

# Downtown Clinic Volunteer Handbook



611 South 2<sup>nd</sup>  
Laramie, WY 82070  
Phone: 307-745-8445  
Fax: 307-745-8419  
E-mail: [laramiedtc@gmail.com](mailto:laramiedtc@gmail.com)

# **DOWNTOWN CLINIC VOLUNTEER HANDBOOK**



## **PURPOSE OF THIS HANDBOOK**

This Handbook has been created to introduce you to the Downtown Clinic, its clients, and its mission to serve individuals experiencing poverty without access to healthcare. The Clinic was founded with the belief that all deserved high-quality, innovative, and compassionate care, and that belief continues to this day. This handbook will share a little of the Clinic’s history, philosophy, practices, and policies. We do not expect this handbook to answer all of your questions; however, we hope it gives you a broad picture of our goals and how you can help fulfill them. Please do not hesitate to ask any questions.

# TABLE OF CONTENTS

About the Downtown Clinic (Mission Statement, Philosophy, Background) .....	4
Scope of Services and Eligibility.....	5-6
Volunteer Rights and Responsibilities .....	7-9
Downtown Clinic Staff.....	10
Clinic Operations Policies .....	11-12
HIPAA – Notice of Privacy Practices.....	13-14
Community Partners.....	15
<i>Appendix A: Receipt and Acknowledgement of DTC Volunteer Handbook.....</i>	<i>16</i>

# **ABOUT THE DOWNTOWN CLINIC**

## **MISSION STATEMENT**

The mission of the Downtown Clinic (DTC) is to provide professional, non-emergent acute and chronic care to adult residents of Albany County who lack access to healthcare, without regard to race, ethnicity, gender, marital status, age, political or religious beliefs or sexual orientation. We offer primary care for both acute and chronic health problems to help clients achieve and maintain physical, emotional, and social health. The DTC also serves as an entry point to the social and governmental healthcare systems.

## **PHILOSOPHY**

We believe that many people in our community do not seek medical attention and lack financial resources. We believe that healthcare is a right deserved by all, regardless of economic status. We believe the DTC will help benefit the entire community through its services since healthy people are more likely to be happy, secure, self-reliant, and productive members of society.

## **BACKGROUND**

The founders of the Clinic, Mary E. Burman, UW School of Nursing, and Diana Esteve, Albany County Public Health, determined that there was a great need for a source of primary health care for people with no insurance and limited income.

The doors of the DTC opened on July 14, 1999, after seven months of intensive organization and planning. Four clients received care that first evening. Since then, our client base has grown, with over 11,000 individual clients receiving care in over two decades of service.

The DTC receives strong community support from many sources. Ivinson Memorial Hospital and its imaging consultant, Advanced Medical Imaging, Inc., donate diagnostic testing to the Downtown Clinic. Phlebotomy and laboratory analyses are donated by Ivinson Memorial Hospital and lab analysis company, LabCorp, Inc. Significant financial support is provided by the Guthrie Family Foundation, Etchepare Family Foundation, the Community Service Block Grant Board, United Way, Rocky Mountain Power Foundation, and numerous local civic, professional, and religious organizations. Nearly 80 volunteer medical providers and community members have allowed the DTC to continue to deliver care since its inception and that spirit of community volunteerism has been a constant throughout its history.

A ten-member Board of Directors oversees the DTC. A representative of Albany County Public Health is an ex-officio member of the Board of Directors. The DTC is a nonprofit corporation and maintains a 501(c)(3) status with the Internal Revenue Service.

## **SCOPE OF SERVICES AND ELIGIBILITY**

### **SERVICES PROVIDED**

- Primary acute and chronic non-emergency care.
- Phlebotomy and lab analyses, both in-house and through referrals to IMH
- In-house Pharmacy
- Application to Pharmaceutical Assistance Programs (PAP), as needed.
- Referrals to health care providers and other community organizations.
- Assistance with applications for other organizational services, such as Medicaid, Medicare, and Social Security Disability.
- Physicals for employment.
- Limited mental health care and referral.
- Client health education.
- Limited orthopedic care.
- Limited podiatry care.
- Limited physical therapy
- Limited nutritional education and care
- Limited dermatology care.
- Emergency dental care, through referrals to cooperating dental offices.
- Diagnostic testing.
- Case management for chronic illness
- Vaccinations
- Referrals for vision screening
- Emergency Dental Referrals
- Cancer Screening Referrals
- Respiratory education and clinic

### **SERVICES *NOT* PROVIDED**

- Cosmetic problems.
- Obstetrics and gynecology.
- Family planning or birth control services.
- Emergency care.
- In-home care.
- Specialty care.
- Travel immunizations

## **INDIVIDUAL ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DTC:**

- Household income must be at or below 200% of the Federal Poverty Income Guidelines.
- Not full-time UW students (because health care is available at school).
- They do not have insurance or are eligible for insurance of any kind including VA benefits, Medicaid, or Medicare
- Reside within Albany County, (Laramie, Centennial, Rock River).
- Adults 18- 65 years of age
- Not veterans who qualify for medical services through the VA.
- Individual exceptions to this policy may be made by the Executive Director or the Client Care Coordinator.

## **INTAKE PROCESS:**

Each new incoming client will complete intake paperwork including a financial eligibility assessment form, behavioral health questionnaires, and general Protected Health information. Individuals must bring income documentation on their first visit to the Downtown Clinic. Financial eligibility is verified every six months.

### **The procedure for an appointment is as follows:**

- **Step 1:** Eligibility appointments (1 hour- Social and Medical History)
- **Step 2:** Schedule and establish with Primary Care Provider (30min-1 hour)
- **Step 3:** Schedule & Receive additional services as needed

Clients cannot receive additional services until they have had a primary care appointment.

# VOLUNTEER RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES



*We believe everyone is valuable, everyone deserves care & everyone can help*

## WHAT YOU CAN EXPECT FROM THE DOWNTOWN CLINIC

The DTC provides an integrated approach to health care for low-income, uninsured adult residents of Albany County. Our mission is clear, and we will succeed in the delivery of that mission to the extent that we have generous and caring volunteers to fulfill the many responsibilities required to do so. Your involvement with the DTC is more than an occasional thoughtful act. It is critical to our success. You are the lifeblood of the DTC. We seek to provide a safe and caring atmosphere, as much for our volunteers as for our clients. To do so, it is important that you are aware of your rights as a volunteer as well as your responsibilities, and we welcome your suggestions.

As a DTC volunteer, you can expect to:

- Receive a job description for your assignment.
- Be trusted with confidential information that will help you carry out assignments.
- Be given appropriate expressions of appreciation and recognition.
- Receive adequate information and support from paid staff.
- Receive orientation, training, and supervision for your responsibilities.

- Learn more about the client population and access to care issues.
- Have your concerns addressed and your comments respected.

## WHAT THE DOWNTOWN CLINIC EXPECTS FROM YOU

The DTC asks that you:

- Read and understand the volunteer handbook.
- Treat all clients and staff with courtesy and respect in a manner that will maintain their dignity and privacy.
- Create an atmosphere that embraces diversity.
- Follow strict rules of confidentiality. You will be asked to sign an agreement not to divulge any client information to maintain HIPAA regulations.
- Report for duty on time, and inform the Executive Director or Client Care Coordinator of any planned absence or lateness as soon as possible.
- Present a neat, pleasant, and professional appearance when volunteering at the DTC.
- Provide feedback to the DTC to help us continually improve our services.
- Uphold the mission of the organization.

## VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES

Volunteer opportunities include, but not limited to:

- **Reception/Eligibility** – (No Certification Required) greet clients, file and update electronic records, help manage clinic flow, office tasks, answer telephone, assists with scheduling, etc.
- **Intake** (requires RN, CNA, EMT or above)- take vital signs, interview client about today's problems, work with screening programs
- **Pharmacy Assistant** (No certification required) - help our certified pharmacy technician and pharmacy intern prepare prescriptions for a final check by a pharmacist (basically locating correct meds and counting pills)
- **Medical Translation** (mainly Spanish, but also need Hindi, Arabic, Cantonese, and Mandarin) on-site medical translations during patients' appointments, scheduling appointments, and flyers/online post translation.
- **Nursing** (requires RN/LPN or above) Examples of nursing support include dental referral, diabetic footcare & exams, and diabetic education
- **Healthcare Provider** (FNP, APRN, MD, etc): Providing primary or specialty care
- **Pharmacist** (PharmD): Support general medication dispensing operation



## **VOLUNTEER POLICIES**

The confidentiality and privacy of our clients are of utmost importance. Consequently, the following policy addresses volunteering by clients and family members.

All positions involving direct service at the Downtown Clinic involve confidential and/or sensitive information and materials. No person who is a client at the Downtown Clinic, a family member of a client, or any person sharing living space with the client may volunteer at the Clinic in any client-related positions, including reception, social work, primary care, nursing, pharmacy, psychology, and medical records.

## **VOLUNTEERING PROCEDURES**

Each person who volunteers at the Downtown Clinic shall:

- Complete a volunteer application form, which documents educational and/or work experience.
- Complete the confidentiality form.

## **IMMUNIZATION REQUIREMENTS**

Volunteering with the Downtown Clinic is contingent upon your proof of vaccination

We require all volunteers, interns, and staff members to have OR show proof of:

- PPD date and results (or IGRA)
- Hepatitis B vaccination and/or serologic testing date
- Influenza vaccination (required annually)
- Varicella vaccination (HCP documentation of clinical disease date/serologic testing)
- Tdap vaccination
- Measles, Mumps & Rubella vaccination (HCP documentation of clinical disease date/serologic testing)
- COVID-19 vaccination (recommended not required)

## **CANCELLATIONS/TARDINESS**

Due to the nature of our work, all volunteers must be present and on time. If you need to cancel or you will be late, please call the clinic at (307) 745-8445. Ideally, get in touch with us as soon as you know you are unable to make it, but we understand emergencies happen.

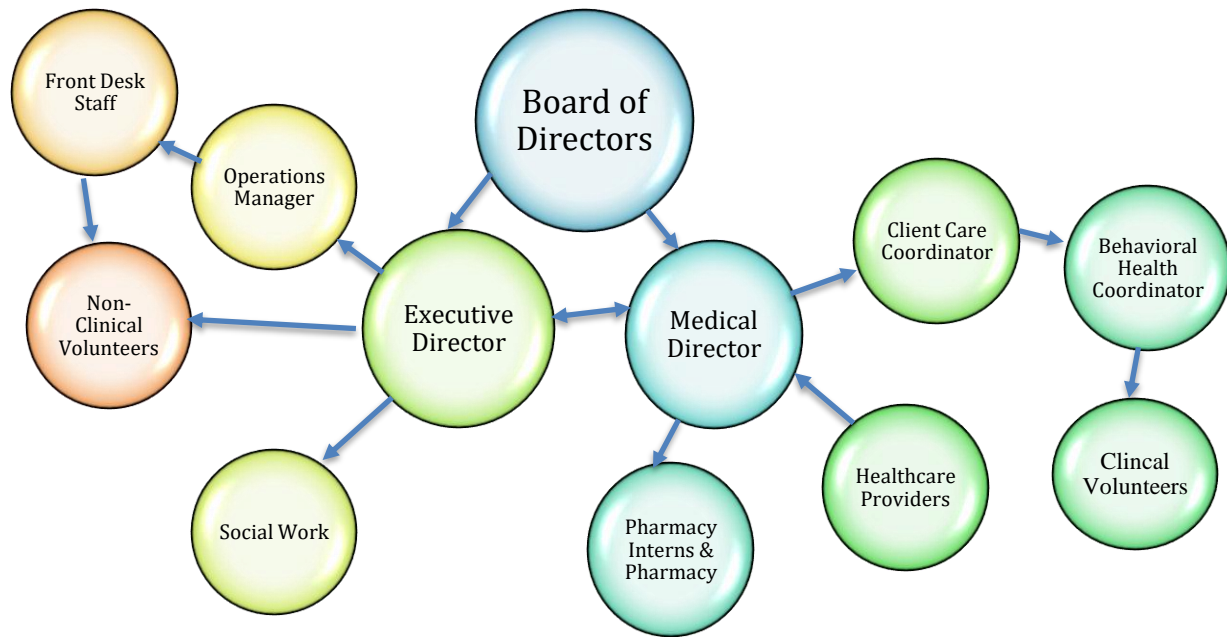
## **COMPLAINTS**

If you have a complaint or would like to discuss any concerns you have, the Executive Director is available by calling the clinic at 745-8445 or emailing the address below. If after working with the Executive Director, you feel the need to file a grievance, the DTC has a grievance process. A copy of the grievance procedure is available from the receptionist at the DTC or by mailing a request to P.O. Box 834, Laramie, WY 82073, or by requesting by email to [laramiedtc@gmail.com](mailto:laramiedtc@gmail.com).

*Downtown Clinic Volunteer Handbook*

*Revised: August 2023*

## DOWNTOWN CLINIC STAFF



The DTC employs five full-time staff members and four staff members who work part-time only: The Executive Director, the Client Care Coordinator, Operations Manager, Behavior Health Coordinator, and Social Worker are full-time positions. The Medical Director, Pharmacy Interns, and Healthcare Providers are part-time positions.

The **Executive Director** is responsible for the administrative duties and supervisory work in planning, organizing, and directing all aspects of the DTC program by the bylaws and policies, and procedures of the DTC.

The **Medical Director(s)** oversees Clinical staff members of the Downtown Clinic including Clinical staff, volunteers, and interns.

The **Client Care Coordinator** is responsible for coordinating client care. The Client Care Coordinator works closely with the Executive Director, staff, and volunteers of the DTC to facilitate continuity of care for clients of the DTC.

The **Behavior Health Coordinator** supports coordinating client care, working under the supervision of the Client Care Coordinator. The Behavioral Health Coordinator works closely with the Executive Director, staff, and volunteers of the DTC to facilitate continuity of care for clients of the DTC. The Behavior Health coordinator focuses on mental health management and community referrals.

The **Operations Manager**, supports the daily operations and project management, working under the supervision of the Executive Director. The Operations Manager is responsible for supporting administrative duties and planning of organizing aspects of the DTC program. This includes volunteer management and office coordination.

**Healthcare Providers** are responsible for providing primary care for complex clients with a variety of chronic illnesses. The Healthcare Providers will develop a plan of care for each client receiving case management in consultation with pharmacy, psychology, nursing, social work, and other disciplines as needed.

**Pharmacy Intern** is responsible for the maintenance and operation of the DTC medication dispensing site, working under the direction of licensed pharmacists and within DTC policies and procedures.

## **CLINIC OPERATION POLICY**

The DTC is open on Tuesdays and Thursdays from 9:00 am to 3:00 pm and Wednesdays from 2 pm to 7 pm. The Clinic hosts primary care, specialty clinics (dermatology, orthopedics, and respiratory therapy), nursing, counseling, social work, vaccinations, referrals, and physical therapy. The DTC has an onsite medication distribution site and provides prescription medicine pick-up from 5:00 pm to 6:00 pm on Thursday nights. Although previously filled medications can be picked up at any time. The Downtown Clinic provides services through scheduled appointments, but walk-in clients are still accommodated, if possible.

The DTC began taking appointments (as opposed to being a walk-in clinic) in January 2012.

### **BASIC CLIENT CARE OVERVIEW**

Each client will be evaluated for social and mental health needs on their initial visit and will be escorted to each service area within the Downtown Clinic by DTC personnel. This process may be assisted by the Social Worker on a case-by-case basis, based on clients' holistic needs. Any care authorized through the DTC, that is to be provided outside of the DTC setting, must be arranged through the DTC by the Client Care Coordinator or Behavioral Health Coordinator. A referral packet from the DTC will accompany each client being referred to an outside provider. Follow-up on outside referrals will be the responsibility of the Client Care Coordinator and Behavioral Health Coordinator.

### **STAFFING**

There will be an MD, Family Nurse Practitioner, or Physician Assistant, present during all clinic hours when clients are being seen for primary care. It is desirable to have a minimum staff of two primary care providers, one RN, one social worker, one pharmacist, one psychologist, and two receptionists during DTC hours. When clients are being seen, we have a minimum of two personnel on site. A receptionist will remain at the front desk during Clinical Hours of Operation, as long as there are clients in the Clinic. If possible, a Spanish interpreter will be available during Clinical Hours.

## **MEDICAL RECORDS ACCESS POLICY**

The DTC transitioned to an electronic medical record system in June 2017. Volunteers and staff at the Downtown Clinic will have access to components of this system based on their job descriptions and/or job responsibilities:

Primary care providers (physicians, nurse practitioners, and physician assistants), psychologists, counselors, nurses, social workers, pharmacists, dental referral nurses, medical records personnel, volunteers, and the Executive Director will have access to the complete client record as necessary. Persons doing eligibility determination will have access to the financial information and the medical and social history components in the client record. Intake volunteers will have access to the vitals documentation record. Receptionists will only have access to that part of the client record for entering and updating demographics, scheduling, and checking clients in and out of appointments. Other volunteers, such as pharmacy assistants, will not have access to client records.

The Downtown Clinic is an educational site for health professional students, and under the supervision of their faculty, may have access to medical and/or psychological records for educational purposes.

The Downtown Clinic is a place of growth and improvement. We believe everyone is valuable thus, feedback from volunteers, staff, and interns is vital to the success and growth of the clinic.

## **EMERGENCIES**

If an emergency should arise while you are at the DTC, first contact the Client Care Coordinator and the Executive Director. In some situations, if the emergency is medical, please call 911 for an ambulance. For a non-emergency civil concern, contact the Laramie Police Department at 911 OR 721-2526.

Be sure you are oriented to the location of “panic buttons” in the DTC. There are panic buttons in every room including counseling room, social work, examination rooms, offices, and reception.

If you have the misfortune to be confronted by an angry, upset, or belligerent client, and you have tried to calm the individual to no avail, let the client know that you will be directing the situation to the Executive Director and then do so.

Clients, staff, interns, and volunteers should be treated with kindness and should treat you with kindness. You should not experience any abuse of any kind from a client, volunteer, or staff member. **Should you experience any abuse, please let the Executive Director, Client Care Coordinator, or member of staff know.**

# NOTICE OF PRIVACY PRACTICES

THIS NOTICE DESCRIBES HOW HEALTH INFORMATION ABOUT CLIENTS MAY BE USED AND DISCLOSED AND HOW CLIENTS CAN GET ACCESS TO THIS INFORMATION AT THE DOWNTOWN CLINIC. PLEASE REVIEW IT CAREFULLY.

State and Federal laws require us to maintain the privacy of client health information and to inform you about our privacy practices by providing you with this Notice. We must follow the privacy practices described below. This Notice will take effect on April 14, 2003, and will remain in effect until it is amended or replaced by us.

It is our right to change our privacy practices, provided the law permits the changes. Before we make a significant change, this Notice will be amended to reflect the changes and we will make the new Notice available upon request. We reserve the right to make any changes in our privacy practices and the new terms of our Notice effective for all health information maintained, created, and/or received by us before the date changes were made.

You may request a copy of our Privacy Notice at any time at the DTC reception or by contacting our Privacy Officer, Pete Gosar. Information on contacting us can be found at the end of this Notice.

## TYPICAL USES AND DISCLOSURES OF HEALTH INFORMATION

We keep Client health information confidential, using it only for the following purposes:

**Treatment:** We may health information to provide clients with our professional services. We have established “minimum necessary or need to know” standards that limit various staff members’ access to client health information according to their primary job functions. Everyone in our office including staff, interns, or volunteers is required to sign a confidentiality statement including:

**Disclosure:** We may disclose and/or share client healthcare information with other healthcare professionals who provide treatment and/or service to clients. These professionals will have a privacy and confidentiality policy like this one. Health information may also be disclosed to your family, friends, and/or other persons you choose to involve in your care, only if you agree that we may do so.

**Emergencies:** We may use or disclose client health information to notify, or assist in the notification of a family member or anyone responsible for the client's care. In case of any emergency involving your care, your location, your general condition, or death. If at all possible, we will provide clients with an opportunity to object to this use or disclosure. Under emergency conditions or if a client is incapacitated, we will use our professional judgment to disclose only that information directly relevant to a client's care. We will also use our professional judgment to make reasonable inferences of the client's best interest by allowing someone to pick up filled prescriptions, x-rays, or other similar forms of health information and/or supplies unless a client has advised us otherwise.

**Healthcare Operations:** We will use and disclose client health information to keep our practice operable. Examples of personnel who may have access to this information include but are not limited to, our medical records staff, outside health or management reviewers, and individuals performing similar activities.

**Required by Law:** We may use or disclose clients' health information when we are required to do so by law (court or administrative orders, subpoenas, discovery requests, or other lawful processes). We will use and disclose client information when requested by national security, intelligence, and other State and Federal officials and/or if a client is an inmate or otherwise under the custody of law enforcement.

**Abuse or Neglect:** We may disclose a clients health information to appropriate authorities if we reasonably believe that the client is a possible victim of abuse, neglect, or domestic violence or the possible 12 victim of other crimes. This information will be disclosed only to the extent necessary to prevent a serious threat to a client's health or safety or that of others.

**Public Health Responsibilities:** We will disclose your health care information to report problems with products, reactions to medications, product recalls, disease/infection exposure and to prevent and control disease, injury, and/or disability.

**Marketing Health-Related Services:** We will not use client health information for marketing purposes unless we have a client's written authorization to do so.

**National Security:** The health information of Armed Forces personnel may be disclosed to military authorities under certain circumstances. If client information is required for lawful intelligence, counterintelligence, or other national security activities, we may disclose it to authorized federal officials.

**Appointment Reminders:** We may use or disclose client health information to provide you with appointment reminders, including, but not limited to, voicemail messages, emails, texts, or letters.

## **CONTACT INFORMATION:**

The Downtown Clinic  
611 S. 2<sup>nd</sup> St.  
Laramie, WY 82070  
Privacy Officer: Pete Gosar  
Telephone: (307) 745-8445, Fax: (307) 745-8149.  
E-Mail: [laramiedtc@gmail.com](mailto:laramiedtc@gmail.com)

## **PARTNERING AGENCIES**

The Downtown Clinic partners with other Albany County agencies. A few of our partnering agencies include but are not limited to:

- **Albany County Public Health** provides vaccinations (childhood as well as travel) and hosts the Women, Infants, and Children (WIC) nutrition program.
- **Laramie Reproductive Health Clinic (LRHC)** provides well-woman exams, STI and HIV testing, reproductive health care, and birth control. LRHC provides service on a sliding-fee scale and also accepts insurance.
- **Albany Community Health Clinic (ACHC)** provides acute and chronic health care, mental health care, basic in-house testing, and physical examinations. The ACHC provides service on a sliding-fee scale and also accepts insurance.
- **Interfaith Good Samaritan** assists with housing, utilities, budgeting, financial counseling, limited toiletries, and food.
- **VOA (Volunteers of America)** provides extended counseling and any problems involving prescriptions for narcotics or attention deficit disorders.
- **Laramie Soup Kitchen** provides daily meals, to-go meals, and other food assistance.
- **SAFE Project** provides safe housing, case management, and legal assistance for those experiencing domestic violence.
- **Feeding Laramie Valley** donates fresh food and produces to Downtown Clinic clients.

# Acknowledgment of Receipt & Downtown Clinic Volunteer Handbook



This Volunteer Handbook is an important document intended to help you become acquainted with the Downtown Clinic. This Handbook serves as a guide; it is not the final word in all cases. We hope that this Handbook illustrates our Mission and Vision, which serve our clients.

Please read the following statements and sign below to indicate your receipt and acknowledgment of the Downtown Clinic Volunteer Handbook.

- I have been given the opportunity to ask questions and gain clarification on the information presented in the handbook.
- I understand the policies, rules, and benefits described in this document are subject to change at the sole discretion of the Downtown Clinic at any time.
- I further understand that my volunteering is terminable at will, either by myself or the Downtown Clinic, regardless of the length of my volunteering.
- I understand that my signature below indicates that I have received this copy of the handbook and that I read it before my first volunteer assignment.

Volunteer Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Volunteer Coordinator's Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_