



Arlington Free Clinic's Continued Work During COVID-19 & How You Can Help

Arlington Free Clinic's (AFC) mission to provide "free, high-quality healthcare to low-income, uninsured Arlington County adults through the generosity of donors and volunteers" is an imperative that remains unchanged since our founding more than 25 years ago. **Like the rest of the nation, COVID-19 turned AFC's world upside down, but unlike most places, we can't shut down.** A patient who faced cancer, diabetes, or heart disease in mid-February—before COVID-19 invaded our community—still must receive timely access to treatment to avoid devastating health effects.

AFC is moving forward during this challenging time to help Arlington County and Virginia Hospital Center care for vulnerable neighbors who are often overlooked and forgotten:

- Our part-time staff nurse practitioner is now working full-time to care for patients
- Recently retired staff nurses have returned to help screen patients, address mental health needs, and develop crisis response protocols
- Dental staff are seeing emergency dental patients and flexing into other roles as needed
- Many of our patients have already lost their jobs in construction, restaurants, cleaning, and childcare and are struggling with access to food, transportation, and other emergency needs. Very few will benefit from federal government support. We are working hard to connect them to local resources.
- Volunteers who are sheltering-in-place are virtually conducting medical reviews and serving as telephone interpreters during patient visits.

Although we are managing our resources wisely, additional support during this time will give us the necessary flexibility to "keep the lights on" while responding effectively to this crisis. AFC commits to:

- Continuing to pay our staff and operate with a small-but-mighty onsite clinical team, while surging forward via telework for those able to do their jobs from home
- Purchasing hand sanitizer, gowns, masks, and cleaning supplies and enforcing strict social distancing and Personal Protective Equipment policies for everyone onsite
- Making up for the understandable but hard-hitting reduction in volunteers by increasing our staff nurse practitioner's hours
- Purchasing a software platform that will better enable us to conduct telemedicine visits with AFC patients, staff, and volunteer providers connected virtually

As we move through this crisis, so much is unpredictable—what was true yesterday is outdated today. What's certain is that AFC will continue leveraging your support with 25 years of experience meeting the healthcare needs of our community's most vulnerable to ease the burden of this pandemic on our low-income neighbors.

While these are uncertain financial times for all of us, a special gift to support our ongoing operations would be greatly appreciated. Contact Alicia Nieves, AFC Director of Development, with questions or to support: 703-979-1425, ext. 121 or anieves@arlingtonfreeclinic.org.