

BETHESDA MISSION MEDICAL CLINIC

The Bethesda Mission Medical Clinic located at 611 Reily Street, Harrisburg, Pennsylvania is a vital part of the Department of Medicine's outreach to the community. The weekly clinic, which is staffed by Department Medicine faculty, residents, and medicine clerkship students, has been in operation since 1991.

Each year a dedicated group of Department of Medicine residents volunteer their time and efforts to serve as resident-coordinators for the clinic. These residents unselfishly volunteer their time to make certain there is proper coverage and supervision for each clinic session. They work closely with the clinic nurse, Nancy Payne, to provide proper care, medications and follow-up appointments for the clinic patients.

These volunteer physicians see an average of twenty-five patients each evening session. The needs of the patients who are guests at the Bethesda Mission's Men's Shelter, the Women's and Children's Shelter, and homeless from the Harrisburg area, range from colds and flu to more serious conditions. While a typical clinic session lasts 2-3 hours, few faculty and residents leave the Mission until the last patient has been given the needed care.

A core group of faculty from the Departments of Medicine, Pediatrics, and Dermatology also volunteer their time beginning at 6:30 p.m. every Tuesday evening to staff the clinic. Third Year Medicine Clerkship students are required to spend one evening per month at the Mission Medical Clinic in addition to Medicine Residents on their Ambulatory Medicine rotation. The response by the students and residents to this evening session is primarily positive. The clinic gives them a chance to provide acute medical care to the indigent population under the guidance of volunteer physicians and offers a look at "another side" of health care.

More recent advancements at the clinic include the involvement of the Department of Dermatology (formerly a Division of the Department of Medicine) faculty and fellows. An every-other-month Dermatology Clinic has been added to the care given at the clinic, with a Dermatology attending present to handle specific dermatological concerns of the patients. Another addition in 2001 is the student-run LionCare program which not only expanded the services of the clinic, but created an outlet for students interested in this patient population to help the homeless in our area.

Two of the physicians involved in the original development of the Bethesda Mission Medical Clinic remain on the Department of Medicine staff. Dr. Edward (Ted) Bollard (Class of 1993) and currently the Director of the Internal Medicine Residency Training Program, began his involvement with the clinic as a medical student, and is now the medical clinic coordinator and advisor to the LionCare Student-Run clinic. Dr. Andrew Sumner (Class of 1990) was Chief Resident in the Department of Medicine during the medical clinic's development and will be returning to the Division of Cardiology in July 2002. The initial involvement of these two physicians in the inception of this community outreach and their continued efforts in its growth and development is something of which The Department of Medicine is extremely proud.

(This article was published in the Jul-August edition of *Vital Signs*.)