

STRAIGHT FROM THE HEART

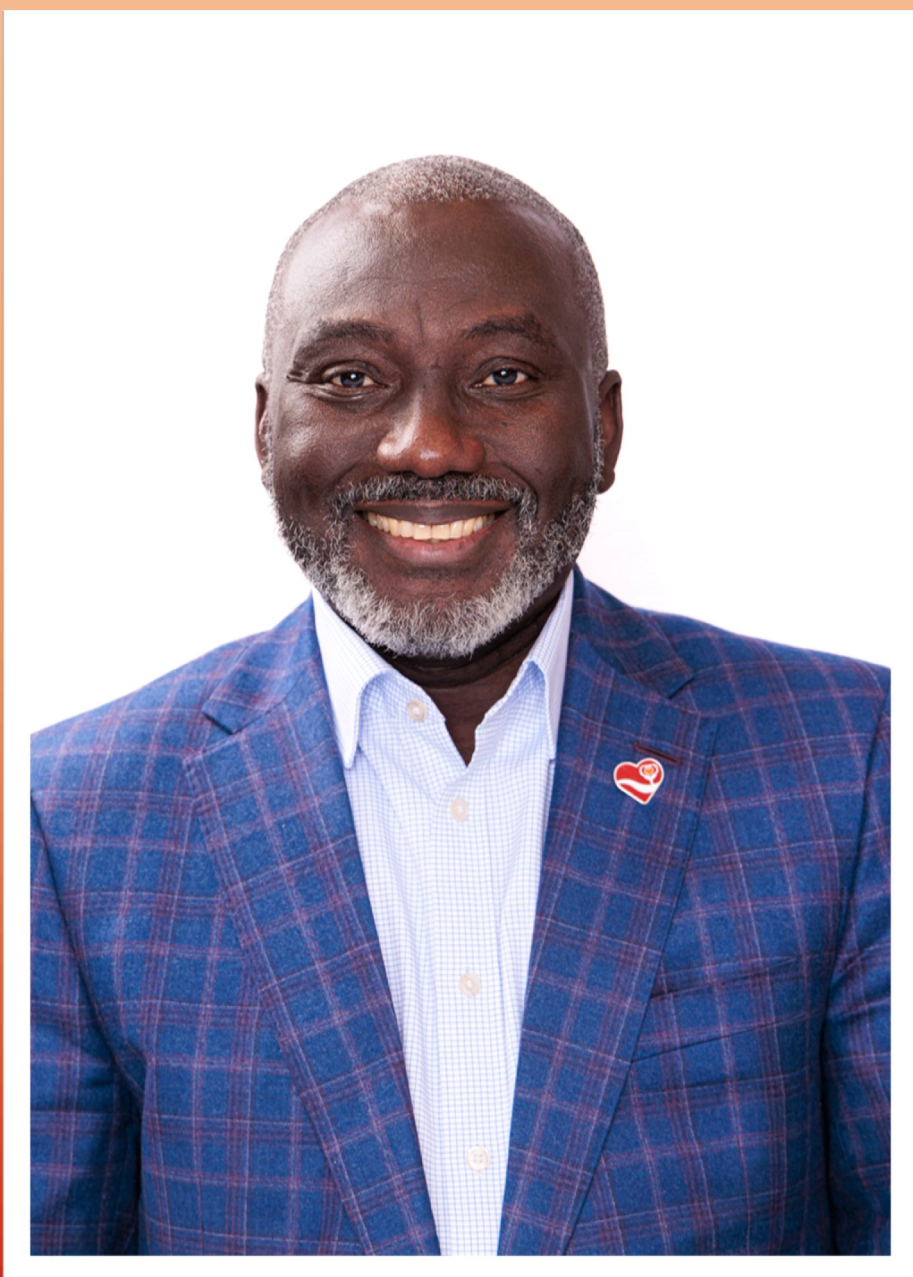
A QUARTERLY UPDATE FOR HEALTHCARE STAKEHOLDERS

2024

**ARCHIVED
EDITIONS**



HEART OF OHIO
FAMILY HEALTH



DR. BUHARI MOHAMMED, CEO

REDEFINING MODERN MEDICINE

DR. BUHARI MOHAMMED, CEO



Dr. Rudolf Virchow (1821-1902) was known as the father of social medicine because he founded the field and believed that medicine and politics (or public policy) were closely linked. Dr. Virchow was a German physician, pathologist, anthropologist, and politician who believed that medicine and public health practices could transform society when applied with good public policies. He also believed that politics and social systems could significantly impact public health.

In 1847, Dr. Virchow went to Upper Silesia (currently Poland) during the Typhoid Epidemic to care for the patients. The first thing Dr. Virchow realized while studying the Typhoid Epidemic almost 200 years ago was that his pathological knowledge did not matter in addressing the outcome of this outbreak. He observed that it was apparent that the housing conditions, the labor conditions, and the food and sanitation conditions of the people were mostly the reasons for the outbreak of the disease. These are what we now call “the social determinants of health.” These factors are outside the biological nature of a person inflicted with any ailment.

In the United States, access to adequate housing, work conditions, transportation, food, and sanitation are determined by public policies. These public policies are “the political determinants of health.” The United States medical profession has suppressed its awareness and acceptance of being influenced by policy decisions for well over a half-century. It is apparent that if we do not engage in the political process, policy determinations, and advocacy efforts that are designed to advance the quality of life for our patients, we are simply avoiding our ethical obligations.

A counterargument to those who believe medicine is only a scientific enterprise and has no political or policy enterprise is to look at the divergence between the hollowness of the ethical claims of the field in the teaching of medicine and the actual practices where revenue-generating and profit-making is most prioritized. Many practicing clinicians will share that this is how they feel. Instead of caring for patients, they feel that they are writing a “glorified invoice,” also referred to as a medical record. Teaching medical schools promote the belief in health equity, doing no harm, and caring for all. However, in many practices, our ethical framework is producing effects that result in worsened patient outcomes. A patient in front of a clinician’s office has to fit into a certain category of some insurance system or network coverage system to be allowed access to the clinician. Healthcare has become a commodity to regulate in an open market!

As the richest nation in the world, America has over 30 million citizens **without** health insurance, and many rely on substandard care to treat their chronic illnesses. Over 50 million more are underinsured, and many healthcare institutions don’t accept their insurance, rendering them technically uninsured.

Apparently, the fundamental root of what determines care in America is motivated by that which generates revenue, and not the medical ethics, quality, or health equity that all doctors were taught in medical school. Seemingly, this is why so many new doctors graduating from medical school are experiencing the hardship of staying in practice.

According to recent data, about 30% of new primary care physicians leave their practice within the first three (3) years, which is quite significant. This high turnover rate is often attributed to factors such as burnout, administrative burdens, and inadequate support. Also, there is a disconnect between the ethics that they were taught and serving as advocates for their patients. The real world of constant revenues and numbers has become unacceptable for so many seasoned and even new physicians, that they seek other professional pathways.

We spend closer to 3.5 trillion dollars on healthcare—which is about 1/5th of our Gross Domestic Product (GDP)—with an increasing race to consolidate many healthcare systems leading to the creation of healthcare deserts in some parts of the country. Not only are we spending more money on health care and reducing access to so many Americans, but many are also experiencing high costs in medications and health care in general without necessary improvement in the quality of outcomes. Comparatively, other advanced nations spend less than America and provide better access with low cost for users and better health outcomes. Why is this the case?

We need to turn this around as a nation. It is time to mirror our ethical medical education to the practices in the real world. We can do this by eliminating the need to prioritize revenue and volume over health outcomes. We should develop policies and practices that eliminate those entities that have monetary incentives to ensure that providers diverge from doing what they were taught to do best—providing essential medical care, rather than writing a perfect invoice to maximize profits!

It is time to reverse this current pathway, uphold our human rights, and amplify the mission to secure access to quality healthcare for all. Advocating for universal healthcare is making access to wellness a priority that every citizen deserves, especially if we intend to advance our society to be healthy and productive.

America has over 30 million people without health insurance.

— U.S. Department of Health and Human Services

CELEBRATING AN **EPIC** YEAR OF MAKING A DIFFERENCE



On Wednesday, October 9, **HEART OF OHIO FAMILY HEALTH (HOFH)** celebrated the **1-Year Anniversary** of going live with **EPIC** that has provided an enhanced electronic medical records management platform that was designed to improved operations of the organization, as well as the overall experience of the patients.

The collaboration between HOFH and **The Ohio State University Wexner Medical Center** provided a strategic approach, training, and implementation that has provided various

enhancements and has improved patient access to their medical records through MyChart. Additionally, the **EPIC** platform provides connectivity to a complement of hospital networks throughout central Ohio.

The vision and creative teamwork between both organizations has produced a foundation that can support many opportunities that may come in the future.

ONE STEP AT A TIME: 2024 HOFH ► WELLNESS WALK

Thanks to everyone who participated in this year’s **HEART OF OHIO FAMILY HEALTH ► WELLNESS WALK**, held on Saturday, October 12. The event started and ended at the Feibel Center, located at 5000 East Main Street, in Whitehall, and featured a 2-mile and a 3-mile option for participants to consider.

This was the second year that the event was held, and the **WELLNESS WALK** is designed to engage patients, staff, students, and stakeholders from our diverse communities in central Ohio. This annual activity promotes all aspects of one’s wellness by simply taking a step at a time.

The setting in Whitehall was selected because it provides safe and scenic pathways upon which participants can easily traverse by using sidewalks while walking around a centrally located community park and residential neighborhoods. Also, a Walk Audit supported by a Challenge Grant from AARP will be an outgrowth of the event and will assist in surveying the walkability of additional areas in the city.



► **CLICK HERE** and take a moment to review a video that summarizes the event, and remember that progress involves being bold enough to keep stepping forward and not looking back!



THE JOURNEY CONTINUES

DR. BUHARI MOHAMMED, CEO



Over sixty years ago, social unrest and protest were a clear indication of much-needed change in many societies throughout the world, especially in America. Leaders, advocates, and voices emerged out of the quest for empathy, equality, and basic human rights. Demonstrations and campaigns shaped an era of movements that are still unfolding, especially regarding the fundamental belief that everyone should have equitable access to quality healthcare, a basic human right.

The **Community Health Center (CHC)** movement that started in the mid-1960s to address this fundamental basic human right still shapes our journey that is unfolding today. Creative and compassionate minds engineered Community Health Centers as accessible and affordable comprehensive primary care locations to meet the needs of patients in every sector of our country. Throughout America, there is an intricate network of CHCs devised to support communities that range from rural to urban settings. In central Ohio, seven (7) CHC organizations have evolved in the past almost thirty (30) years that currently offer thirty-three (33) locations that provide quality care for patients in need of physical and mental care, regardless of their ability to pay!

I am proud to be part of this movement! The **Heart of Ohio Family Health** volunteer board and talented staff are celebrating 21 years of providing easy-to-access and **affordable quality healthcare** to patients at six locations in Central Ohio. Collectively, we are evolving and expanding the vital reach of healthcare and wellness to a growing and diverse population.

However, there are still over **70%** of our central Ohio residents who lack access to primary healthcare. Community Health Centers are pioneers in breaking down the barriers to the social determinants of health (SDoH), but there are many challenges that our communities continue to face. Some ideological and political mindsets still compromise the movement that is intended to dismantle the hurdles to access personal and community wellness, and interfere with efforts to assure that healthcare is a **right deserved by all**.

At **Heart of Ohio Family Health**, our organization employs talent that reflects the diverse patient population that we serve. Although securing talent in this demanding marketplace is a challenge, our organization is committed to finding diverse professionals and providing a safe and comfortable experience for every patient. From our current central Ohio residents who consider our patient-centered facilities their healthcare home, to New Americans who may have never had to navigate the current healthcare system — we strive to make a difference.

COMMITMENT and COMPASSION

Those who choose to enter the healthcare profession are typically compassionate people from various backgrounds united with a singular voice – to care for others and do no harm. We should remember to recognize the champions of activism who forged through a time when leaders were threatened, met with fierce opposition, and mocked – for they must have known that one day little children and adults would need proactive and continual care. Perhaps they also knew that this was, and is, the best way to heal and keep a nation strong and steady.

My journey prepared me to arrive at this moment with a holistic understanding that we can indeed make an impact in the world in which we live. I also believe that the same is true for everyone willing to embrace challenges and have the courage to be an agent and advocate for advancement **for the good of all!**

Following those who have paved the way, we need to be **BOLD**, in charting a new pathway regarding healthcare Education, Training, and Delivery. We need to be **BRAVE** to speak up regarding the Inequities that we witness, and encourage our colleagues and leadership to acknowledge and define solutions to such disparities. Finally, we simply need to be **BETTER**. The late Maya Angelou said, “Do the best you can until you know better. Then when you know better, do better.”

We know our current healthcare system is somewhat fractured and challenging for many to navigate, and some may say that it is even broken – with poor incentives and often dismal outcomes compared to the other developed countries in the world. For example, our nation’s infant and maternal* mortality outcomes are shameful, to say the least. Our collective voices and advocacy should maintain the movement toward creating a viable healthcare system that **works for all**, not just a certain population segment. We must match forward towards **100% ACCESS** and **ZERO HEALTH DISPARITIES** for all!

*<https://www.commonwealthfund.org/publications/issue-briefs/2024/jun/insights-us-maternal-mortality-crisis-international-comparison>



2024 GIVING HEARTS CELEBRATION: ONGOING IMPACT



HEART OF OHIO FAMILY HEALTH

2024

CELEBRATING 21 YEARS



The Honorable **Michael T. Bivens**
Mayor, City of Whitehall

The **HEART OF OHIO FAMILY HEALTH - 2024 GIVING HEARTS CELEBRATION** was an exciting evening that showcased the successful year experienced during 2023, and acknowledged the support of corporate and community stakeholders, as well as the accomplishments of HOFH leadership and staff. The twenty-first year benchmark in our society usually indicates a stage of maturity and responsibility, and the evening provided a time for reflection and commitment to pushing forward while assuming the responsibility to be an advocate and leader in advancing access to the wellness needs of current patients, and those yet served.

The celebration was held at the Jefferson Country Club, in Blacklick, Ohio, and started off with a warm reception that provided time for networking and conversation with colleagues, peers, community members, and friends. The program and awards presentation followed a full-course meal and a dynamic keynote address by the Honorable **Michael T. Bivens**, Mayor of the City of Whitehall, Ohio.

During the program presentation, the **2023 IMPACT REPORT** was highlighted outlining the successes that were accomplished due to dedicated Board members, a proactive leadership team, a compassionate and engaged staff, and collaborative community partners. [CLICK HERE](#) ► to view the document.

Annually, staff and community members are selected to be acknowledge for their exemplary efforts and are given special awards. The **2024 Staff Honorees** are: **Abby Gerbers**, **Ambrose DuPree**, and **Dr. William Washington**. Each were saluted for their outstanding achievements during the past year, and for their ongoing commitment to assure that patients experience high-quality healthcare.

The **2024 Community Honorees** are: **Patricia Dawkins** (previous HOFH Board Member and Chair), and **Dr. Sharee Wells** (Superintendent of Whitehall City Schools). Both were selected for their outstanding support of community healthcare, and for being leaders and advocates for health and wellness.

[CLICK HERE](#) ► for a video overview of the **2024 GIVING HEARTS CELEBRATION**.

STAYING PREPARED

DR. BUHARI MOHAMMED, CEO



As we are still recovering from the worldwide COVID-19 pandemic, our communities may sigh a breath of relief that the worse that could happen may be behind us. Collectively, we may not fully embrace the total impact that this unique health emergency has had on our society as we still address the residual fallout that impacts our physical and mental wellness.

The last four years have provided several key lessons that may shape our perceptions and policies regarding our medical vulnerabilities, our preparedness for random challenges, and our ability to be proactive rather than reactive.

The healthcare systems throughout the world had to negotiate, collaborate, and devise strategies on a rather tight timeline based upon the demands of populations that were dependent upon life-saving measures and solutions. From research, to the delivery of care – we witnessed the amazing potential of compassionate and time-sensitive responsiveness. It may take several years to fully understand the impact that our collective experience will have on our medical journey, but the greatest take-away may be that we are resilient and capable of meeting the greatest of challenges when we chose to work together.

HER PLAN IS HER POWER

As you may already know, March is the time of the year when a new season unfolds and we also celebrate Women's History Month. The **Heart of Ohio Family Health** (HOFH) Board, Leadership and Staff is grounded by the expertise and interdependence of many women who have chosen this organization to dedicate their time and talent. Many of our strategies and efforts to support our flourishing communities have been designed around the specific and integral wellness needs of women.

We are intentional about our proactive approach to engage and employ the best partnerships and resources to enhance our scope of services to all patients, especially women. We recently collaborated with **Organon**, a global healthcare company with a portfolio of women's health therapies and products, and served as one of their select sites to host their Listening Tour.

On Tuesday, March 5, four unique listening sessions were scheduled throughout the morning and early afternoon. These sessions were held in the Community Room at the James B. Feibel Center, in Whitehall, and engaged stakeholders ranging from clinicians, patients, city and school leadership, various organizational partners, as well as HOFH Board and staff members. The engagement sessions revealed vital comments and insights regarding the history, current climate, and forward-thinking centered around women's healthcare.

Kevin Ali, CEO of Organon said, "I toured the Heart of Ohio Family Health clinic. Inspired by the clinic's efforts to empower women in the community through a more integrated approach to better health, and close health gaps."

Dr. Charlotte Owens, Organon's Senior Vice President and Head of Medical Affairs & Outcomes Research also shared, "Words will fail to communicate how appreciative I am to have shared time and space with you and your team. You epitomize what inspirational leadership looks like, while making a daily difference in the lives of people."

Providing access to the healthcare needs of our community involves engagement within the community, such as Organon's Listening Tour as well as the recent Black Family Wellness Expo provided by The Columbus (OH) Chapter of The Links Inc. This engaging event was held on Saturday, March 16 at The Ohio State University Wexner Medical Center's newly constructed Healthy Community Center on Columbus' eastside. Collaboration, and proactive initiatives such as these premiere activities create abundant opportunities for candid conversations and dialogue to occur that is essential to igniting the inspiration that fosters change.



Organon's Leadership, Kevin Ali and Dr. Charlotte Owens, stand with Dr. Buhari Mohammed.



Dr. Buhari Mohammed and Mayor Michael Bivens (City of Whitehall) at the Organon Listening Tour.



Dr. Buhari Mohammed poses with Dr. Joshua Joseph from The Ohio State University Wexner Medical Center, and U.S. Congresswoman Joyce Beatty at the Black Family Expo, sponsored by The Columbus (OH) Chapter of The Links Inc.

WORK & LIFE BALANCE

Many decades ago, the late **Albert Einstein** said,

"Life is like riding a bicycle. To keep your balance, you must keep moving."

Today, we continue the quest for balancing personal and professional success. Even as organizations, our viability is dependent upon the experiences and environments established for employees as well as our patrons. Those of us who work in the healthcare field embrace this challenge of balancing the vital care that supports the communities that we serve with maintaining a climate that encourages and inspires the talent that makes it all happen on a daily basis. It is important that we find approaches to encourage and congratulate staff for their dedication and unwavering efforts through the good and also the difficult times.

At **Heart of Ohio Family Health**, we have employed strategies to engage and support our staff via various initiatives and activities. From a peer-to-peer level, our staff members can share encouraging and supporting comments through a "**Cheers For Peers**" promotion that is shared on a quarterly basis. Annually, our **Engagement Committee** plans and produces purposeful activities ranging from a **Family Fun Day** to an **End Of The Year Celebration**. Additionally, staff members also volunteer in various community events that support their interests and may also serve as outreach for the HOFH organization. In a patient-centered environment, it is essential to embrace each opportunity to produce quality outcomes by staying steady and focused on our mission. We are committed to making a difference, one **heart** at a time.

Annually, we also recognize several staff members who have exhibited outstanding efforts during our **Giving Hearts Celebration**. Mark your calendars now, and plan to join us for this momentous occasion on **Thursday, June 20**. More details to come.



STRAIGHT FROM THE HEART

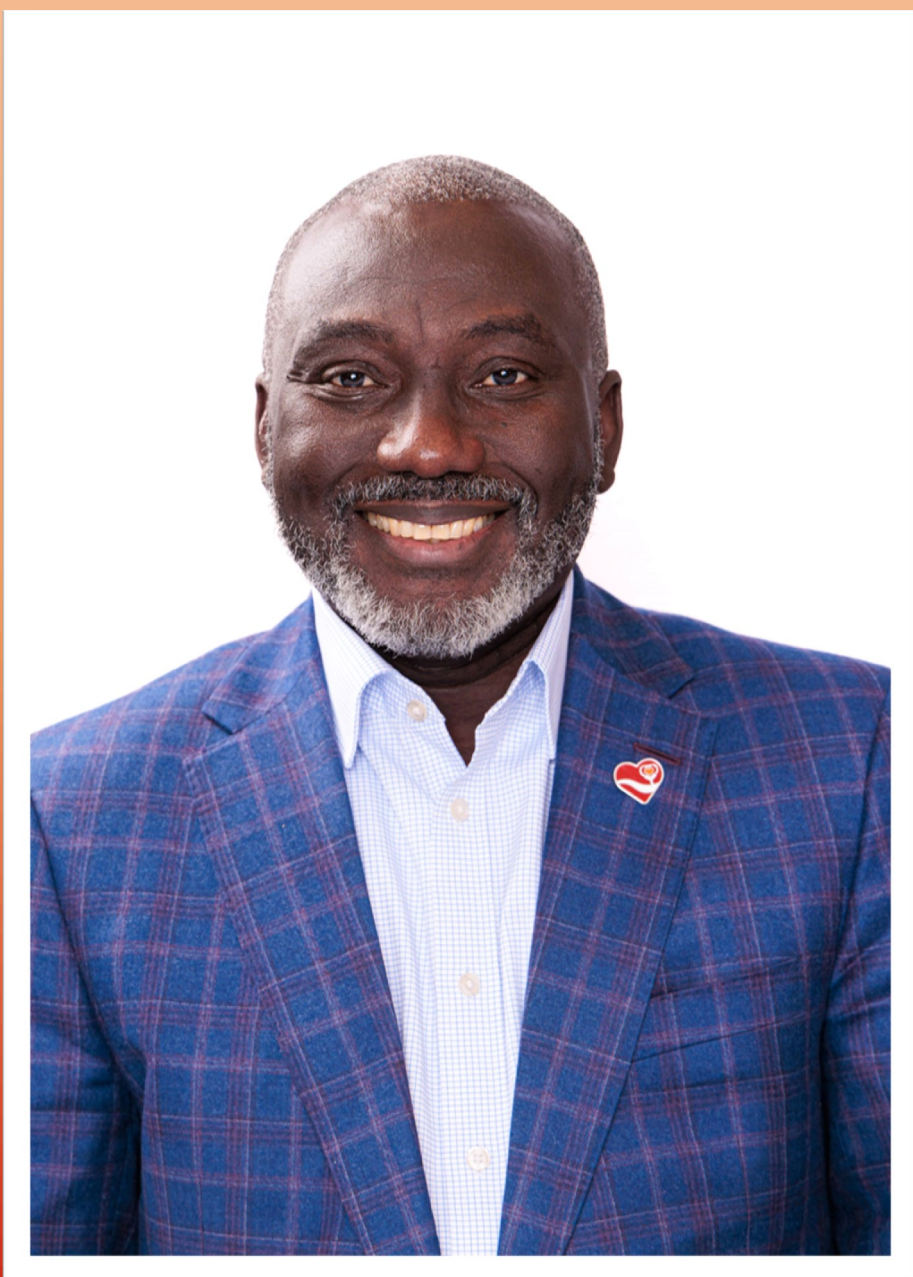
A QUARTERLY UPDATE FOR HEALTHCARE STAKEHOLDERS

2023

**ARCHIVED
EDITIONS**



HEART OF OHIO
FAMILY HEALTH



DR. BUHARI MOHAMMED, CEO

ACTIVE ADVOCACY

DR. BUHARI MOHAMMED, CEO



The **National Association of Community Health Centers (NACHC)** continues to encourage advocacy efforts in support of healthcare access and progress, such as the **Lower Cost and More Transparency Act**. Undoubtedly, an investment in healthcare is an effective and efficient allocation of funding that supports preventative care rather than reactive and typically more acute and emergency casework.

From Capital Hill to our state capitals —and even local government offices — legislative and community leaders need to be aware of the critical healthcare needs of their citizenry. Local healthcare centers are constantly strategizing and implementing pathways to meet the needs of the diverse communities that we serve, and we need to share our important stories and messages.

Some political and civic leaders may be veterans in their offices, while others may be newly elected or appointed. Creating and maintaining a bridge of communication and understanding doesn't take much time nor management and can consist of a simple phone call, social media post, email, or an invitation to a site visit. As you know may already know, once a relationship has been created, the sharing of information can consistently be shared and trusted.

STRAIGHT TALK

On any given day, media outlets are reporting about the pending impact that Artificial Intelligence (AI) and machine learning will have on the advancement of our society, especially in the medical field. Reports suggest the tremendous potential AI will have on enhancing clinical practice and the delivery of patient care, as well as in areas of billing, clinical operations, and supporting quality and safety protocols.

However, the most important aspect of the services that are provided to the 31.5 million individuals that the network of community health centers reach is the human interaction that goes beyond any AI or machine learning. From the front desk to the exam rooms, qualified staff, medical professionals, administrators, and board members will always be the most important source for enhancing and advancing quality outcomes in the patient experience. Our services and insights go beyond the exam room, and technological prompts and applications to assist patients with the challenges of navigating health decisions and advice. Sometimes we are tasked with holding hands, providing a reassuring smile, translating directions, to patiently listen, or to simply open a door.

As technological developments streamline the efficiency of services, the importance of our human engagement becomes even more critical, especially with the privilege of serving diverse cultures. On any given day, a new or current patient may be trying to access a pathway to afford them the opportunity to enhance their existence through the quality care that we strive to provide, even with the assistance of the technological advancements and resources that are available. Our collective vision should never stray from the importance and inherent benefits of our human interaction.



COLLABORATION IS A TEAM EFFORT

Heart of Ohio Family Health has recently collaborated with **The Ohio State University Wexner Medical Center** to implement the conversion of the **EPIC-IHIS** electronic medical records management platform. The planning and training process was on a rather tight 10-month schedule in order to launch the system this autumn.

Fundamental to the planning and implementation process was the recognition of the various skills and roles of the talent that exists in both organizations. Much like with most athletic programs — especially at the professional level — the head of the organization consist of team owners or managers which would be like our health center's Board of Directors.

The CEO and Leadership Team serve as coaches and advisors, and our talented staff serve as the players who maintain unique responsibilities and roles on the field or courts where the execution of critical action occurs.

Our patients are more than just spectators, since we hope that they become fans and help spread the importance of staying passionately engaged in their healthcare journey from season to season. What better advocacy is a patient (fan) who ignites their family, friends, and coworkers about the positive experiences that they may encountered while visiting our centers.

This is usually a result of careful planning, and the time spent sharing the wealth of resources with a collaborating entity. We are enjoying the outcomes created by our partnership with **The Ohio State University Wexner Medical Center**, but more importantly we hope that our patients will benefit the most out of their new experience of being able to schedule, monitor, and understand their wellness experience. Together we are all **champions!**



WHAT A YEAR - IN REVIEW

So much has happened in the last year, and I want to take a moment to thank the **HOFH Board and Staff** for their support of fulfilling our mission each and every day that we open our doors. What happens at our **Heart of Ohio Family Health** is indicative of the type of intent that occurs at other centers across the country, and we are taking even greater strides to be proactive with each and every step. The following is just a **partial** pictorial snapshot of what we have accomplished and celebrated over the past 12-months. Thanks to all who helped to make great things happen in 2023, and I can't wait to see what we can do in the year to come.



HIGHLIGHTS

- 1) St. Ann's Site Opened (Jan. 2)
- 2) Giving Hearts/20th Anniversary Celebration (June 22)
- 3) Wellness Garden - sponsored space dedication (June 22) @ Feibel Center
- 4) Dental Clinic Opens - HOFH patients only (July 10)
- 5) EPIC Training Start (Aug. 7)
- 6) EPIC Launch (Oct. 2)
- 7) 2023 Wellness Walk - (Oct. 14) [[CLICK ► HERE](#)]
- 8) Woodard Café - sponsored space dedication (Nov. 24) @ Feibel Center

MOVEMENTS AND WAVES

DR. BUHARI MOHAMMED, CEO



I recently attended the **National Association of Community Health Centers (NACHC)** national conference in San Diego, California, and was reminded how steadfast the movement for creating and maintaining access to quality healthcare has been since the mid-1960's. **Federally Qualified Health Centers (FQHC)**, like **Heart of Ohio Family Health**, are instrumental in meeting the wellness needs of the diverse populations that we serve, and we have collectively evolved through some very difficult times.

In America, the mid-sixties was a turbulent time, but out of the waves of various national challenges many initiatives and efforts were born to resolve and mend areas that threatened this nation.

Along with the creation of FQHCs across the country, the Civil Rights Movement gained momentum, National and State Arts Councils were formed to support the creative fabric of America's various cultures, and space exploration heightened the potential of scientific advancement with worldwide implications. The ripples of these movements created more than just trends or waves, as our country pivoted from chaos to critical reform that is **still** making a difference.

TIME MATTERS

Historically, change often happens swiftly when there is a critical event that threatens the sense of social and economic balance. Even on a personal level – we often won't seek support until something catastrophic is threatening, especially when it comes to our wellness.

It is also apparent that being prepared and proactive provides a better pathway for resolving challenges as they may arise. More importantly, having a plan based upon our experiences (lessons learned) is essential and can provide the appropriate course of action to remedy issues before they become acute.

Unforeseen events will often occur, such as the current COVID-19 pandemic that we are experiencing, but we have been creative and resilient and fortunate to have the existing network of healthcare options like those provided by FQHCs. Can you imagine the worldwide, national, and community-level devastation that we would have faced if our advancements in medical care and delivery systems had not already been in place? Also, the nimbleness that we maintain by investing in the impactful practices that are truly making a difference is essential.

Now, technological advancements are providing an opportunity to enhance the sharing of vital information that can: improve research efforts, expand the scope of medical records management, and simplify the engagement of diverse patient populations. We must also manage these opportunities with integrity.

TIME TO HARVEST

The third quarter of the year, is a time to harvest for many who may engage in keeping a garden as a hobby, or farm for a living. All of the proactive efforts, like: making sure that the field is a solid foundation for nurturing growth, planting the seeds securely and at the right depth, providing adequate and appropriate care during various shifts in the climate, and tending to the crops to assure their full potential are all relevant to the work in the healthcare profession.

Healthcare is a field wherein we must nurture the growth of all who provide a quality experience to all patients. Consider providing preceptorships and other mentoring opportunities to expose students to the various professional opportunities that healthcare organizations provide. There is an altruistic nature that is the lifeblood of our society, and developing strategies to recruit, elevate, and retain the talent and compassion that is needed to sustain the movement that was created over 60-years ago should be an ongoing priority.



PATIENT ADVOCACY: SUPPORTING 340B AND MORE!



HEART OF OHIO FAMILY HEALTH continues to provide substantial savings to its patients through the **340B Program**. Qualifying patients can benefit from securing their prescription needs at a fraction of the typical costs associated with the medication.

Ongoing advocacy efforts have provided for this successful plan that often offsets the burden that some may have regarding the challenges of balancing their living expenses and medical needs.

Personal accounts of how the program is making a difference is perhaps the best advocacy resource that healthcare organizations can provide, especially since that is where the most significant impact occurs. Periodically, our organizational website features such testimonies and we call them "**YOUR STORY**."

Simply, our patients are our best advocates, and they gauge and promote any success or even challenges that may be experienced. The impact that we produce starts at an individual level and often cascades through family members and associates. Sharing the patient experience is valuable to staff as well as other patients, and can assist with developing strategic efforts to enhance positive outcomes for others.

Recently, a patient stated that prescription purchased without the 340B benefit would have cost around \$400, and the actual cost was decreased to only \$20. She says, "That changes lifestyles of people."

Imagine how many lifestyles have been enhanced due to the ongoing advocacy efforts that improve the access to healthcare provisions for all sectors of society. More than just their lifestyles, but expressions about the quality of their wellness are captured in their testimonies.

To view the passionate testimony of one patient's story: [CLICK HERE](#).

HEART OF OHIO FAMILY HEALTH INAGURAL WELLNESS WALK

Plan to participate in this unique FAMILY & COMMUNITY

2023 WELLNESS WALK

This engaging event will occur on **Saturday, October 14**, and begins promptly at 9:00 a.m. Participants have a choice of walking a **3-MILE** or **5-MILE** course through the center of **Whitehall**, while focusing on making strides for personal and community fitness and wellness.

The event will start and finish at the **JAMES B. FEIBEL CENTER**

located at 5000 East Main Street, in Whitehall, Ohio.



TO REGISTER, please email your name before **Wednesday, October 11** to: tanderson@hofhc.org

SAVE THE DATE



**HEART OF OHIO
FAMILY HEALTH**



**2023
WELLNESS WALK**

SATURDAY, OCTOBER 14 | 9:00 a.m. ▶ 12:00 Noon

START & FINISH
HEART OF OHIO FAMILY HEALTH
JAMES B. FEIBEL CENTER
5000 EAST MAIN STREET
COLUMBUS, OHIO 43213





HEART OF OHIO
FAMILY HEALTH

2023 - SECOND QUARTER EDITION

STRAIGHT FROM THE HEART

A QUARTERLY UPDATE FOR HEALTHCARE STAKEHOLDERS

WEATHERING THE STORM

DR. BUHARI MOHAMMED, CEO



Just a few months ago, on a late Monday afternoon, tornado sirens rang throughout central Ohio as Franklin County was put under a tornado warning for over 30-minutes as a severe storm twisted across the state.

Heart of Ohio Family Health staff followed protocols and sought shelter in secure spaces in all of our six facilities. The staff at the administrative office and clinic in Whitehall cleared the second floor and joined the clinical staff in safe areas on the first floor near the interior walls and corridors. Patients and family members in the waiting area were also ushered into the safe interior areas, away from the glass and entrances in the front of the building.

There was a quite hush and solemn concern of all who were gathered, as they waited for the sirens and fierce winds that swayed trees and tossed debris to subside.

Staff members reference the updates on their cell phones until the emergency was deemed to be over. Once the storm warning had cleared, patient visits were completed and the staff resumed their responsibilities as the day drew to a close.

THE AFTERMATH

Although this was a unique experience, the staff had been prepared from previous exercises and drills that made the situation less threatening. This may have been the first real-life experience of such a threat for many of our patients and staff, but we were thankful that there was no sustained emergency or injuries.

After all, we had previously maintained our composure through the COVID pandemic. During that experience, our operation embraced the adversity, and stayed open to meet the needs of our patients. We assisted them through what may have been their first experience of such a worldwide emergency, and we are still here to meet their needs.

There are many lessons to be learned from how we collectively made decisions and managed to do more than just survive the challenges that were faced. As the leader of the organization, the most impressive take-away was that which was experienced as a result of the storm a few months ago.

I was actually visiting another Federally Qualified Health Center in another state when the storms settled upon our community here in central Ohio. However, much like the buildings that withstood the high winds, our organization was able to weather the storm due to a strong foundation built from appropriate procedures and practices.



CLIMATE CHANGE

The strength of our organizations is based upon the stability created by our Boards, leadership, and staff. We provide a valuable service to our patients and customers, but it is important that we continue to develop practices that will ensure the capacity to weather the challenges that may arise.

As the environment in which we operate continues to evolve, we need to be steadfast and committed to our mission, and willing to pivot when it becomes necessary. It is imperative to be aware of the warning signs, look for the indicators, and listen to the voices that relate what is happening in the communities that we serve. Only then, can the critical steps be taken to respond accordingly. Developments like artificial intelligence may be seen as an innovative support tool or a threat, but our ability to adapt and to adjust will employ the benefits of new technologies as well as talent.

Storms will come and go, and we will learn more from our reactions and responses and build from any damage that may occur. Let's embrace the journey.



TAKE ACTION: 340B ADVOCACY IS NEEDED TODAY!



Advocacy is a very important part of sustaining the vital reach of the healthcare movement that started over 50 years ago.

On Wednesday, May 17 2023, the Health Subcommittee of the **U. S. House Energy and Commerce (E&C) Committee** unanimously approved a bill that would eliminate the ability of **Federally Qualified Health Centers (FQHCs)** and other 340B providers to retain 340B savings on drugs reimbursed under Medicaid managed care. For Community Health Centers in many states, including Ohio, this provision would be extremely harmful.

340B provider groups – including **National Association of Community Health Centers (NACHC)**, **340B Health, Ryan White Clinics**, and others – are working hard and collaboratively to block this provision when the full E&C Committee votes on it. Furthermore, NACHC reports that in meeting with Committee leadership, it seems there is a path forward to achieve the Committee's goal to increase transparency and alignment with managed care and Fee For Service plans, without jeopardizing critical 340B savings for FQHCs.

ACTION STEPS

If you haven't already, please ask your member of Congress to support comprehensive 340B reform to stabilize and restore the program by [clicking here](#) for a **340B Action Alert**. By being proactive and assisting with this NACHC campaign, it will allow you to customize an email alert to your Members of Congress. Make sure that you chose the correct designation, otherwise it will send an email with placeholder information.

Also, share a supportive 340B story using NACHC's **340B impact profile template** ([click here](#)), and also send a copy to **Ohio Association of Community Health Centers (OACHC)** at advocacy@ohiochc.org.



20th ANNIVERSARY & GIVING HEARTS CELEBRATION

Did you know that **Heart of Ohio Family Health** will step into the 20th year of providing access to quality healthcare starting next month?

We now have **six locations** that are addressing the wellness needs of our diverse community.

Please join us for the **20th Anniversary & Giving Hearts Celebration** and stay tuned for other ways that we will highlight our ongoing success throughout the year!

Simply, scan the **QR code** and purchase your ticket(s) and join us for the celebration!

JOIN US ► THURSDAY JUNE 22, 2023



PLAN TO JOIN US AS
WE CELEBRATE OUR
20th ANNIVERSARY
AND SALUTE THIS YEAR'S
GIVING HEARTS RECIPIENTS



www.heartofohiofamilyhealth.org



eventbrite

JEFFERSON GOLF AND COUNTRY CLUB • BLACKLICK, OHIO • 6:00 P.M. - 9:30 P.M.

LESSONS LEARNED

DR. BUHARI MOHAMMED, CEO



For nearly three years now, the COVID-19 pandemic has made healthcare a priority on an individual, community, and worldwide spectrum. We need to take advantage of the intentional effort that allowed governments, systems, and policymakers to address the fundamental right that everyone has access to healthcare, even beyond what may occur during a crisis.

We have witnessed how proactive preventative care allowed for testing, diagnosis, and treatment that saved lives. Just as important were the suggestions for behavioral adjustments and provisions that supported safety concerns.

Every day, we can employ the same approach that helps advance remedies and strategies that meet the needs of our individual families, our communities, our state, our nation, and the entire world's population. The virus unleashed global mayhem and deaths without discrimination. Collectively and collaboratively, we have proven that we can engage in an effort to address the physical and mental wellness of individuals, while we erase the barriers and constructs that may stand in the way of progress. Let's work together to make healthcare access a universal right for all. Moreover, our work should always position us to advance health equity for all. We can do this!

TRANSFORMING HEALTHCARE TRANSFORMING COMMUNITY: 2022 Year-In-Review

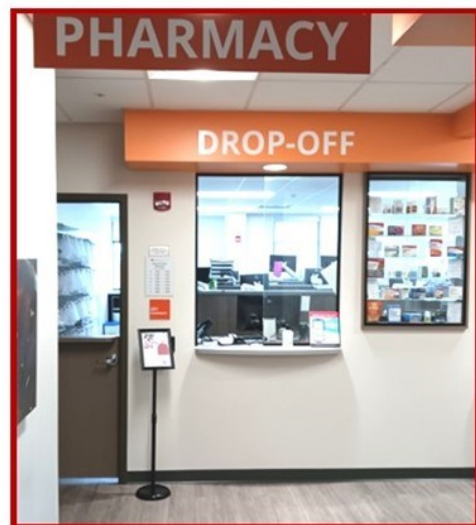
In 2022, the year started with a celebrated move to our new state-of-art facility, **Heart of Ohio Family Health – James B. Feibel Center**, located at 5000 East Main Street in Whitehall. Throughout each facility, our 157 dedicated, compassionate, and committed professionals at Heart of Ohio Family Health ended the year providing medical services to 15,804 individuals, a 7% increase from 2021. The total number of visit encounters for 2022 was 71,866 – a 15.2% increase in visits compared to 2021.

The **James B. Feibel Center** provides patients with comprehensive primary care services to children, pregnant mothers, and adults with access to: mental health, counseling, and an in-house pharmacy. The **in-house pharmacy** services in the Feibel Center started serving patients in the summer of 2022. By year-end, 1,468 prescriptions were served of which 1,107 were new and 361 were refilled. The most impactful piece of data for patients using the in-house pharmacy is the savings of \$243,398.12 for our cash-paying patients.

Lastly, I will be remiss for not highlighting our ongoing focus on Quality Care efforts for diabetes and blood pressure control. We ended the year with improved performance regarding diabetes of HBA1c >9 at 15%! That's 76% of our blood pressure-diagnosed patients who now have their blood pressure under control. To all of our internal and external stakeholders, thank you for your valuable support of our efforts in transforming health care, and transforming the community!



TAKE ACTION: WHY 340B PLAN ADVOCACY IS IMPORTANT



Federally Qualified Health Centers (FQHC) were born out of a movement that started almost 60 years ago, during the mid-1960s. The single focus of FQHC is providing efficient, high-quality, comprehensive health care that is accessible, culturally and linguistically competent, community-directed, and patient-centered across the nation. Today, FQHC facilities serve as the primary medical home for over 30 million people in more than 13,000 rural and urban communities across America. These community-based "family doctors" enjoy longstanding bipartisan support by administrations and policymakers at all levels, as well as in both the private and public sectors. A product of that movement is the 340B prescription discount program which has had bipartisan support directed toward providing discounted pharmacy costs to all patients of a "Covered Entity" such as the FQHCs.

Heart of Ohio Family Health opened an **In-House Pharmacy** in the summer of 2022 and has offered noteworthy savings to cash-paying patients. Aside from providing each patient with important medication prescribed to address their wellness needs, the discounts provide an opportunity for them to direct their funds to other financial responsibilities. Covered Entities like Heart of Ohio Family Health use program savings to expand additional services to patients.

The influx of large hospital systems as "Covered Entities" in the 340B program has unsettled the pharmaceutical industry. This has led to the pharmaceutical industry limiting "Covered Entities" including FQHC's access to a shipment of qualified medication to contract pharmacies. A recent U. S. Court of Appeals 3rd Circuit decision (January 30, 2023) favored the pharmaceutical industry. The decision found that 340B status is silent on the delivery of 340B drugs, specifically the use of contract pharmacies. Other similar cases are going through the Courts such as a DC Court of Appeals case, and the U. S. Court of Appeals for the 7th Circuit. Our best-case scenario is a circuit split, which would require the Supreme Court to take up the issue of 340B and contract pharmacies.

The Ask?

Congress will eventually need to strengthen the 340B Program and provide enforcement authority to the Department of Health and Human Services. Call your U.S. Representatives and members of Congress to let them know the importance of supporting the 340B program to assure that patients receive such vital savings.



HISTORY STILL IN THE MAKING

Celebration of history and heritage goes beyond the calendar month and evolves with the unfolding of each day.

[CLICK HERE](#) to read about the origin and legacy of the **Community Health Center Movement**, and embrace the importance of the work that lies ahead. (Courtesy of: National Association of Community Health Centers)



20th ANNIVERSARY

Did you know that our organization will step into the 20th year of providing access to quality healthcare starting in mid-June?

We now have six locations that are addressing the wellness needs of our diverse community.

Mark your calendar for the **Giving Hearts & 20th Anniversary Celebration**, and stay tuned for other ways that we will highlight our ongoing success throughout the year!

SAVE THE DATE ► THURSDAY, JUNE 22, 2023



HEART OF OHIO
FAMILY HEALTH

PLAN TO JOIN US AS
WE CELEBRATE OUR
20th ANNIVERSARY
AND SALUTE THIS YEAR'S
GIVING HEARTS RECIPIENTS



www.heartofohiofamilyhealth.org

JEFFERSON GOLF AND COUNTRY CLUB · BLACKLICK, OHIO · 6:00 P.M. - 9:30 P.M.