for all that I have gained. I hope that I have made a positive impact on our community and that I can accomplish even more in the next phases of my life. Thank you to everyone whom I have met, provided care for, worked alongside, and interacted with along the way. The Open Door Clinic is a unique place and serves a really beautiful community, and I am honored to have been and to be part of it.

With gratitude and love,
Savannah Solomon, RN,
aka Sav



FINANCIALS

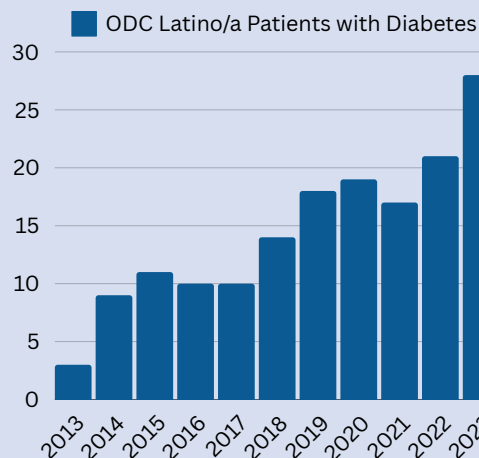
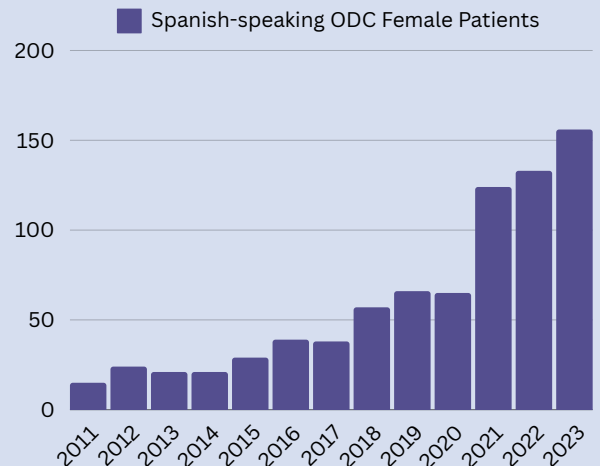


TRENDS

Latina women's health

ODC is serving a growing number of Latina women.

- As Latino migrants and immigrants become more established in Vermont and some shift into employment outside of agriculture, the number of women and families present grows.
- Latino/a patients who are present in Vermont with their families tend to report better mental health.
- 28% of our Latino patients identified as female in 2023.
- Women's health and our collaboration with Porter Women's Health are growing areas of our case management and interpreter services.



Diabetes among Latino/a patients

ODC is seeing a growing number of Latino/a patients for diabetes care.

- Nationally, when Latinos immigrate to the U.S., they are significantly healthier than their US-born peers.
- The longer immigrant patients are present in the U.S., the more their health declines, until they are 70% more likely to develop diabetes than their US-born peers, for example (Gallo et al. 2022).
- Stress, long working hours, and limited access to transportation and to healthy, desirable food contribute to diabetes risk.
- We do not see a similar growth in numbers of individuals with diabetes among our patients who identify as white and English-speaking.
- ODC offers quarterly diabetes specialty clinics. We focus on treatment, education and management, including nutrition counseling and foot care.