

# Role of A Student-Run Free Clinic in An Urban Underserved Area

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## BACKGROUND

- The Camden Community Health Center (CCHC) is a student-run free clinic that has provided care for over two thousand patients in Camden since 1999. Services provided include routine annual physical exams, vaccine administration, chronic condition management, sick visits, and referral to specialty care. The clinic does not ask about the insurance or legal status of patients, making it an accessible source of healthcare for the community.

- During a clinic visit, the patient is usually first seen by an upper level student (third or fourth year) and a lower level student (first or second year), who perform an initial history and physical. The students then report to the resident and attendings present on that clinic day. Finally, the attending physician will see the patient and addend and approve the final assessment and plan. Third and fourth year students oversee the logistics of the clinic.

- By this model, the clinic is able to serve both the patient population and the students who partake--patients receive the healthcare they need, and students obtain additional clinical practice.

## OBJECTIVES

The goals of this project will be to assess:

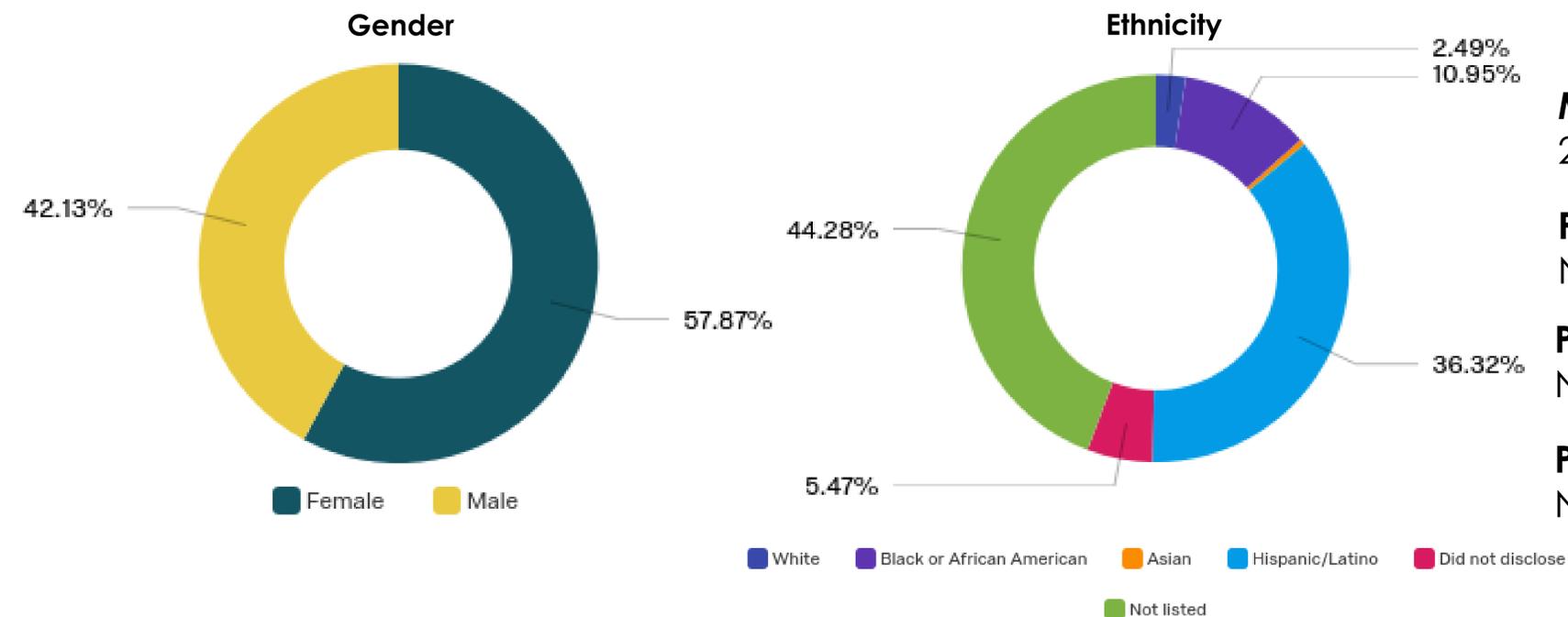
1. What services have been provided over the course of the clinic's history,
2. The conditions most commonly seen in the clinic,
3. The role of a student-run free clinic in an underserved urban community,
4. Potential avenues for improvement based on the needs of the clinic population.

## METHODS

This is a retrospective chart review analyzing patients who sought care at the CCHC office. Study institutional review board approval was obtained from the Rowan University School of Osteopathic Medicine Institutional Review Board prior to beginning the study. Permission to use the paper patient charts was obtained from the Camden Clinic. Charts were then selected randomly from the clinic chart archive. Research assistants made a combined effort to abstract information from paper charts into a database using Qualtrics.

## RESULTS

**N = 201 charts abstracted and analyzed**



**Mean age:**  
24.46±17.71 years

**Patients under 18:**  
N = 82

**Patients 18-40 yo:**  
N = 77

**Patients >40 yo:**  
N = 42

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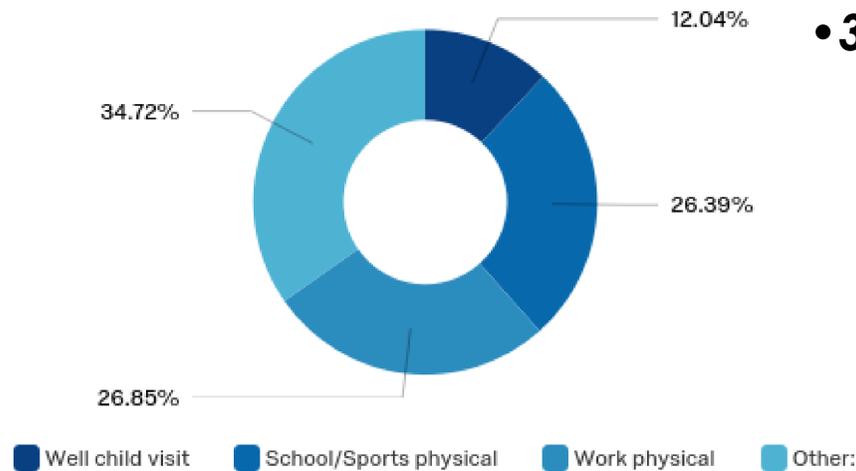


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## RESULTS

Most Common Chief Complaints



- 26% of patients received a new prescription at their visit
- 31% of patients received a new diagnosis at their visit

### Most Common New Diagnoses

Dermatologic:	21
Cardiovascular:	17
Pulmonary:	7
Allergic:	6
Psychiatric:	6
URI:	6

### Most Common Pre-Existing Conditions

Asthma:	30
Hypertension:	19
Chronic pain:	11
Cardiovascular Complications:	11
Diabetes:	9

### Most Common Referrals

Dental:	20
OBGyn:	13
Immunizations:	8
Radiology:	6
Cardiology:	5
ED:	3

### Most Common Labs Ordered

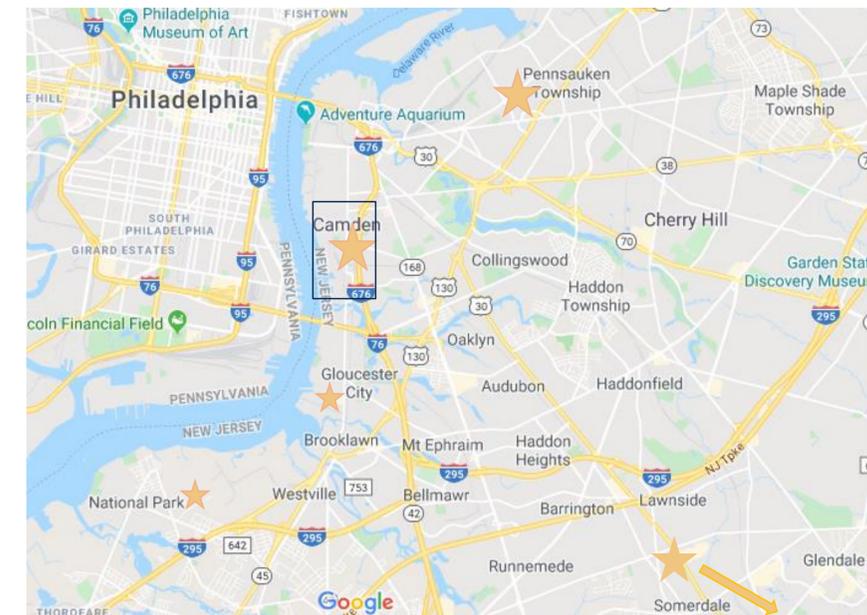
PPD:	39
Urinalysis:	12
BMP/CMP:	12
Titers:	14
CBC:	11
Lead Testing:	9
Liver Panel:	8
TSH/Thyroid panel:	7

### Common Towns of Residence

Camden:	125
Pennsauken:	12
Sicklerville:	7
Blackwood:	3
Lindenwold:	3



## Map of Camden and Surrounding Communities



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## DISCUSSION

- The majority of patients seen at the clinic were female, and over half of patients were from Camden.
  - A the rest of our patients hailed from other towns, such as Pennsauken, but others had come to the clinic from as far as Millville or Egg Harbor, which are towns that are a 40 minute drive.
  - Ethnicity was frequently not listed on charts, but where patients chose to disclose, the most common ethnicities served were Hispanic/Latino, Black or African American, and White, respectively.
  - The majority of patients included in the review were under 40, with 40% of patients age 18 or under.
  - Asthma and hypertension were the two most common pre-existing conditions. This may reflect the younger sample age and so fewer chronic conditions are seen than in a normal population.
  - The clinic provides a large amount of school and work physicals for its patients. Although they may seem ordinary, these services are required for children to attend school and for adults to begin work and are very important for anyone who recently moved to the area or to the country.
  - With the extent of physicals provided, clinic physicians also order many labs for patients, such as lead testing for children, and CBCs and UAs for adults.
  - Almost a third of patients leave the clinic with a new diagnosis, most often a dermatologic diagnosis such as eczema, but many heart murmurs and cases of hypertension have been detected.
  - Because the clinic is a primary care office and it's testing resources are limited, many referrals are made to outside centers. A large amount of dental and immunization referrals are made for children, and ob/gyn referrals are frequently made for the women who visit. Notably, three patients were sent to the ED for urgent cardiac complaints, such as an MI rule-out or hypertensive crisis.

## LIMITATIONS

- There were several limitations to the data presented, including incomplete charts, lack of standard visit documentation, large time range, and the younger population selected. Most importantly, this is a small selection of 201 charts out of almost 1200, which provides only a sliver of perspective on the clinic population. Even just how the charts were pulled at random from the archives can change the data. Even this incomplete timespan is large, and thus with the evolution of the clinic there is inconsistency in how patient information is charted. Some patient charts are sparse and may contain a single page with only basic information, while other patients have charts that span up to seven visits. Thus, for many patients, many data points were often not listed. This data selection also happened to skew heavily toward a younger population, over half of patients were 40 or under, and thus very few chronic conditions appear in this data set compared to the entire clinic population.

## STATEMENT OF OSTEOPATHIC SIGNIFICANCE

The Camden Community Health Center not only provides healthcare, but connects patients to resources they may not previously have had access to, such as the free OMM clinic at Rowan University. Furthermore, treatment plans are made with keeping the whole person and their circumstances in mind. Seeing as the clinic cares for vulnerable populations that may not be able to afford expensive treatments or drug therapies, clinicians take unique routes of care by providing patients with feasible lifestyle modifications, utilizing OMM, and taking the time to educate patients on the importance of maintaining a healthy body, so it may work as a unit. Members of the clinic truly consider the impact of lifestyle and community on health, thus guiding future preventative care based on individual needs.

