Meharry’s Students Eager to Help Uninsured

NASHVILLE, TN — Tuesday, September 24, 2014, marked the one-year anniversary of Meharry’s 12 South Community Clinic, Meharry Medical College’s first and only student-run health clinic, supervised by licensed physicians and dentists.

Meharry 12 South was founded to fulfill the mutually beneficial goals of addressing the needs of Nashville’s uninsured patient population while providing a venue for students to refine their medical skills.

The board of directors is composed of medical students from all years who are completely responsible for planning, overseeing, and managing all aspects of the clinic. With the support of Charles P Mouton, M.D., M.S., senior vice president for health affairs, dean, School of Medicine and on the faculty advisory board, these students have been able to establish and sustain the clinic throughout the first year of operation.

In just one year, the clinic has entrenched itself in the community, steadily building its patient population to include over 130 patients. During its inaugural year, Meharry 12 South operated solely as a primary care facility and served as a volunteer opportunity exclusively for medical students. As of September 2013, the clinic transitioned to include dental students who are on hand to provide oral cancer screenings.

October heralded the commencement of the clinic’s Influenza Vaccine Initiative.

Third-year medical student, Andrew Marshall, financially spearheaded this endeavor via his Ingram Scholarship. With these funds, Meharry 12 South was able to purchase flu shots and coordinate a training session where 25 medical students were trained, under the supervision of a physician and nurse, in how to properly administer vaccines.

November brought further expansion to the clinic as it hosted its first sub-specialty night in pediatrics. Cardiology and other sub-specialties are to follow.

Meharry 12 South has transitioned from paper records to an electronic medical records system. This gives volunteers a more comprehensive clinical experience and allows multiple members of the health care team to simultaneously track each patient’s progress.

The news of Meharry 12 South’s endeavors in the community is rapidly spreading. The clinic recently received a $5,000 grant from The Community Foundation of Middle Tennessee after they toured the clinic and were impressed by the work of the students. Grants like these allow the clinic to distribute necessary supplies, such as bus passes, to minimize patient transportation costs to and from the clinic and gift cards to local pharmacies to promote patient adherence to treatment regimens.

The accomplishments made by Meharry 12 South during its first year are a testament to the dedicated students that have made its goals their priority.

Visit Meharry 12 South at 1501 12th Avenue South, Nashville, Tennessee. Our student physicians and dentists are waiting to see you every Thursday night from 6 – 9 p.m.