



**Report of St. Benedict Health and Healing Ministry
(A Diocesan Institution)
To the 132nd Annual Convention of the Diocese of Colorado
October 3-5, 2019**

Purpose

Our **mission** is being an oasis of care, offering an environment of hospitality as we respond to the real human need for physical, emotional, and spiritual healing.

Our **vision** is one of a community:

- Where suffering is alleviated,
- Where holistic health and healing are available to all,
- Where health and healing are understood as integration of body, mind, and spirit,
- Where people are met and seen with hospitality and compassion, and
- Where connections are fostered:
 - between the uninsured and the underinsured and health care providers,
 - between the individual and God, and
 - between organizations dedicated to health and healing.

Our **values**, the shared and strongly held principles that guide us in our work, are those of Benedictine spirituality, including:

- Hospitality
- Dignity
- Compassion
- Seeking the face of Christ in all whom we meet

Members

Our work succeeds on the basis of relationships, which permeate all aspects of this ministry. Effective relationships require active listening, being present and showing respect. This begins with our Board of Directors. Current members are:

Officers:

Mr. William Eliason, President
 -St. Ambrose Episcopal Church, Boulder
 Mr. Jim Podolak, Vice-President and Bishop's Representative
 -St. John's Episcopal Church, Boulder
 Ms. Kathy Fox, Treasurer
 -St. John's Episcopal Church, Boulder
 Ms. Mary Doran, RN, Secretary
 Dr. Julie Ansell, MD - Medical Director

Program Chairpersons:

Rev. Deacon Jan Dewlen, Don Burt Community Care Program
 -St. John's Episcopal Church, Boulder
 Rev. Michael Houlik, Medical Financial Assistance Program
 -St. Mary Magdalene Episcopal Church, Boulder

At Large:

Dr. Richard Keller, MD
 Marsha Ruggeri, RN

Ex Officio:

Mr. Bill Goodwin, Executive Director
 -St. John's Episcopal Church, Boulder

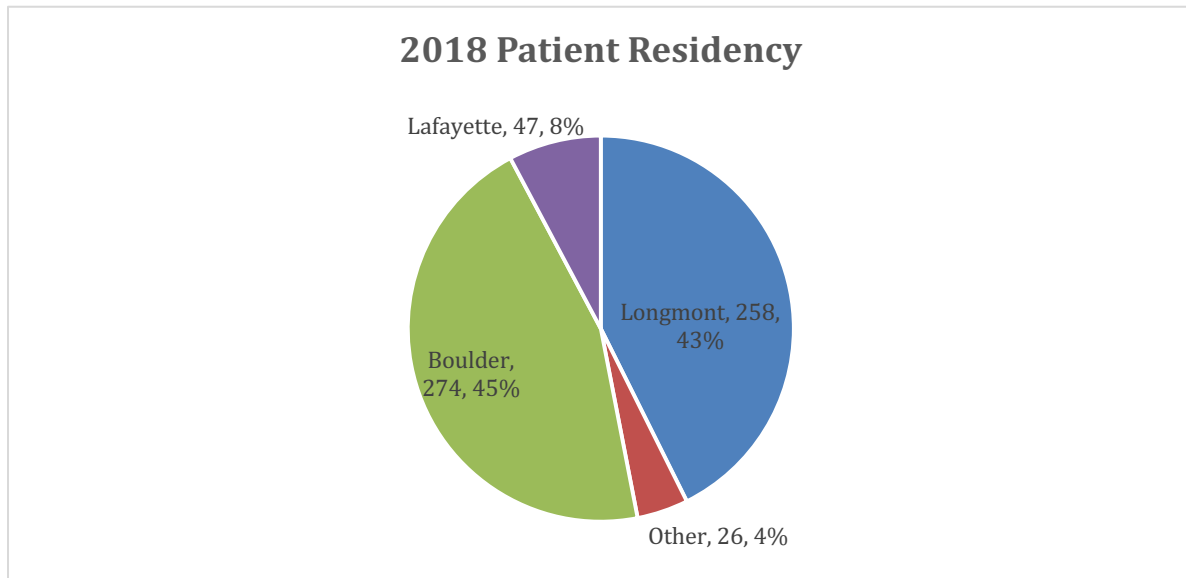
Executive Summary

In 2018, responding to the need for health care resources in Boulder County (see Annual Report below), volunteer Health Care professionals (21), Board members (10), administrative supporters (12) and a Spanish translator made possible 1,115 medical services through 605 patient visits at 131 Free Clinics in the Boulder County communities of Boulder City, Lafayette and Longmont.

Our volunteer hours totaled 2,448, which equates to \$83,858 in the value of volunteer service. This breaks down to:

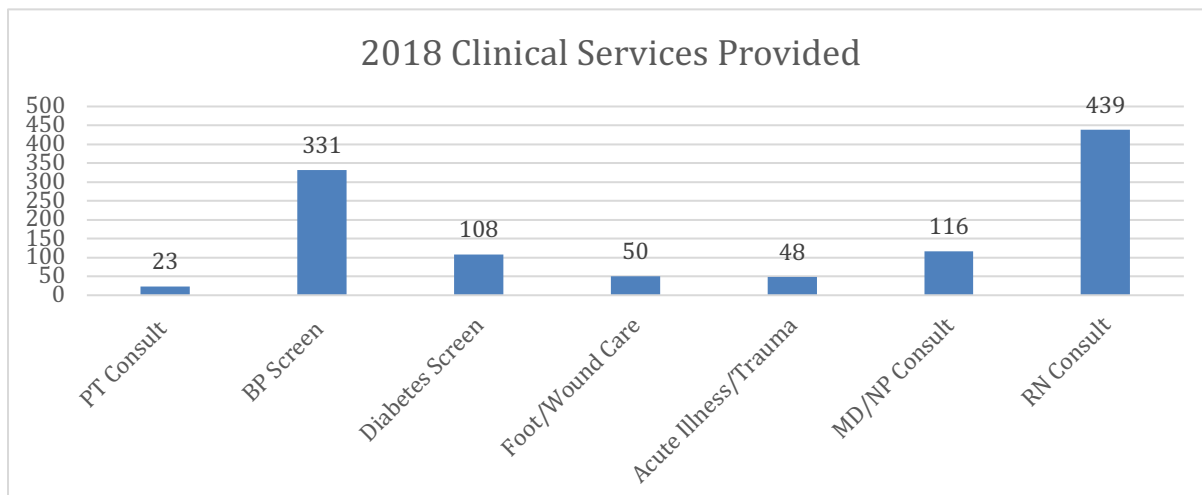
-\$36,237 value of clinicians' 670 Free Clinic service hours, and
 -\$47,621 in 1,778 other service hours provided through the Don Burt Community Care Program, governance structures, and administration.

Our 205 new Free Clinic patient visits highlight the continuing demand for our services, and the 405 returnee visits demonstrate that customer satisfaction is high. Here is where our patients came from:



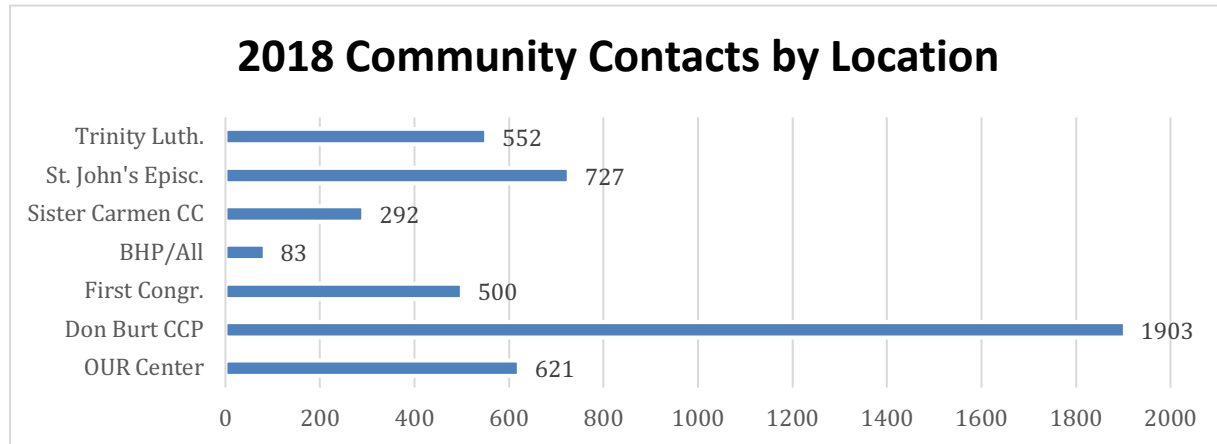
In addition to the services in the chart below, 82 health care referrals were made, including People's Clinic (Boulder), Salud (Longmont), Hope Light Clinic (Longmont), Clinica (Lafayette), Dental Aid, and more. Ten patients were referred to Urgent Care Centers or Emergency Rooms. Vaccinations totaled 13 this year, including influenza and Hepatitis A (our first offering of this critical protection).

In-Kind donations such as hats, socks, and personal care items were distributed to our patients and other low-income community contacts. They totaled over \$2,800 in value, more than doubling that of 2017. This was due to the generosity of our partnering Free Clinic churches: First Congregational, Trinity Lutheran and St. John's in Boulder, and all four other Boulder County Episcopal churches.



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By simply being present in the homeless shelters, food banks, community centers and below-market-rate housing communities where we serve, our volunteers reached 4,678 members of the community who now know about us and where to find us. Here is where they encountered us:



Annual Report

The Need:

Affordability and Accessibility

According to the American Community Survey estimates for 2017, *Boulder County* 13.1% of county residents were estimated to be living below the federal poverty level in 2017. This equates to nearly 41,500 individuals. The 13.1% rate is three percentage points higher than it was in 2000. The rate is higher in the City of Boulder (21.6%) than in the cities of Longmont (12%) or Lafayette (8.3%).

Stating that the high cost of insurance continues to be the primary reason for not having it, the Colorado Health Institute (CHI) has concluded that the state's "final uninsured" are among the most vulnerable and hardest to reach. The following findings from CHI's 2017 Colorado Health Access Survey (CHAS) support its conclusion that the "affordable" part of the Affordable Care Act (ACA) is still elusive in Colorado:

- about 350,000 Coloradans under age 65 still do not have health insurance (including about 13,100 in Boulder County), even though more than half are eligible for a public program
- 25% of the uninsured do not have documentation, making them ineligible for most public insurance and unable to use the ACA marketplace
- 61,000 of the uninsured are under the poverty line, nearly 50,000 don't have a high school diploma, and about 115,000 are Hispanic

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- 1 in 7 uninsured Coloradans do not know how to get health insurance
- 1 in 5 Coloradans skip care because it costs too much (unchanged since 2009); uninsured people are four times more likely to say they skipped care because of cost
- only 41% of those without insurance say they are likely to have a health care professional visit; this is half the rate of those with insurance.

Boulder County is not immune from high health care costs:

- 7.5% of Boulder County residents eligible for Medicaid and premium tax credits are not enrolled, according to Internal Revenue Service tax data
- The Boulder-Broomfield Region uninsured rate (7.4%) is halfway on the continuum of regional rates in the state
- Our region has the fourth highest percentage (11.0) of residents who buy insurance on the individual market and therefore, according to CHI, “have borne the brunt of higher premium prices”
- Only 8 of the 64 Colorado counties have more uninsured individuals than does Boulder County, according to CHI’s analysis of the 2015 American Community Survey
- The probability of not getting a medical appointment as soon as one is needed varies by zip codes in Boulder, ranging from 16.1% to 33.4%, the latter for the University of Colorado-Boulder (the highest in the state).

Homelessness

Adding to the visible need for a local medical safety net, the Community Foundation in its *Boulder County Trends* report notes that homelessness in Boulder County continues to be a problem, with increasing numbers of families living in cars or “couch surfing”, single homeless people coming from outside the community, and seniors unable to afford escalating rents and costs of home ownership.

The Point in Time (PIT) Survey is a snapshot of those experiencing homelessness on a given night. It was most recently conducted on January 29, 2018. Both sheltered and unsheltered individuals were counted. However, persons in temporary living situations or who are at risk of becoming homeless (such as those staying with friends or family or paying to stay in a motel) were not included in this count.

Five hundred ninety-two (592) individuals were found to be homeless in the PIT results. This included 158 unsheltered, 283 in emergency shelters, and 151 in Transitional Housing. The trends over the past three years are not encouraging, with steady increases

in the percentages of those in emergency shelters and those unsheltered, and decreases in the percentages of those in transitional housing, as shown below:

Living Situation	2016	2017	2018
Emergency Shelter	40.9%	45.8%	47.8%
Transitional Shelter	41.3%	32.7%	25.5%
Unsheltered	17.8%	21.5%	26.7%

The PIT also concluded that over one-third (34.5%) of the homeless population in Boulder County were experiencing chronic homelessness. This includes those who were homeless for at least one year in the past three and also have a disability. Half of the chronically homeless were in emergency shelters or unsheltered on the night of the count.

The Response:

St. Benedict Health and Healing Ministry (SBHBM) welcomes all medically underserved people in Boulder County. Through our Free Clinics program, volunteer medical professionals offer clinics in Boulder, Longmont and Lafayette at sites where those in need congregate for human services (i.e., soup kitchens, food pantries, community centers and subsidized housing facilities). We work with those uninsured and underinsured, the latter defined as those who have health insurance but cannot afford the out-of-pocket costs.

We are non-denominational in our ministry in that “all are welcome” without regard to church affiliation or any other factor. We receive no guaranteed funding from any source and must compete for grants and rely on our generous supporters for donations.

Our focus in clinics is on blood pressure checks, diabetes education and prevention, acute illnesses and wounds, referrals to local clinics and services, and creation of a plan for care. Education and prevention include information provided through consultations on such issues as mentioned above and/or alcohol use, smoking cessation, nutrition and exercise. We also regularly offer instruction in contemplative and stretching practices to assist patients to better handle physical and emotional stress.

We believe in the power of partnerships and are continually looking for more ways to collaborate with local entities that promote healing and improve health. SBHBM is officially part of Colorado’s health care safety net through our membership in Colorado’s Community Safety Net Clinics network. We are one of only 43 community safety net clinics in Colorado.

The Colorado Health Institute reports that someone most likely to need a safety net either has a low income, is uninsured (or underinsured), is covered by public health insurance, and/or has no regular source of primary care. All of our patients fall into at least one of these categories of need. All are in danger of falling through the cracks in the road to

reliable health care. As such, we are the initial point of access for many into the health care system.

Volunteer doctors, nurses and a physical therapist offer direct services at clinics in the cities of Boulder, Longmont and Lafayette at soup kitchens (three times a month), community centers (seven or eight times a month) and subsidized housing facilities (once a month). After a health care assessment and health history, the provider determines the care that is needed. Those who can prescribe medicine do so if indicated. If sufficient care cannot be provided at the clinic, the patient is educated and referred to another health care provider for additional services.

Education is based on the findings of each patient's medical history. Referrals may facilitate connections to regular ongoing health care to provide a medical home for dental care and care for chronic diseases such as hypertension, diabetes or asthma. The referral may be to facilities that can provide HIV/AIDS or Hepatitis C testing, mammograms, etc. Referrals are also made to non-medical community resources.

In 2018, our 44 volunteers donated 2,448 hours of volunteer time valued at nearly \$84,000. Twenty-one volunteer health care professionals, Spanish translators and on-site administrators provided 1,115 medical services through 605 patient visits at our 12-13 monthly Free Clinics. Through the Don Burt Community Care Program (DBCCP), non-medical volunteers distributed free unit doses of over-the-counter medications at severe weather shelters in the City of Boulder whenever they were open. As a result, over 1,900 people were offered relief from their distress. The DBCCP is currently being considered for relocation in order to increase its reach even more.

A dedicated volunteer also regularly offers instruction in contemplative and stretching practices at selected locations to provide patients with relaxation techniques to better handle emotional stress. This particular ministry reached 33 more people in 2018 than in the previous year.

SBHMM also maintains a Medical Financial Assistance Program to help patients who cannot pay for prescriptions, diabetic supplies, or other medical equipment. The program was re-evaluated this year to ensure its efficiency and effectiveness, and will be re-introduced as an offering at our Free Clinics soon.

SBHMM's Free Clinics address the problems in health care accessibility and affordability and the medical problems inherent in homelessness. We do so by offering direct and preventive services. A count of services in 2018 reveal that 116 Physician or Nurse Practitioner consults were provided at no cost, as were 439 Registered Nurse consults. Types and numbers of services included:

- Acute illness or trauma care (48);
- Foot or wound care (50);
- Blood pressure screenings (331);
- Diabetes screenings (108); and

- Physical therapy consults (23).

Of equal importance is the fact that 82 health service referrals were made to either Urgent Care or Emergency Room facilities or to potential medical homes (i.e., full-service clinics such as Clinica and its affiliate People's Clinic, Salud Clinic, Hope Light Clinic, and Dental Aid). Finally, in-kind donations such as hats, socks, personal care items, medical supplies, dental supplies, medications and office supplies valued at over \$2,800 were received and distributed in 2018.

Informational Resources for Topics in Report

For additional details on Safety Net Clinics, see

https://www.coloradohealthinstitute.org/sites/default/files/migrated/postfiles/2016_Primer.pdf

For our programmatic results in prior years, see our Annual Reports at

<http://www.stbenedicthealthandhealing.org/contact/>

For additional details on access to health care services, see

<https://www.coloradohealthinstitute.org/research/colorado-health-access-survey>

For additional details on socioeconomic trends in Boulder County, see

<https://www.commfound.org/trends>

...and <http://www.bouldercountyhealthcompass.org>

...and <https://www.bouldercounty.org/departments/public-health/health-data-resources/>

For additional details on the Point in Time Survey results, see

https://www.mdhi.org/pit_reports