

Saturday Clinic for the Uninsured

“Smiling Sophie”



At 7:30 in the morning, Sophie is smiling. She is number 17 in a line of over 30 people waiting to be seen at the Saturday Clinic for the Uninsured, and there's a really good chance she's going to be able to see a doctor today. She got here at 7:00 a.m. - but some people have been in line longer than that. Hopefully she can be seen soon, as she has to be at work in a couple of hours. Sophie, in her early 40's, works full-time as a Personal Care Worker. It is ironic that she provides for the health care of others; but her job provides no health insurance. Since her first visit three years ago, she has come every two to three months to follow up for her diabetes and high blood pressure. Seeing the effects it had on her family, Sophie took charge of her health and has made great efforts to obtain much-needed healthcare.

When she first came to visit the doctors at the clinic, she had a hemoglobin A1C level of over 14%. Hemoglobin A1C is a blood test used to measure how well a person's diabetes is controlled. Below 6% is normal, and anything over 8% is usually cause for concern. Within a year of regular visits, medications, and lifestyle modifications, Sophie was able to reduce her level to about 7%. Sophie has spent her entire life living in Milwaukee, and thinks the Saturday Clinic for the Uninsured “is a great program”. She likes talking with the students, and “enjoys helping the students learn”. If it weren't for the Saturday Clinic she's not sure where she would get healthcare.

The line is moving slow today so Sophie holds her spot while she runs to work to tell her boss she will be a little late. When she returns, she is able to quickly see a doctor, get refills of her medications, get her blood drawn, and go back to work within half an hour. As she walks out in to the warm July day, Sophie is still smiling.

For more information on the Saturday Clinic for the Uninsured please visit:
www.columbia-stmarys.org