

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Concord free and charitable clinic planning Feb. 26 ‘Pop-Up Doc’ event to provide a day of free health care to uninsured food-service workers

- *Community Free Clinic scheduling appointments for workers without health insurance*
- *Event is part of Giving Kitchen program that supports food-service workers nationally*
- *N.C. hospitality workers among most likely to be uninsured, unable to afford basic care*

CHARLOTTE, N.C. (Feb. 19, 2024) – Food-service workers in Cabarrus County have a chance to receive free health care later this month as part of an effort to help low-income, uninsured and underinsured workers in an industry where many employees struggle to afford even the most basic medical care.

The “Pop-Up Doc” event at the Community Free Clinic in Concord is scheduled for Monday, Feb. 26, from 8:30-4:30 p.m. The event is open to uninsured Cabarrus County residents working in food-service jobs. Appointments are required and can be scheduled by calling the clinic at (704) 782-0650.

The event is the latest in a partnership between North Carolina’s free and charitable clinics and Giving Kitchen, an Atlanta-based humanitarian organization that supports food-service workers with financial assistance and other resources, including free health care through its Pop-Up Doc program.

“We look forward to serving as many people as possible at our Pop-Up Doc event,” said Laura Milliken, executive director of the Community Free Clinic. “Even more important, we hope to welcome many future patients who are eligible to enroll and receive ongoing free care at the Community Free Clinic.”

The hospitality industry, including food-service jobs, accounts for about one of every six low-wage, uninsured workers in North Carolina. Free and charitable clinics are exclusively devoted to bringing high-quality health care to low-income uninsured and underinsured residents regardless of ability to pay.

Services available at the event will include checkups with primary care providers, behavioral health screenings, lab tests as needed and “lifestyle medicine” screenings to improve health by focusing on healthy eating, exercise, stress reduction, sleep habits, healthy relationships and tobacco use.

“Over 700,000 North Carolinians do not have access to insurance benefits from their place of employment and have incomes that make them ineligible for Medicaid,” said April Cook, CEO of the North Carolina Association of Free and Charitable Clinics (NCAFCC). “Free and charitable clinics across the state provide the care they can’t afford.”

Uninsured residents across North Carolina can go to www.ncafcc.org/our-clinic-list/ to find a free and charitable clinic near them. Clinics serve people who have no health insurance and household income between 139% of the federal poverty level (FPL) – just over the Medicaid cutoff – and 250% of FPL.

“Pop-Up Doc is a chance for Giving Kitchen to provide preventative care for food-service workers before a minor health issue becomes a crisis-level event,” said Jen Hiding-Kendrick, Giving Kitchen’s co-founder and senior director of community engagement. “Our partnership with North Carolina’s free and charitable clinics makes it possible to reach food-service workers in their communities and help them get the care they need.”

NCAFCC member clinics are planning additional Pop-Up Doc events for 2024, including Hope Community Clinic of East Charlotte, which will provide two days of free care for local food-service industry workers April 8 and April 15. Details will be available closer to the event at www.thegivingkitchen.org/popupdoc.

About the Community Free Clinic

The Community Free Clinic in Concord is the only health-care provider in Cabarrus County dedicated exclusively to improving health outcomes for the county's low-income, uninsured adults by providing free access to medical services and prescription medications. Founded in 1994 and sustained by dedicated staff and volunteers, donors and community sponsors, the clinic offers primary care, chronic disease management, an in-house lab, onsite pharmacy, specialist care and referrals, and behavioral health services. The Community Free Clinic is one of 19 awarded the North Carolina Association of Free and Charitable Clinics' 2023 Gold Standard for excellence. Learn more at www.communityfreeclinic.org.

About Giving Kitchen

Giving Kitchen (GK) is a nonprofit organization that provides emergency assistance to food service workers through financial support and a network of community resources. Their goal is to create a food service community in which crises are met with compassion and care. Giving Kitchen is a James Beard Humanitarian of the Year award winner and Fast Company's 2022 Brands That Matter. Since its inception, GK has served over 17,500 food service workers and awarded over \$11.6 million in financial assistance. For more about Giving Kitchen, visit givingkitchen.org and follow @givingkitchen on Facebook, X (Twitter), Instagram, and TikTok.

About the North Carolina Association of Free & Charitable Clinics

The North Carolina Association of Free & Charitable Clinics supports 69 member clinics in expanding access to health care, reducing health disparities and improving the health of uninsured and underinsured individuals. Member clinics are a vital part of North Carolina's safety net, providing care for 82,500 patients in 87 counties, including primary and specialty medical care; dental care; pharmacy services; optometry; behavioral health care; lab tests and hospital referrals. The association supports member clinics with education, advocacy, research, funding and collaboration, and promotes quality health care for all North Carolinians. Learn more at www.ncafcc.org.

Media Contacts

For North Carolina Association of Free and Charitable Clinics/The Community Free Clinic: David Coburn, Coburn Communications, david@coburncomm.com, 704.408.4276.

For Giving Kitchen: Rebecca Wagner, senior director of marketing and communications, rebecca@thegivingkitchen.org.