



Advancing Collaboration with the Good Shepherd Clinic

Approach to Collaboration

The Good Shepherd Clinic is a free and charitable clinic for the low-income and uninsured in Oklahoma City. Everything we do is a collaboration in one form or another. We currently work with the OU College of Dentistry, who sends their dental students to us so they can receive hands-on experiences by working with our patient population. We also have a pharmacy and a medical side that provides opportunities for students who come in and follow our doctors.

Further, we've collaborated with the Health Alliance for the Uninsured (HAU) - they're a referral source for us so we can send our patients to doctors

or hospitals for CT scans or X-rays that we can't provide. We're currently working with HAU on another collaboration so we can give more back to our community. We recently open the eye exam clinic and are doing eye exams and glaucoma resting for our diabetic patients. Once we're more established, HAU will refer other free clinics to us so their patients can receive eye exams as well. We've collaborated this way in the past with the Open Arms Clinic, which is a free medical clinic as well, but they don't have a dental clinic. We offered them access to ours and are now seeing twenty of their dental patients a month. We're constantly sharing our assets with others to create great collaborations. We believe we can only succeed if we do it together.

Application of the 9 Considerations for Collaboration

Build Trust

We believe in trusting our volunteers and donors, just as they put their trust in us. In our collaborations with universities, we put our faith in their quality of instruction provided to students who rotate in our clinic. We rely on the public's trust and word of mouth, especially in our patient population.

Have a Vision

We're always considering the future of our organization in our strategic planning and thinking. As of now, we're situated in the middle of downtown Oklahoma City, in the parking lot of First Baptist Church. The church owns the building we operate in; we are fortunate to receive free rent, though we pay the insurance and maintain the building. However, we acknowledge the notion that if the church transfers ownership, we might not get to retain the building. We're considering seeking out some land so we can plan and have an option of building in the future.

Seek to Assure the Success of Your Collaborators

In terms of city projects, the first step is to bring everybody to the table together so we can build and expand on the resources we have.

Take Stock

Delta Dental Foundation is a major donor of ours. They see the dental students that we're teaching, and they're able to see the impact we're making. They've invested in some dental equipment that they're storing with us, and they're bringing instructors in to teach on this particular dental machine, which creates an opportunity to include more of the community. The success of our collaboration with Delta Dental relies heavily on the fact that we're open to work with them and expand in ways that will help the community as a whole.

Start Small

We're starting small with our collaborations with Dean McGee Eye Institute, who donated parts of the eye equipment to our emerging eye clinic. As of now, we're relying on one ophthalmologist from the office

to volunteer his time and perform eye exams. If the collaboration succeeds, then we can build on it.

Fail Fast, and Build Rigorous Feedback Loops

Our partnership with the Oklahoma Charitable Clinic Association Board ran into difficulties because we didn't have a solidified board. Many members didn't realize the commitment and time associated with the Free and Charitable Clinic, so we had to rebuild the board. We learned that it's challenging to run an association without some paid staff, as members can't do it all. We believe that hiring a part-time executive director might be helpful to share some of the responsibilities of the board members.

Take a Portfolio Approach

One of the hospitals we work with sends its residents to us as a part of their residency program. We need to expand on having more residents volunteer in our clinic to make a bigger impact on caring for the community. We collaborate with many hospitals, but we've discovered a need to try to figure out what we can do if and when we lose a particular service provider. We need to find others who are willing to step in and take on a little more.

Consider Non-traditional Partners

We've been fortunate enough to experience the benefits of partnering with people who work in completely different industries. Keller Williams Realtors recently raised \$14,000 for paint, flowers, trees, and more; thirty of them came in and carried out a renovation day at our clinic. As a real estate company, their motivation was to help out a neighbor, and we feel extremely grateful to have experienced such benevolence.

Keep Your Donors Apprised of Your Collaborations

We prioritize keeping our donors apprised of our collaborations and have felt the kindness of our donors in return. One of our dental vendors recently went out of his way to introduce another potential donor, so we could ask for a seed gift to build an endowment and secure our future.

Future Collaborations

We would love to collaborate with a funder who would allow their employees to volunteer in our pharmacy. We also hope to work with more hospitals so they can refer their patients, nurses, doctors, and PAs to our clinic. We can help hospitals alleviate their financial loads instead of having to write off their debt by helping them see the patients who aren't able to pay their bills.

Also, while we wait to welcome our community back, we're using our time and resources to do our part on the frontlines of the 2020 pandemic crisis in keeping our community healthy and out of the emergency rooms. We continue to prepare for the upcoming increase in healthcare demand. There will be an influx of those needing our help due to the large number of people losing their jobs and health insurance, as well as the millions of families affected by the most dramatic disruption of the labor market since the Great Depression.

Good Shepherd is continuing to see medical patients and asking volunteer doctors to come back and care for our patients. Our volunteers and staff are working hard on many upcoming events, and we are enlisting the help of our community to make them successful. We are asking our community to help us prepare for this increase of patients and our future sustainability by participating or donating to these events. Additionally, we ask for them to support us financially to meet the untimely needs.



Pam Timmons,
Executive Director
Good Shepherd Clinic

About the Organization

Good Shepherd Clinic provides consistent, quality medical and dental services for the vulnerable members in our community.

Disclaimer: All participants were interviewed about past collaborations through the framework of the 9 Considerations for Collaboration. Naturally in some organizations, not every one of the considerations are applicable to their circumstances.