

# BERGEN COUNTY DEPENDS ON BVMI

**2019**  
**ANNUAL REPORT**



# LEADERSHIP MESSAGE

As our team sat down to plan this annual report, we faced a big question: Could we simply recap the past year at BVMI as we usually do, and then wait until next year to sum up how we handled the COVID-19 pandemic? The answer was no.

COVID-19 has upended "business as usual" everywhere, including at BVMI. Who knew that our biggest challenge yet would arrive right on the heels of our success in 2019? Who could have predicted that we'd have to find a way — right away — to care for our patients from a safe distance?

Fortunately, a combination of teamwork and dedication not only saves the day, it also prepares us to come out ahead. As you read this report, you'll see how BVMI's staff, volunteers, board of trustees and community partners kept our patients healthy, safe, and out of emergency rooms in 2019. You'll also see how we're still doing it, every day. The rapid changes we've made are enabling us to serve more patients today and tomorrow. Your support, as always, is the lifeline that makes this happen.

At times like these, we turn to our leaders — as well as each other — for guidance, reassurance and resources. We're working hand in hand on solutions to the many issues facing us during this pandemic. It's a big responsibility, but we have to succeed. Our patients deserve nothing less.



Andrea Costa Egan (L) and Amanda Missey loading emergency food kits for delivery to BVMI patients.

BVMI's game plan has always been to provide quality healthcare today, while planning ahead for the future. That won't change. We thank you for your generosity in 2019, and also for stepping up during a crisis we never imagined in 2020. We're determined to keep winning because we love what we do — and who we do it for.

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# AND BVMI DEPENDS ON YOU!

Life was good at BVMI in 2019.

We served more patients, our programs grew, and we continued to keep people out of emergency rooms. Then we entered 2020, and a “healthquake” struck. But COVID-19 did not stop the BVMI team in its tracks. We have found ways to keep moving forward. Our patients know they can still count on us. And we’re more grateful than ever to know we can still count on YOU.

## What do you do when the vulnerable become even more vulnerable?

Throughout 2019, thousands of our Bergen County neighbors still lacked access to health insurance, and their lives were more challenging than ever. BVMI was able to serve 1,500 of them during more than 9,000 visits, with a plan to continue expanding.

When COVID-19 arrived without warning in 2020, Bergen County also found itself with the state’s highest rates of infection. With many BVMI patients living in small spaces with multiple family members, it was the perfect breeding ground for a virus that showed no mercy — especially for those with underlying health conditions. Other burdens included job layoffs, food insecurity and trouble paying for rent and utilities. We knew BVMI had to think and plan quickly, before life got even tougher.

## A strong foundation kept us grounded.

Especially in times like these, BVMI realizes how important it is to hold fast to our mission. By keeping our patients as healthy as possible, and out of emergency rooms, we make things less frightening for them. We’ve also had to face our own fears. On March 18, 2020, we made the tough decision to temporarily close our clinic doors. We had to protect our patients and our team from the physical contact that could expose them to COVID-19.

We rapidly assembled two BVMI teams, who reached out by phone and mail to let our patients know we were still here for them. We fielded dozens of calls each day as we ramped up and seamlessly transitioned to a new “telemedicine” system — one that would allow BVMI patients, medical practitioners and interpreters to be in the same virtual exam room. Whether our patients used their cell phones, home computers, or even their children’s laptops, they could still “visit” us. We expressed our heartfelt thanks to Volunteers in Medicine America for forging a partnership with Doxy.me to make the telemedicine platform available to member clinics.

“The telemedicine model was something we’d been planning to add to our services in the very near future,” said Amanda Missey, BVMI’s President/CEO. “Within a four-week period, we figured out how to ramp it up and roll it out. It has kept everyone much safer as we find the smartest ways to deal with COVID-19. Going forward, the telemedicine option can also resolve transportation issues and scheduling conflicts for some of our patients and medical providers.”

Of course, we haven’t forgotten about our program results in 2019. They might seem overshadowed by recent events. But, more than ever, we appreciate those accomplishments. They are helping our patients stay strong, even during a pandemic.

■ **BVMI's Women's Health Initiative (WHI)** was in greater demand than ever in 2019. Visits increased by more than 18%. We also had more referrals for mammograms, ultrasounds and other procedures. More women are now receiving preventive and diagnostic care. This program continues to be one of BVMI's most vital services, since 63% of our patients are women.

■ Nearly one-third of BVMI's patients are diabetic or pre-diabetic. We keep placing roadblocks in the path of this disease through our **Prevent Diabetes Program (PDP)**. By the end of 2019, the PDP had three cohorts, for a total of 30 participants. Each team met on a regular basis and learned more about nutrition, exercise, healthy habits, stress management and behavior modification. Changes in diet and increased exercise resulted in better lab work results overall. Some patients also saw a drop in A1c (an average of

blood sugar levels over time), or they lost weight. One patient is 12 pounds lighter and counting! At the moment, we continue serving all of our diabetes-challenged patients through the new telemedicine model. We haven't missed a beat.

■ **The Korean Healthcare Program (KHP)** recently celebrated its one-year anniversary at BVMI. We reached deeply into Korean-speaking communities to determine which people needed us, and how we could make them comfortable enough to turn to BVMI for help. In 2019, we provided 86 patients with culturally sensitive primary care. More than half of them came to us with cardiovascular issues, diabetes or pre-diabetes – and most of those conditions were previously undiagnosed or untreated. These patients are now receiving the care they need, and we thank our Korean-speaking interpreters for their help.

All of these initiatives support our day-to-day efforts to keep all BVMI patients as physically and emotionally healthy as possible. Their continuity of care is a top priority for us.

### **We're empowering our patients through education and case management.**

Ongoing education for our patients gives them the knowledge and confidence they need to help take charge of their health. This has become critically important as we share what we're learning each day about COVID-19. Our patients need to know how the virus spreads, and how to take precautions. We know they desperately need their incomes, too. When the risk of infection and spread is even greater than the loss of their hard-earned wages, it's an agonizing decision. We're here to talk them through it, and to see if we can help in some way.

"Five years ago, when I joined BVMI as a volunteer physician, I never could have predicted the extent of our impact during such a critical moment."

– Karen Latimer, MD

"BVMI volunteers are ROCKSTARS! They are there for BVMI, responding to everything we need or ask for."

– Elaine Posner

"Many of our patients are living with chronic conditions made more complex by the pandemic. It has been a team effort to make sure they could manage their health."

– Josef Machac, MD



Josef Machac, MD, Volunteer



Karen Latimer, MD, Volunteer

"I find our patients are pleasantly surprised when we reach out to them and offer help. They are so relieved to know they can call us when needed."

– Rosa Flores-Campos, MSW



Rosa Flores-Campos, MSW, Case Manager



Elaine Posner, Volunteer Manager



**In 2020, for the first time, we hired a case manager**, Rosa Flores-Campos, MSW. She is charged with looking at the bigger picture for our patients. Some need childcare, or a support network, or assistance with the very basics, such as food and medication. Rosa screens patients to learn more about their individual needs and circumstances, also known as Social Determinants of Health. Then she rolls up her sleeves to locate the right resources. Right now, all of our patients' needs are greater than ever, and we're doing our best to help them fill in the gaps.

### Small acts have the power to make a big difference.

These are not ordinary times. BVMI has stretched beyond its typical services to help wherever we can. Through our **BVMI Gives Back** initiative, we're meeting some immediate local needs:

- With the help of the Center for Food Action (CFA), the Community FoodBank of New Jersey (CFBNJ), Bergen Volunteer Center, the Bergen County Prosecutor's Office and Bergen County Executive Jim Tedesco, BVMI received 100 forty-pound emergency food kits. These were delivered to our patients by volunteers.
- Thanks to generous donors who have supported BVMI's Emergency Patient Fund, we've also been able to provide patients in need with gift cards for groceries, or with funds for other essentials such as medication.
- To thank those on the front lines, BVMI's board, staff and volunteers arranged for delivery of meals to our partner hospitals: Bergen New Bridge Medical Center, Englewood Health, Hackensack University Medical Center, Holy Name Medical Center and The Valley Hospital.

### We will continue to serve – and to succeed, thanks to you.

The statistics and charts in this report provide more numbers behind BVMI's results in 2019. The formula behind them also includes resiliency, strength, and dedication – variables that are hard to quantify. We never forget that we couldn't do what we do without our caring donors, staff, medical and lay volunteers, and community partners.

The world may look different moving forward, but we know that crossing our fingers and hoping for the best is not an option at BVMI. Our hands and hearts are much too busy for that. So we just keep working on even better ways to bring high quality, compassionate care to our patients. In other words, we're still here. And we'll be here tomorrow.

"Our COVID-19 triage teams moved quickly. We made sure patients got their tests and prescriptions, and that they could speak to a doctor in an emergency."  
– Michael Arteta

"Patients had questions and worries about COVID-19. In many cases, we were able to help them manage their symptoms right from their homes."  
– Karla Goffe, RN



Michael Arteta, Front Desk Supervisor



Dale DeAngelis Mottola, Administrative Director

"We were determined to continue providing care through this crisis, and we did. It is my honor to work with such a great team."  
– Dale DeAngelis Mottola



Karla Goffe, RN, Staff Nurse



Holly Homa, RN-BC, Certified Diabetes Educator

"By introducing telemedicine appointments during the pandemic, we've actually seen an increase in diabetic counseling requests."  
– Holly Homa, RN-BC, CDE

# 2019 HIGHLIGHTS

## THE POWER OF YOUR GIFT

46%

OF PATIENTS WITH DIABETES HAVE CONTROLLED BLOOD SUGAR, EXCEEDING THE NATIONAL HEDIS\* BENCHMARK OF 34.5%.

71%

OF HYPERTENSIVE PATIENTS HAVE CONTROLLED BLOOD PRESSURE, SURPASSING THE NATIONAL HEDIS BENCHMARK OF 56.5%.

\$1076

ANNUAL COST TO PROVIDE CARE FOR ONE PATIENT

81%

OF NEW WOMEN PATIENTS 40 AND OVER RECEIVED A MAMMOGRAM REFERRAL AT THEIR FIRST VISIT: 87% OF THOSE GOT THE SCREENING.

61%

OF PATIENTS WITH DIABETES, HYPERTENSION OR CORONARY ARTERY DISEASE HAVE AN LDL OF 130 OR LESS.

\*HEDIS (HEALTHCARE EFFECTIVENESS DATA AND INFORMATION SET) FOR MEDICAID PATIENTS.

### WHERE THE MONEY COMES FROM

- 30% Donated Services
- 24% Foundations and Corporations
- 21% Individuals
- 14% Special Events
- 8% Donated Goods
- 3% Other

### HOW WE SPEND THE MONEY

- 82% Programs
- 12% Fundraising
- 6% Management/Administrative

**BVMI**

Bergen Volunteer Medical Initiative

**BVMI Mission ...** Powered by passionate volunteers, BVMI meets the medical needs of low-income, working, uninsured adults in Bergen County by providing free, comprehensive, patient-centered primary healthcare.

**Lynn Diamond Healthcare Center** 75 Essex Street, Suite 100 Hackensack, NJ 07601 201-342-2478 [bvmi.org](http://bvmi.org)

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