



WHITTIER STREET HEALTH CENTER

Comprehensive. Compassionate. Community.

[Support Whittier Street Health Center today!](#)

WHITTIER'S 2020 ROAST TO
Mark Girard, MD, MBA

President, North Division
Executive VP, Steward Health Care System

NEW DATE!
FRIDAY, JUNE 5TH, 2020



A Benefit for
Whittier Street Health Center



Register for our 2020 Roast today!

Campaign to support 30,000 of Boston's most vulnerable populations and the dedicated and patient centered staff providing high quality health care and social services.

Whittier Street Health Center, a large urban community health care serving more than 30,000 of Boston's most vulnerable residents and all Massachusetts community health care centers are in current financial peril and require immediate and substantial financial relief in order to avoid a partial or complete collapse of the state's largest primary care network and, most urgently, a vitally important part of the Commonwealth's response to this public health crisis. On many occasions you have recognized the critical role that the community health center network plays in providing care to MassHealth (Medicaid) members and the uninsured, as well as the linguistically, ethnically and racially diverse populations throughout our state. However, the COVID-19 pandemic presents an imminent threat to the survival of that network.

There is now a countdown to the closure of community health centers in Massachusetts, all of whom are operating with a diminished workforce, some with under two weeks cash on hand, and many with negative operating margins, and little to no personal protective equipment—as over one million patients continue to rely on them for life saving care, and as the Commonwealth and their communities expect them to be ready and available to test and care for patients with COVID-19. Today, our situation is dire. Soon, when there is a surge, we are deeply concerned that we may not be here to relieve pressure on emergency rooms, nor here to help save lives.

At Whittier Street Health Center, we have transitioned their organizations to rapidly respond to the need for screening and testing of COVID-19 patients, while also continuing to address the urgent non-COVID-19 related medical needs of the vulnerable communities we serve. Based on public health directives to mitigate the spread of COVID-19, our senior management team are making excruciating decisions in real time. We have curtailed non-urgent services and sites; suspended dental, vision and routine medical visits—which includes vaccinations. These decisions all have public health and financial implications and consequences, as health center expenses are increasing in response to COVID-19, while revenue drops precipitously. Therefore, immediate and significant financial relief is the only solution for ensuring the short- and long-term viability of Whittier and other Massachusetts community health centers. With this situation changing hour by hour, it is almost impossible to calculate the need, but the order of magnitude is significant.

Presently and for the foreseeable future, we are estimating a decline of approximately 70 percent in our net patient service revenue. Capital Link, a national non-profit that assists health centers with capital and finance needs, says that over the next 12 weeks alone, those declines will result in income losses of between \$109 million and \$152 million statewide. The driving factors behind this sudden financial decline are interrelated and can be broken down into three overarching categories: workforce challenges; lack of resources to treat and test patients and protect staff; and spiraling and varied revenue losses.

Workforce Challenges

As the pandemic evolves, challenges already impacting our workforce include: quarantined staff who may have been exposed to COVID-19 and are awaiting test results and clearance; school closures that result in employees staying home from work to care for children; and “high risk” personnel who, because of age or underlying health conditions, must remove themselves from the clinical setting. In addition, health centers that are self-insured for unemployment will face significant financial exposure if layoffs become necessary.

Lack of Resources to Treat and Test Patients and Protect Staff

Personal Protective Equipment plays a significant role in ensuring the ongoing safety and ability of health center staff to address this crisis. Whittier and other health centers have identified the need for face masks, specialized N95 respirator masks, gloves and sanitizing wipes and gels with some centers stating that their supplies will be exhausted at current levels of use within 1 to 2 weeks. Once these supplies are depleted, we will be forced to either close their doors to coronavirus patients or, alternatively, continue providing services with recycled supplies or without the necessary protective equipment resulting in increased exposure for frontline medical staff. Unfortunately, our existing supply chains for purchasing critical supplies has tightened, as group purchasing organizations have begun to ration supplies, limiting health centers to their pre pandemic purchasing levels or less.

Access to testing kits along with medical tents to triage, isolate, test, and treat have also been identified as critical in the work of health centers to protect the health and safety of their patients and workforce. This will become increasingly more critical as we anticipate a surge in COVID 19 related cases. The lack of these resources contributed to early decisions by health centers to

suspend or reduce services in business lines such as preventative dentistry and optometry, reducing patient access and depressing revenues and diminishing our overall public health response to this crisis.

Spiraling Revenue Losses

Suspensions of entire service lines and canceled visits due to public health imperatives to keep healthy patients out of the health care setting, in combination with workforce and supply shortages, are serving to significantly depress Whittier Street Health Center and other health center's revenue. This level of financial loss is unsustainable, and would cause a ripple effect through the healthcare continuum if health centers are forced to shut their doors.

Your support is a lifeline to people in need. We are grateful for all sizes of gifts and donations to help us deliver the highest quality of primary care and support services to our large uninsured and low income residents! Thank you in advance for your compassionate generosity!

FY2019 Annual Report

Comprehensive. Compassionate. Community.

<http://www.wshc.org/>

Whittier Street Health Center
FREDERICA M. WILLIAMS BUILDING
1290 Tremont Street
Roxbury, MA 02120

FOLLOW US



Whittier Street Health Center | FREDERICA M. WILLIAMS BUILDING, 1290 Tremont Street,
Roxbury, MA 02120

[Unsubscribe {recipient's email}](#)

[Update Profile](#) | [About Constant Contact](#)

Sent by events@wshc.org in collaboration with



Try email marketing for free today!