

Clínica Msr. Oscar A. Romero

Cooperative Health Care for the Homeless Network

As one of the 14 members of the Cooperative Health Care for the Homeless Network, Clínica Msr. Oscar A. Romero (CMOAR) provides comprehensive primary healthcare services to individuals and families without homes. Additional services, such as dental, mental health and substance abuse treatment programs are also offered to the homeless. Funding for this program is administered through Northeast Valley Health Corporation.

The transient nature of the homeless population poses unique challenges to primary care providers based on patient fear about declaring their homeless or immigration status to not identifying with a single clinic as their medical home, which facilitates follow up. People without homes are concerned primarily about food and a roof for the night rather than physical and mental healthcare. They are more likely to show up for care at late stages of illness or when chronic diseases, such as diabetes, asthma or hypertension, have severely worsened.

It takes a special kind of provider to work with the homeless because they need more overall care once a patient does walk through the clinic's door. Understanding the culture of the homeless is paramount to providing interventions appropriate to their livelihood. Through participation in this collaborative network, CMOAR maintains quality improvement standards in its care of people without homes.