



# Community

## *Partnerships between Catholic Health Care Organizations, Catholic Charities, and Other Groups*

**L**ike other health care organizations in the United States, Catholic health care facilities are developing new relationships with a wide array of partners to extend their ministry and to improve efficiency, coordination, and quality of care.

In forming these partnerships, Catholic-sponsored organizations may have an advantage over others. Through Catholic Charities and other social service programs, the Catholic Church in the United States is the largest provider of human services. In addition, the church's network of almost 20,000 parishes enables health care organizations to reach into communities where little infrastructure exists. The current movement toward integration of community-based health and social services creates opportunities for church-sponsored organizations to work together as never before.

*Health Progress* publishes an ongoing series of case studies of such partnerships, hoping they might serve as models for those creating integrated systems of care. These case studies of partnerships between Catholic health care organizations, Catholic Charities agencies, and other groups were prepared by the Catholic Health Association as part of New Covenant, an initiative designed to promote collaborative efforts of the Catholic health ministry at the national and regional levels.

Here is another case study. *Health Progress* will present others in future issues.

**If your health care organization is involved in a similar collaboration, we would like to know about it. Please contact Julie Trocchio by phone at 202-296-3993 or by e-mail at [jtrocch@chausa.org](mailto:jtrocch@chausa.org).**

# Networks

## Xavier Medical Clinic

Tulsa, OK

### Organizational Structure

The clinic is cosponsored by Saint Francis Health System (SFHS) and Catholic Charities of the Diocese of Tulsa.

### Goals of Affiliation

To provide access to health care for uninsured and underinsured members of the Tulsa community.

### The Project

The clinic project began in 1999, when SFHS's leaders asked themselves what they might do to:

- Extend the system's mission into the larger community
- Forge links to other local Catholic organizations, especially Catholic Charities

SFHS conducted a needs assessment that showed a great need for improved health care access among Tulsa's uninsured and underinsured, especially Hispanic and other minority residents. A pilot clinic program of December 1999 was very successful. Soon afterward, SFHS and Catholic Charities launched Xavier Medical Clinic.

The clinic is located in a house that Catholic Charities found and renovated in one of the city's poor neighborhoods. Currently open on Wednesdays from 9 am to 4 pm, it has examination rooms, a small laboratory, and a small pharmacy, stocked in part by sample pharmaceuticals donated by the area's physicians.

Clinic physicians make many referrals to other providers, some of whom donate their services. The clinic's leaders are currently discussing the establishment of a referral fund to help patients with long-range medical problems pay for their treatment. If the fund is created, they will form a board to screen applicants according to financial need.

### Governance Structure

The clinic is managed by its medical director, Phyllis Lauinger, MD; Andrea Hyatt, SFHS' vice president for mission effectiveness; and Tim Sullivan, executive director of Catholic Charities of Tulsa.

### Staff and Budget

The clinic's medical director is the sole paid staff member. Twenty-one local physicians (including pediatricians, gynecologists, and internists), 39 registered nurses, and many licensed practical nurses, lab technicians, and interpreters volunteer their time.

Catholic Charities maintains the clinic building and provides nonmedical aid to patients. SFHS provides the volunteer medical staff, equipment, medical supplies, and technical support, plus laboratory and radiology backup.

### Effect on Community

Community response has been very positive, partly because of strong coverage by the local news media. Local service clubs have donated money and supplies. The Catholic population is especially pleased to see Catholic organizations working closely together.

### Contact:

**Andrea Hyatt**

**Vice President,**

**Mission Effectiveness**

**Saint Francis Health**

**System**

**Tulsa, OK**

**918-494-7539**



### Practical Advice

**"Make sure at the start that the need and the project parameters are clear and that goodwill exists on the part of everyone involved. The clinic has raised the morale of both organizations."**