CLINIC AIDING LOW-INCOME, UNINSURED

A GOOD CAUSE

By Jim McCarthy • February 22, 2020

With care from Good Health Clinic, a housekeeper who just made ends meet was able to get the insulin she needed for her Type 2 diabetes. A boat captain received the screening and cataract surgery needed to extend his career.

Good Health Clinic is a charitable organization that provides health care to low-income, uninsured residents in the Keys. Those who meet the eligibility requirements can use the Good Health Clinic as their primary care home.

“People can come for wellness and things like annual exams and more specialized care like chronic and acute disease management,” said Kate Banick, executive director. “Many people also will register and get an annual wellness exam, and that’s great. They’re being proactive about their health, and if they get sick, they’re already registered and there’s no delay in care.”

Banick said Good Health Clinic has an extended network, known as the volunteer provider network, that includes more than 100 doctors and medical personnel in the Keys and South Florida who donate
time to patients in need. From oncologists to optometrists, Banick said, there are services for almost all the patients’ needs.

“This extensive network of people have come together and give comprehensive health care in our office because they care and see the importance of it,” Banick said.

Good Health Clinic has seen patients since 2004. Banick said the clinic is helping many in the workforce who are just making ends meet.

“Over 65 percent of patients work full time, have jobs, but they can barely afford to pay basic living expenses in the Keys” she said. “We’re aiming to have a healthier community and support the working class in the community by providing them an option for health care.”

Last year, just over 890 adults and children received the care they needed, and nearly $5 million in donated services was provided. At the end of 2018, with support of Direct Relief International and United Way of the Florida Keys, Good Health Clinic opened a satellite clinic in Marathon to offer services to residents in the middle and lower Keys.

“Since 2004, Good Health Clinic’s mission of providing free access to primary health care, diagnostic, preventive and wellness services to the uninsured low-income resident population, has served our community well. But this service is as needed as it is expensive,” said Roberto Alonso, chairman for Good Health Clinic. “Every year, the clinic holds its biggest fundraising event, and with the receipts from the competition and Luau event we raise approximately 20% of next year’s operating budget funds, which are essential to the clinic and its mission.”

Supporters of Good Health Clinic include Baptist Health South Florida, Health Foundation of South Florida, Direct Relief International, United Way of the Florida Keys, Ocean Reef Community Foundation and countless local individuals and businesses.

More information about the annual fundraiser or supporting a 2020 Big Kahuna contestant is available from Banick at 305-619-0154 or www.keyslua.com.

More information about services provided by the clinic is at 305-853-1788, info@thegoodhealthclinic.org, or www.thegoodhealthclinic.org.

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Jim McCarthy, a Western New York native, is a gym rat who can’t get his nutrition in line, a golfer who can’t find the green and a neat freak who can’t let anything be out of order. Xbox and movies are his downtime loves.