

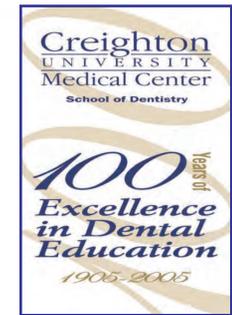


All Things Ignatian



One World – Creighton Dental Clinics

Creighton Dental Students and Faculty Provide Dental Care in Volunteer Evening Clinics



Lutheran Family Services began a volunteer low income health clinic in the early 1970s in a church basement. As this effort expanded, it moved to a storefront at 20th and Castelar and adopted the name Indian Chicano Center. Dr. Ray Shaddy from the dental school had a dental chair installed in this location, and dental faculty and students would screen patients and send them to the dental school for volunteer evening clinics on alternate weeks. Dr. Charles Meyer and later Dr. Gary Westerman oversaw these weekly clinic sessions. The Indian Chicano Health Center expanded and hired physicians and dentists as it offered in-house services on 24th and Vinton, and later 36th and Q Street, but the weekly screening and treatment sessions continued for the lowest income patients who could not afford the regular dental services. Later, Indian Chicano changed its name to One World Community Health Center, and moved again to larger quarters at 33rd and L street. At the present time, the South Omaha dental clinic has 12 chairs and five full time dentists, but the volunteer evening clinics continue for the lowest income patients.

Since the 1970s, the clinic has been faculty supervised but student run. One early principle is that patients are asked to contribute to their dental care, though no one is denied service. In the earliest days the requested contribution was \$2.00, which has now become \$20.00. For this, the patients get two hours of dental care, usually sufficient to treat most emergency care cases. Extractions, fillings and temporary dentures are the most common services. Many of the patients are hispanic with limited english skills, so translation services are often needed. In the past year, the evening clinics have paired with the Porto-Heart Clinic and the Magis Medical Clinics to take limited numbers of patients from the Francis Siena House. In 2013, 22 clinics sessions were held, and approximately 600 patients were treated.

The One World-Creighton dental clinics provide emergency care services to patients with very limited access to traditional dental care. It is an invaluable service learning experience for the students, as well as an intercultural service opportunity. The student leaders of the clinics also gain some administrative experience. One of the remarkable aspects of the program is its longevity. The program has depended on the generosity of the Dental School, as well as faculty and students, who are uncompensated.

J. Wilverding

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One Creighton: Bridging to a Greater Future

