



Jericho Road Family Dental Director Meg Kelly stands at the entrance to the new clinic at 1021 Broadway.

LONG-AWAITED DENTAL CARE COMES TO JERICHO ROAD'S BROADWAY HEALTH HUB

Jericho Road's care management team works with patients who have multiple chronic health conditions, like Amir*. Amir lives with severe, uncontrolled diabetes and hypertension, in addition to a number of significant mental health challenges, including PTSD and schizophrenia. Amir's first language is Arabic, but his English is fairly good. His care team has a good relationship with Amir and knows to check his understanding during conversations to ensure he doesn't miss important information about managing his conditions.

Last year, Amir was having mouth pain. The appointment he scheduled with his dentist was canceled multiple times without explanation. Eventually, his dentist's receptionist told him that someone else needed to call on his behalf.

Michael McQuade, Amir's care manager, stepped in to discover that Amir's dental team no longer wanted to treat him because he made other patients in the office uncomfortable. Reading between the lines, McQuade ascertained that they didn't have the expertise or willingness to support Amir's mental health issues in a dental clinic setting, so they were releasing him from their care.

By this time, Amir was in so much pain he couldn't sleep and his mental health was deteriorating. He told McQuade that he felt "hopeless" because he couldn't find support or relief. Eventually, Amir went to a local hospital for emergency surgery on an abscess.

His surgeon prescribed a post-op antibiotic but didn't take the time to make sure he understood where to get the medicine and how to take it. McQuade stepped in to help get the medicine, but Amir didn't take his first dose until two days after his surgery.

Amir's experience shows how lack of integration between providers and services can seriously damage patient care. With 57% of East Side residents living in or near poverty and with dental care as the top self-reported healthcare need¹, Jericho Road recognized that accessible, affordable, high-quality dental care for all ages was an urgent and critical need. In fact, since opening as a private family practice back in 1997, Jericho Road has

wanted to make dental care part of its in-house services.

On November 9, after years of research, preparations, and prayer, Jericho Road Family Dental opened at 1021 Broadway.

Dr. Meg Kelly, dental director, is excited about bringing this new service to Jericho Road and to the East Side.

"The Broadway-Fillmore area is extremely underserved from a dental perspective," she says. "Meeting our neighbors in their own backyard will encourage them to seek care that they may have otherwise delayed."

The new clinic provides an array of traditional dental services, as well as other offerings not found in most dentist offices, such as live interpreters and integration with a behavioral health team who ensure that the clinic is trauma-informed. Some of Jericho Road's refugee and asylum seeking patients have experienced oral-

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related torture and staff members are prepared to address past trauma as part of the dental care process.

“Oral health is a vital part of what we do, but, to us, our patients are not only a mouth,” says Dr. Kelly. “We truly seek to meet patients where they are and support them in all areas. As part of an integrated

health center we have the resources on hand—in many situations in the same building—to address the diverse needs of our patient family.”

*name and personal details have been altered to protect patient privacy

¹ University at Buffalo Regional Institute, School of Architecture and Planning, Community Snapshot: City of Buffalo (East of Main Street), September 2019.

Good health is more valuable than gold: Jericho Road in Komao

The gold mining village of Komao, located in the Kono District of Sierra Leone, is home to more than 5,000 people. In the years leading up to the 2014-2016 Ebola outbreak in West Africa, the mine in the village was owned and operated by a British company. When the outbreak began, the British company abandoned the mining operation and didn't return. Eventually, the mine was sold to a Chinese company, which owns the operation today. Many villagers work in this mine.

In 2017 and 2018, Jericho Road's Adama Martha Memorial Community Health Center began treating a number of sick children who were being brought into the clinic from Komao. Often, these children were so ill that there was little the clinic could do to help them. In 2018, AMMCHC started bringing its mobile medical clinic to the village once a month; however, the monthly clinic wasn't enough to meet

the healthcare needs of the community, which are exacerbated by lack of access to clean water and basic sanitation.

When the British mining company left Komao, they also left behind a compound of buildings that the community gifted to Jericho Road. In June 2020, Jericho Road Health Facility, Komao opened the doors of one newly-renovated building, which is now an outpatient primary care center with a small inpatient clinic. This is Jericho Road's third health center in Sierra Leone and is a one-hour drive from AMMCHC.

Because the water and sanitation situation is the main source of disease in Komao, Jericho Road has partnered with Let Them LOL, a Buffalo-based NGO that works on clean water access in Sierra Leone, to dig seven wells in the village.

“We are greatly looking forward to working together with Let Them LOL

to address such a big cause of illness and disease in Komao,” says Phebian Abdulai, director of Jericho Road's operations in Sierra Leone.

“Clean water access will allow our new clinic to concentrate more on preventive care and chronic disease management, since fewer people will be needlessly ill from dirty water.”

Abdulai also plans to renovate other buildings into a surgical theatre and surgical ward so that AMMCHC staff can provide C-sections, appendectomies, and hernia repair surgeries.



Villagers from Komao await the official opening of the new clinic in June.

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Supportive relationships are heart of new clinic at Buffalo City Mission

In May, Jericho Road opened its fourth health center in the City of Buffalo. Located in Buffalo City Mission's recently-built Alfiero Family Center of Hope and Promise, the new clinic was established through a collaboration between Jericho Road and the City Mission.

By opening its first medical site downtown, Jericho Road is extending its reach to treat even more of the city's historically underserved community members, particularly those who are experiencing homelessness. The health center serves Buffalo City Mission residents, as well as individuals living in the neighborhood, and welcomes new and existing Jericho Road patients. Services include adult primary care, women and children's healthcare, addictions medicine, psychiatry, diabetes education, and medication assistance.

Karyanne Cox, clinic director and physician assistant, is acutely aware of the unique need that the new clinic is able to meet for this particular community. Cox has a background working with patients experiencing homelessness and individuals with addiction issues. Prior to coming to Jericho Road, Cox helped run a hepatitis C program at a multidisciplinary substance abuse clinic, where she also treated suboxone and methadone patients.

"Despite having clinics within walking distance, many residents at City Mission do not engage in primary care," Cox

explains. "Deep-seated mistrust in the medical system, shame in lifestyle circumstances, and misunderstanding of health can yield overuse of hospital emergency departments and inadequate use of preventive care services."

With the opening of the new medical site, Cox now sees patients who may have initially visited the clinic out of convenience or because they were urged to do so by City Mission case managers, but then continue to come as a result of the supportive relationships they build with the Jericho Road medical team.

In coordination with City Mission case managers, Jericho Road is able to provide high-quality care to individuals who are grappling with significant life challenges and might otherwise be unable to access the healthcare services they need. Patients are treated by Cox and Dr. Patrick Hurley, who specializes in internal medicine and psychiatry.

Since the clinic opened, Cox has already witnessed some success stories. Brian*, a 70-year-old patient, had not seen a primary care provider since childhood and came in with extremely high blood pressure. The medical staff was able to effectively treat his condition and stabilize his health. Shortly after, he was hired to work at a local cheese factory. Devon* had overdosed three times the month before coming into the clinic. Since May, he has been meeting with Cox consistently and

The medical team at Jericho Road's Buffalo City Mission clinic poses outside new Mission building.



has not overdosed or had a single hospital visit in that time (aside from a scheduled preventive screening).

Cox is confident that Brian's and Devon's successes are the very beginning of the new clinic's story.

"At City Mission," Cox says, "we have the opportunity to spend every day pouring love and laughter into lives while building dignity, self-worth, and hope. Just as Jesus actively and practically loved the beggar, the refugee, the widow, the outcast, and the poor, we serve individuals dependent on substances, released from incarceration, escaping domestic violence, surviving through prostitution, hiding in abandoned buildings, and in so many other difficult situations. Jericho Road at Buffalo City Mission continues to provide care for exactly those Jesus came to heal and save."

*names have been altered to protect patient privacy

Hope takes on COVID, the election, and Census 2020

When COVID-19 hit Buffalo, the team at the Hope Refugee Drop-In Center made adjustments to continue providing services to the city's refugee community in a safe, effective way. But the pandemic wasn't the only challenge that the Drop-In Center tackled in 2020.

"With strong anti-immigrant rhetoric coming from government officials, our team knew we would be facing a number of obstacles to our efforts for a complete census count," said Quinita McKinney, Office for New Americans Program Coordinator. "And with 2020 being an election year, Jericho Road, as an entire organization, made it a goal to register as

many people to vote as possible."

Immigrant and refugee populations are historically undercounted by the U.S. Census. For Drop-In Center clients, mistrust of the government and a lack of understanding about what information the census collects and how it's used were the main reasons for not responding.



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Kyaw "Jason" Suar proudly displays his "I voted" sticker after casting his first ballot as a U.S. citizen.

"We addressed these hurdles by conducting in-person information sessions and one-on-one phone calls, then we fully transitioned to phone banking during New York on Pause," explained McKinney. "We discussed the purpose of the census, the strict confidentiality required by the Census Bureau, the government's inability to collect citizenship information, and the ways in which data from the census is used."

In total, the Drop-In Center team provided census education to 1,123 individuals and helped complete nearly 400 census forms.

In addition to working on Census 2020, Drop-In Center and other Jericho Road staff also conducted community outreach to increase voter registration, particularly at Jericho Road's Broadway location.

"Most of these people [were registering to vote for] their first time," said Doh Moo, a case manager for the Drop-In Center who helped register voters over the summer. "I got a lot of questions like where to vote, how to vote, what's going to happen after I mail [my registration] form?"

In total, Jericho Road registered 79 new voters, including Kyaw "Jason" Suar, who was elated to vote for the first time since becoming a U.S. citizen in 2018.

"[I am] really proud to take this responsibility," Jason said.



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Samaria Burris

Owner of SunniBlu Health & Wellness

SunniBlu Health & Wellness has worked closely with Jericho Road for over a year. The infectious spirit of love, support, and community has been nothing short of a blessing. We wanted to show our gratitude by donating cookies to the summer reading event. This way children would have a familiar but healthy snack to enjoy while listening to a story. We would like to thank Jericho Road for leading by example in what it means to be a charitable organization.