

Prince William Area Free Clinic

Behavioral Health and the Holidays

As discussions centering on mental health also known as behavioral health are on the rise it is important to discuss behavioral health and the holidays. Per the CDC it is a well documented fact that suicide numbers do not increase during the holidays, but instances of Seasonally Affected Disorder (SAD), and the "holiday blues" do. Suicide is still a very serious issue and is the 10th leading cause of death among adults in the U.S. So what are warning signs of the "holiday blues", SAD, and Suicide, and what can you do?

In a survey conducted by the National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI) 64% of adults said that they are affected by the "holiday blues". Symptoms might include fatigue, tension, frustration, an increased feeling of loneliness or isolation, sadness, and a sense of loss. Per NAMI, "the difference between the holiday blues and clinic anxiety or depression is that the feelings are temporary. However, short-term problems must still be taken seriously ...". Per the National Institute of Mental Health (NIMH), SAD is a type of major depression that comes and goes with the seasons. Symptoms include feeling depressed most of the day, nearly every day, feeling hopeless or worthless, low energy, loss of interest in activities, sleep issues, changes in appetite and weight, feeling sluggish or agitated, difficulty concentrating, and having frequent thoughts of death or suicide.

The Suicide Prevention Resource Center states that an immediate risk of suicide can be indicated by some behaviors that include: talking about wanting to die or to kill oneself, looking for a way to kill oneself, and talking about feeling hopeless or having no reason to live. If you know anyone exhibiting those three symptoms please immediately call the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline at **1-800-273-TALK** and call the police. People at serious risk, for committing suicide may exhibit behaviors that include: talking about feeling trapped or in unbearable pain, talking about being a burden to others, the increased use of alcohol or drugs, acting anxious or agitated, behaving recklessly, abnormal sleep patterns (too little or too much), withdrawing or feeling isolated, showing rage or talking about seeking revenge, and displaying extreme mood swings. If you or anyone you know is displaying these warning signs, especially if they are new, please call a behavioral health expert and the police if it is an emergency.

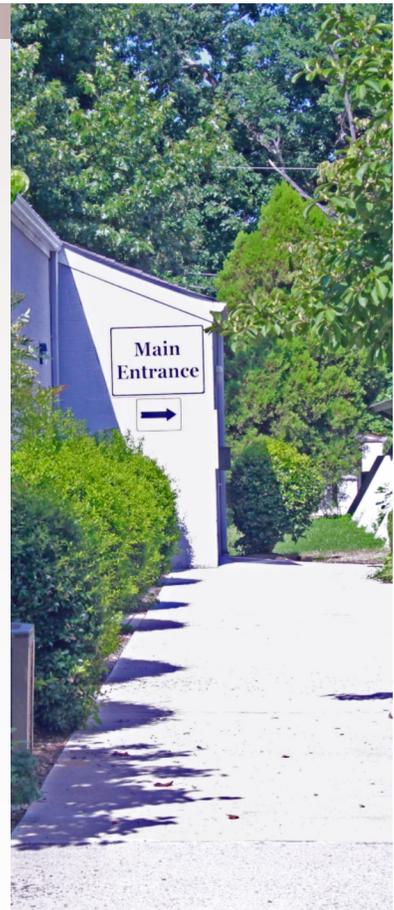
If you are interested in becoming a Mental Health First Aid Responder the NOVA Veterans Association holds regular trainings. For more information please visit novavets.org.

Resources on Depression

- American Psychiatric Association Answer Center 1-888-35-PSYCH (77924)
- Depression and Bipolar Support Alliance www.dbsalliance.org
- Depression Screening www.depression-screening.org
- National Alliance on Mental Illness www.nami.org
- National Council for Behavioral Health www.thenationalcouncil.org

Resources on Suicide

- American Foundation for Suicide Prevention www.afsp.org
- Mental Health America <http://www.mentalhealthamerica.net/mental-health-screening-tools>
- National Suicide Prevention Lifeline 1-800-273-TALK (8255)
- Veterans Crisis Line 1-800-273-8255, Press 1
- 9-1-1



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Patient Story: Mike and Roz, a Partnership

Mike* is a relatively new patient of the PWAFC. Having no medical insurance he came to the clinic to receive much needed medical care. When he first arrived at the clinic's door in June, his A1C was 11.9. An A1C blood test calculates a person's average blood glucose level over the previous three month period. At 11.9, his result far exceeded the recommended level of 4.5 – 5.9. Mike needed help controlling his Type 2 diabetes and his cholesterol levels.

Ms. Rosalinde "Roz" Smith, a volunteer Physician's Assistant with the clinic, met with him and started developing a course of treatment. When Roz discussed Mike starting insulin he was adamant about not wanting his new norm to be a daily routine of insulin injections. He was given two choices by his healthcare team; get the diabetes under control with a treatment plan that included oral medication, a healthy diet, and exercise, or resign himself to taking the insulin. Mike chose to make a diet and exercise lifestyle change.

After three months Mike returned to the clinic for a follow-up visit to have another A1C test taken so that the healthcare team could update his treatment plan as required. When the results come back Roz and Mike were pleased with his drastic improvement. Mike's A1C had dropped to 6.9. This is an amazing change in such a short time.

Dramatic changes in numbers like this highlights what the PWAFC strives for in a successful patient-provider relationship. Mike was given education and motivation from Roz and he in turn was determined to get his diabetes under control and was compliant in following his treatment plan. When patients like Mike have access to appropriate medical care, such as what the PWAFC provides, our patients are given a partner in improving the quality of their life and health management.

"Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed citizens can change the world; indeed, it's the only thing that ever has." —Margaret Mead

The PWAFC Staff!

We want to recognize and thank the following four people for their years of service and dedication to our patients.

- Hend Abu-Joudeh, PRN Pharmacist
- Valerie Cyrus, Medication Case Manager
- Jennifer Parsons, Medication Case Manager
- Thida Vongkaysone, Patient Navigator

We are sad when our staff members leave us but each change brings us a new opportunity and we are eager to welcome our new team members! Please welcome (in order of appearance in the photo):

- Brenda Bateman, Care Coordinator
- DeSean Golatt, Medication Case Manager
- Ana Ventura Palacios, Patient Navigator
- Iris Rivera, Medication Case Manager

Letter from the Executive Director

As a clinic we are gearing up for a large organizational culture shift as we are on the cusp of implementing an Electronic Medical Record (EMR). This is important because it will improve our intra and inter clinic operations. An EMR will offer more conveniences for patients, taking less time out of their lives and most importantly, it will help us improve our patients' health outcomes. With more data we can better track the care we provide and how patients are responding to it, becoming healthier members of our community. However, change is not easy even when it comes readily. It will present unexpected challenges and require that every member of the PWAFC team, from staff to volunteer to come together and work in a cohesive unit. It requires patience, and determination to see this through. Even if it hurts to change now, it will hurt more not to have changed later.

In a time of change there are great lessons that can be taken and applied at a macro and micro level. As we face changes from something as simple as the seasons, to something as large as a new, primary, organizational tool there are several things to keep in mind to help. Do you know what the end stage/where you want to end up looks like clearly? Do you know what the "champagne moments" are along the way? Are you prepared for things to go wrong, and have plans to accommodate? Do you know how you learn and communicate to best be taught and can teach others?

Self-care is vitally important when going through any sort of change. In times of change it is important to protect yourself against burn-out. As a health care provider we need to stay mission focused, keeping the end result in sight. Our patients have to find their "champagne moments" on their way to managing a healthy lifestyle and not become discouraged. As a friend or volunteer of the clinic it is important to know when you need to spend time taking care of yourself versus taking care of others. I sincerely hope this newsletter finds you well and want to thank you for all the support you have shown the PWAFC. I also sincerely hope that you find time to take a 'me' moment and practice some self-care.

Best Regards,

Caitlin R. Denney, MS



Amir, a volunteer who recently started medical school, reviewing a patients eligibility before calling them up to check-in for their appointment.

Changing Perceptions

Two and a half years ago my friend, Linda, discovered The Prince William Area Free Clinic as a place where the two of us might want to volunteer. I knew a little about the clinic as my Aunt Ruthie had volunteered as a nurse there for many years. I honestly had never given it much thought, as my limited perception was that I would need some medical training to be a part of the clinic.

Linda and I met with the director and found that there were other ways in which we could contribute. Our plan was to volunteer on alternate weeks, but that plan changed quickly as our attachment to the clinic was immediate. From the beginning, we have both volunteered weekly together. Our main function is to screen the clients, which has been such a rewarding experience for both of us.

I'm not sure what I expected the clinic environment to be, but what I discovered is that it is a warm, welcoming place for clients and volunteers alike. Our clients are treated with respect and dignity. In return they are so appreciative of the services they receive. I've found that while they have this need, most are very hard working people. They are simply in circumstances where they are unable to pay for health services, or insurance.

The services at the clinic extend so far beyond what I expected. In addition to seeing dedicated nurses and doctors, there is a pharmacy where qualifying patients pick up their medications from our friendly, efficient pharmacists. Patients may be referred to other doctors and even to University of Virginia when their condition warrants it. In addition to medical and dental services, there are various other wonderful things happening at the clinic. Nurses in training present various classes to our clients. Churches, as well as other community organizations and businesses, donate food, coats and a variety of goods that are distributed through the clinic.

The Prince William Area Free Clinic is so much more than my initial perception. It seems as though each time I am there I learn of something else the clinic does to meet the needs of the most needy in our area. Though the core of the clinic is the nurses and doctors and the services only they can provide, the Prince William Area Free Clinic is so much beyond that....and I have only touched on part of what makes the clinic so special!

— Linda Hunt, Volunteer

What We've Done in 2017

While the year isn't over yet we would like to showcase all of the amazing work the PWAFC, it's staff and volunteers have managed to accomplish from January through October. Thus far we:

- Have seen 1,881 unduplicated patients
- Had more than 15,447 patient encounters
- Wrote more than 1,452 specialty-care referrals
- Assisted more than 200 patients receive transportation to a specialty referral
- Through Sentara, and Novant UVA health helped patients access 10,285 laboratory tests, radiology orders, and mammograms
- Connected patients to more than 3,819 medications
- Had more than 145 volunteers work with the clinic
- Picked up more than 2,000 lbs of food from the Dale City's Farmer market for our patients to come "shop"
- Had three coat drives courtesy of individual donations as well as the Woodbridge, and Montclair Lions Clubs
- Held one health fair that brought more than 25 different safety-net organizations together in one place
- Held more than 10 dental clinics using our new portable x-ray machine to help target patients dental needs with the correct providers.

PWAFC's Diabetic Prevention Program and partnering with Kaiser Permanente

In the United States approximately 86 million adults, or one out of every three, have pre-diabetes. More than 90% of those with pre-diabetes don't know that they have it. Just by having prediabetes these adults are already at a greater risk for heart disease and stroke.

The Diabetes Prevention Program (DPP), is a CDC recognized lifestyle change program design for people diagnosed with prediabetes or are at risk of developing type 2 diabetes. Pre-Diabetes is most commonly diagnosed by an A1C test result between the 5.6 and 7 range. DPP is a lifestyle change program conducted in a group setting and consists of modules that help change aspects of participants' lifestyle over the course of a year. Topics include eating healthier, increasing physical activity, mental well-being and reducing stress. The program is designed to be a year-long tool to help create a sustainable lifestyle change.

The PWAFC has identified a pool of eligible patients with prediabetes who have been invited to join our first cohort. We are planning to start our first English language cohort in December and a Spanish language cohort in 2018. Through the generosity of Kaiser Permanente of the Mid-Atlantic States the clinic has been provided with funding to help us purchase incentives from cook-wear to pedometers that will help participants achieve and maintain their goals. While our DPP program is limited to our patients the Virginia Department of Health has helped at least two other sites in Prince William County to become CDC recognized if you or someone you know is interested in participating. For more information visit: <https://www.cdc.gov/diabetes/prevention/>
—Elsa Levita, LPN, Diabetic Coordinator

Volunteer Spotlight: Kaiser Permanente Community Ambassador Program

The Prince William Area Free Clinic is fortunate to partner with Kaiser Permanente of the Mid-Atlantic States for their Community Ambassador Program (KP CAP). This program places skilled nurse practitioners and physician's assistants in select safety net health clinics throughout the District of Columbia, Maryland and Virginia. After orientation and training, the clinicians are assigned to different clinics and work either full or part time as a medical provider. Over the past five years we have been fortunate to have four community ambassadors work with the clinic. Abigail "Abby" Phillips and Rosalinde "Roz" Smith, who are still providers at the clinic, David Dickey who has moved on to another great opportunity, and Margaret Collins who retired this year.

Nurse practitioner Abby Phillip's parents immigrated to the United States from the Philippines. Abby was born in Washington, DC and her early school years were spent in Springfield, VA. She completed her college education at Georgetown University. Abby has been employed by Kaiser Permanente for 15 years, of which the last five have been with us at the PWAFC. As well as English, she also speaks Spanish, and Tagalog, which is a great help in building a rapport and communicating with her patients.

Abby, who has been with the PWAFC the longest, loves many things about working at the clinic, especially the warm and loving patient population. She says that, "although my patients have lots of hardships, they all want to get better and improve their health." Since the PWAFC is the medical home for so many, they are getting healthier because they receive regular care and are avoiding unnecessary trips to the emergency room. Abby teaches healthy living skills as part of her patient visits and loves building a partnership with her patients. She enjoys learning about their families and being there for the good times and the bad.

When she is not at the clinic, Abby enjoys time with her family and their dog. She is married and has three children. All of her children are involved in sports and Abby enjoys exercise as well; practicing what she preaches to her patients. She loves to clean believing that an organized life is a happy life. The Free Clinic is so fortunate to have Abby as part of the team.

Mrs. Roz Smith has been a physician's assistant at the clinic for nearly four years, and it is a job she loves. When she graduated from George Washington University there were no positions for physician's assistants, so Miss Roz set about to create her own positions. At one

time, Miss Roz worked three different jobs while raising her three sons from her first marriage. She is pleased to say that all three of her sons are successful and happy.



Roz Smith, PA and Abby Phillips, NP, our KP CAPS

Miss Roz strongly feels that she is blessed to now have such a supportive husband, family (with daughter-in-law) and a career that she loves. She is committed to "giving back". Over her forty plus years in medicine, "giving back" has manifested itself in a variety of positions. Miss Roz has worked in jails, psychiatric units, pediatric units, urgent care among many others. Urgent care being her favorite.

While Miss Roz loves her patients, she looks forward to when she can spend more time enjoying other interests, such as reading and playing the grand piano that was a recent birthday gift. But for now, the clinic is where her heart is, with the staff and patients who mean so much to her. She believes in the principle of treating other like you want to be treated. This is evident every day as Miss Roz interacts with her patients at the PWAFC.

The Prince William Area Free Clinic is proud to be a partner with Kaiser Permanente of the Mid-Atlantic States Community Ambassador program and is delighted to have these two dedicated professionals as part of the PWAFC family.

Other Ways to Give

During the holidays we all tend to think more about giving to others. True of any organization, those gifts are what allow us to operate from day to day and year to year and are truly appreciated. However, not everyone can give money and there are other excellent ways to support your community this holiday season without spend any money.

If you are an online shopper or know anyone who is please consider using pwafc.we-care.com/start. This is a plug-in for your browser that asks every company you online shop with to donate a portion of your purchase to the clinic! If you are an Amazon shopper the PWAFC is a member of Smile.Amazon.com. These are both great ways to give to the clinic while you shop for the perfect gifts to give to your loved ones.

Other great ways to give are by collecting canned and non-perishable food for our food pantry. Bringing your neighbors together to sort through new or clean and lightly-used coats for our coat drive. Hosting a fundraiser among your friends to raise a collective gift to the clinic or by filling out a volunteer application and joining us either daily, once a week, or once a month in service to our community.

YOUR PURCHASE HELPS

www.pwafc.org



Prince William Area Free Clinic

Your purchase through this site helps Prince William Area Free Clinic help the truly indigent of Prince William County receive health services in a medical home that they would otherwise not have access to.

We at Prince William Area Free Clinic have a trusted partnership with We-Care.com.

*“The smallest act of kindness is worth more than the grandest intention.”
—Oscar Wilde*

Good Samaritan Gifts: Genuine Gifts from the Heart

Help us make this a Happy Holiday for someone in need! You can give a PWAFC patient a six month supply of life-giving medication for just **\$25.00**. A certificate will be given for each “gift” purchased. The PWAFC will provide a receipt for tax purposes. For perspective, with **\$50.00** the free clinic can fund a patient’s transportation to their specialty referral down at UVA Hospital in Charlottesville. For **\$100.00** the free clinic can continue to provide life saving services to our patients from providing them with glucometer’s and test strips for our diabetic patients, to dental care and beyond.

To purchase a “Good Samaritan Gift” for this holiday season, please complete this form and mail it along with a check made payable to the Prince William Area Free Clinic. Please use the included envelope and send it to:

**Prince William Area Free Clinic
13900 Church Hill Drive
Woodbridge, VA 22191**

How many \$25 “Good Samaritan Gifts” would you like to purchase?:

Total Amount Enclosed?: \$ _____

Good Samaritan Gift 2017

Purchaser Name

Address

Email

Phone



**Prince William Area
Free Clinic**

13900 Church Hill Drive
Woodbridge, VA 22191

Phone: 703-499-9034
Fax: 703-499-9240
E-mail: caitlin.denney@pwafc.org

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