

NC Family to Family Health Information Center

"A beacon for families of children with special health care needs."

NC Family to Family Health Information Center
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Fact Sheet

17

Public Health Programs 2 Low Cost/Free Clinics

A Free Clinic is a private, nonprofit, community-based organization that provides medical care at little or no charge to low-income, uninsured and underinsured persons through the use of volunteer health care professionals and partnerships with other health providers.

North Carolina has over 50 Free Clinics, more free medical clinics than any other state in the country. There are approximately 1850 Free Clinics nationwide. The first Free Clinics in America were organized in California in 1967.

Common Characteristics of Free Clinics:

- Community Based

No two Free Clinics are alike. They are custom-designed by communities to meet identified health care needs using the community's unique health care assets and resources. Free Clinics are governed by volunteer Board of Directors representing a broad cross-section of the community.

- Private, Nonprofit

Free Clinics are private, nonprofit organizations supported primarily by cash and in-kind contributions from the private sector.

- Volunteer Driven

Volunteerism is a central feature of Free Clinics. Free Clinic services are provided primarily or exclusively by volunteer health care professionals serving in the clinic's own facility and/or in their own private practice setting. Lay volunteers also perform a variety of administrative and clerical tasks thus keeping overhead costs low.

- Target Low-Income, Uninsured, and Underinsured Adults

In NC this is the population that has the greatest difficulty accessing affordable health care services. While eligibility criteria vary from one to the next, Free Clinics conduct rigorous eligibility screening to ensure that the patients they serve are truly in need.

- Little or No Charges

Free Clinics believe that inability to pay should not prevent people from receiving health care. To this end, Free Clinics provide services at little or no charge.

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Public Health Programs 2

Low Cost/Free Clinics

- **Compassionate Care**
Free Clinics place strong emphasis on providing non-judgmental, compassionate care, respecting the dignity and self-worth of every patient.

For More Information

For more information contact NC Association of Free Clinics at (336) 251-1111 or visit: www.ncfreeclinics.org. This website has a complete list of Free Clinics in NC.

Source: North Carolina Association of Free Clinics: What is a Free Clinic? at www.ncfreeclinics.org