



pathways

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On the cover is our clinic team member, Leskibel,
connecting our neighbors to better health.

All photos by Kennedy Jene, UMWC Media and Communications Specialist

Our Community Response

These past several pandemic years have weighed heavily on our community.

The pandemic persists, particularly among historically marginalized populations. The recession disproportionately affects our neighbors in need. Jobs in the service industry, retail, and hospitality have been slow return. Inflation – especially food inflation running at 13% – challenges our families. Supply chain issues affect our sourcing of food and medical supplies. Eviction, gentrification, and soaring rental costs exacerbate a crisis in affordable housing.

The news is bad. Our response is heart-warming.

We are feeding more families than ever in our history with fresh and nutritious meat, milk, eggs, fruit, and vegetables and, yes, some boxes and cans. We give healthy food boxes to 80, even 100 families, Monday thru Thursday each week.

We are providing comprehensive primary care to hundreds of patients each week including behavioral health, diabetes education, and many specialty services. Our pharmacy fills thousands of prescriptions and partners with local businesses to provide vaccinations for influenza and COVID to our community.

We are not simply sheltering scores of homeless women, we are engaging them with onsite case management, workforce development, and this year, with onsite physical and mental health care, and substance use disorder screening and treatment.

“We” means you. Without you, we can’t afford the food that nourishes the food insecure, provide the care that improves health, and support the women of Helen Wright on their path to a place called home.

Now, more than ever, we need you at our side.

We need our volunteers, our donors, and our friends to share the work and the story that we live in a place that cares about our neighbors in need.

You make it happen. Thank you.

Dr. Peter Morris, MD, MPH, MDiv
Executive Director



OPEN DOOR CLINIC AND PHARMACY

There is a growing need for behavioral health services. According to a report by the National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI), 1 in 5 adults in the United States experiences mental illness each year. Of those adults, 1 in 25 experiences a serious mental illness that significantly interferes with or limits one or more major life activities. In low-income areas, the prevalence of mental illness is even higher.

The good news is that many behavioral health services are available to help; however, behavioral health services are often not accessible in low-income areas. This can lead to people not getting the help they need. At Urban Ministries of Wake County, we're dedicated to addressing the growing demand for services to manage these increasingly common concerns impacting our community.

Our behavioral health program has worked to end those widespread barriers since its development in 2016. "Here at the Open Door Clinic, it's a fully integrated program providing collaborative, culturally sensitive, trauma-informed care for all patients at the Open Door Clinic to ensure they receive access to personalized treatment that will improve their quality of life."

We're committed to helping your mind and body feel better. Services are free of charge for patients. Services include help with stress management, lifestyle changes, behavioral diabetes, navigating chronic pain and routine screenings, treatment for mental health conditions, and care coordination with external agencies and other resources.

Patients see Ana Hernandez, our bilingual behavioral health and wellness counselor, through the Open Door Clinic. "Patients are referred to Behavioral Health services by primary care providers. They can also be self-referred to services." Ana then works alongside clients to identify their goals and create a treatment plan.

Our continuing goal is to be an integral part of Wake County. Aiming to diversify the community's health needs by offering individualized support through a collaborative, patient-centered approach. We work overall positively impacting the behavioral and mental health of Wake County.

Open Door Clinic Impact

FY2021-2022

1,430

patients seen by our providers

678

mental health counseling appointments

40,822

monthly prescriptions filled

1,485

total immunizations

**THE DOOR IS ALWAYS OPEN.
THERE IS HOPE. THERE IS HELP.**





Hunger & NUTRITION PROGRAM



Pivot. A word we've heard many, many times over the past few years. So much, in fact that our Director of Hunger and Nutrition named his newest initiative after it. Our pantry has always been focused on expanding their impact and reaching all parts of Wake County. The new, *Project Pivot*, takes that to a new level.

Partnerships include, Justice Served of NC, Passage Home, Raleigh North Christian Center, SouthLight Healthcare, The Resiliency Collaborative, and the Wake Local Reentry Council. All meeting the goal of bringing quality food assistance to our neighborhood.

Southlight's ACT Team provides clients with a variety of outpatient services for mental health and substance use treatment; meeting them where they are. In coordination with our food pantry, the team brings a food box during home visits. Boxes with not only shelf-stable items – but dairy and the occasional meat. Quality is prioritized – the food provided to client's is an extension of their medical care. The ACT team makes sure to provide support past the deliveries.

“For some people, going to the grocery store is not a normal occurrence.

“**In the pantry, we serve a car a minute - wow! It’s easy to make a big impact in just a few hours time. I love the way our pantry volunteer team works together and pitches in, doing whatever is necessary.**”

- Longtime volunteer

residents go through and providing high quality food boxes on a weekly basis to ensure well-rounded care. The residents are more open to seeking treatment once basic needs are met. Quality food and nutrition are crucial to success.

Project Pivot supports people of all ages, living across Wake County and in varying circumstances. From elementary-age kids in need of an afternoon snack to a single father

Our food pantry continues to respond and increase the quantities distributed, while still reaching out a helping hand to new partners.

They don’t have the experience, the confidence. They need instruction.” The team will accompany clients to food pantry, grocery stores, etc. and provide information needed. “People don’t understand how hard it is to lead a life while in constant hunger. Food is a part of healthcare. It completes the circle.” Once clients are fed, communication opens and allows for easier treatment.

A group of local health community workers from Southeastern Healthcare of NC, expanded outside their roles to provide essential services in partnership with our food pantry.

While they go out to different communities across the county, one in particular has been “adopted” through this partnership. With repeated visits, the team learns what services the neighbors need, adapting to the changes that

unable to make his groceries stretch through the weekend – the need is there. Our food pantry continues to respond and increase the quantities distributed, while still reaching out a helping hand to new partners.





THE HELEN WRIGHT CENTER for Women

The Helen Wright Center for Women was fortunate to receive funding for the new Bridge to Home program with the goal of increasing the transition of people into permanent housing. This program and our shelter, place an emphasis on providing comprehensive case management, connection to medical care, and transportation support – among many other goals. The effects can already be seen at our shelter.

Thanks to this new funding, the Helen Wright Center now provides first month's rent and deposits for women who secure permanent housing. Giving huge relief to these individuals struggling to get their foot through the door. With time to smoothly transition into their new home and furnishing provided by The Green Chair Project, our shelter is setting them up for success.

Another great addition to our shelter recently was the hiring of a Nurse Practitioner, who comes onsite once a week. For some shelter guests, this is the first medical professional they've seen in years.

Housing Navigation Case Manager Alexis describes what she sees by saying, “The women line up to sit with her – they’re so excited to have a compassionate person evaluate and care for them. They don’t have to worry about obstacles like insurance and finding transportation to a doctor’s office. Shelter guests have someone come to them and give them peace of mind.”

Recently joining the team as well is a psychiatrist, three therapists, three case managers and a medical administrator. Mental health professionals and weekly therapy sessions now made available provide women with comprehensive care during their stay.

Since July 2022, 5 women have been placed into permanent housing. Our shelter staff have already felt the great impact that Bridge to Home was intended to create. They can provide a wealth of resources to these women from the moment they step through the shelter door.

Wake County is still facing the challenge of having safe, affordable housing that residents can maintain. Programs like this one move us in the right direction.

“**For those who volunteer and donate, it means a lot because it gives us a chance. The world is already stressful enough, and it helps us to focus, to get ourselves together.**” - Shelter Guest



Helen Wright Center Impact
FY2021-2022

338

women were sheltered and fed

1/3

of women entered with special needs (including mental health, physical disabilities, and substance abuse)

54%

of women sheltered are 41 years old or older



VOLUNTEER SPOTLIGHT: MedServe Fellows



“As an aspiring physician, it has been a privilege to serve alongside compassionate health care providers, seeing how they are able to empower patients with the knowledge to manage their health conditions and promote preventative health measures.”

Our Open Door Clinic partners with MedServe to bring in Fellows who serve full-time, for two years. These Fellows are recent college graduates, entering the world of medicine. They play a huge role in our clinic by providing support in various capacities, including phone triage, medical intake duties, interpretation, and the training of intake volunteers. On top of their daily responsibilities, Fellows assist with community health events, assisting with outreach, expansion, and the accessibility of our services. Each one brings a unique skillset and fresh perspective to our care team. The MedServe mission is focused on improving the health of the medically underserved, while additionally equipping future



providers with much needed mentorship and first-hand experience. Fellows spend a large amount of time with not only clinic staff but also patients, gaining valuable one-on-one experiences. A current Fellow describes the dynamic by saying, “Everyone is determined to provide the best quality care to each patient, taking the time to listen to their respective needs and formulate patient-centered treatment plans.” His personal mission aligns with that of Urban Ministries of Wake County; to break down barriers for individuals in need of receiving essential health care.

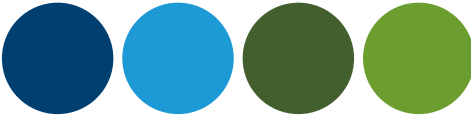
Urban Ministries of Wake County is fortunate to be a participating agency in this program. Fellows provides much-needed support and hold key roles in our clinic. Their work is greatly valued. They serve alongside a compassionate team of staff, interns and volunteers to provide essential services to Wake County.

Want to get involved?

- Volunteer with us
- Host a food drive
- Donate items

Visit urbanmin.org/get-involved





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- You can make a gift directly from your IRA. Anyone over the age of 70 1/2 can make a gift from their IRA, and if you're 72, you can make a gift out of your required minimum distribution.
- You can transfer stock directly to UMWC. When you donate your appreciated assets, you avoid paying capital gains tax.
- You can name UMWC as a beneficiary of your Estate, 401(k), IRA.
- Visit our Give page for more information or email Kate Palmer at kpalmer@urbanmin.org.

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