EXPANDING ACCESS TO CARE THROUGH A COMMUNITY-BASED PHARMACY NEIGHBORHOOD FAMILY PRACTICE

With the opening of an in-house and retail pharmacy at Dave’s Mercado, located next to Neighborhood Family Practice’s (NFP) main community health center, patients and community members now benefit from significantly expanded access to affordable prescription medications, medication education and adherence counseling. Three Arches Foundation awarded a grant to help fund the construction costs of creating the pharmacy, investing in an innovative and sustainable care delivery model.

In late 2018, the existing Dave’s Mercado pharmacy was expanded and remodeled to allow for increased benefits to NFP patients, Dave’s Mercado customers and residents of the surrounding community via extended hours and additional services. During its first month of operation, the new Neighborhood Family Practice Pharmacy filled nearly 4,000 prescriptions. NFP patients who utilize the pharmacy and meet income requirements can receive medication at significantly discounted prices through the Federal Government’s 340 B Drug Discount Program as well as a sliding fee scale administered by NFP. This is a big differentiator for NFP patients using the in-house pharmacy compared to other pharmacies. Not only do they receive the lowest possible price for their medication, but in cases where there is a very high co-pay or deductible, the NFP Pharmacy can offer financial assistance through the sliding fee scale and use charitable dollars to help further offset the expense.

Bonnie Jung, a NFP patient and the beloved former receptionist at the organization’s Ridge Community Health Center, is extremely grateful to be paying just $4 for a monthly prescription that used to cost her over $60 prior to the opening of the NFP Pharmacy. NFP pharmacists were also able to assist another patient with obtaining insulin valued at $1,500 for just $8. Had it not been for the NFP Pharmacy, this patient would not have been able to afford this life-saving medication. While NFP is new to the pharmacy business, the Federally Qualified Health Center was founded in 1980 in response to a concern that residents of Cleveland’s near west side lacked access to primary health care. Since then, NFP has grown to six locations, five in neighborhoods on Cleveland’s near west side and one in Lakewood.

“The recent addition of pharmacy services is key to the continuity of care for our patients and keeping them healthy,” says Jean Polster, NFP’s president and CEO. “Strong partnerships such as that with Dave’s Supermarket help Neighborhood Family Practice to expand not only our services, but also our service area, allowing us to continue to meet the evolving needs of our community.”