

South Cumberland Community Clinic

Newsletter
Fall 2025

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VOLUNTEER WITH US

We welcome doctors
and nurses who are able
to volunteer one or two
days a month.

Please contact
Dr. Phelps at:

tphelps52@gmail.com

Picture: SCCC volunteers:
Isabel Patterson, Margaret
Woods, Carol Titus, Dr. Tom
Phelps, Sheri Lawrence.

Elijah Andrews, Evey Knopf,
and Sarah Beth Layne (not
pictured).

Photo by Allie Cahoon



MISSION

Since 2022, South Cumberland Community Clinic has provided free medical care to the uninsured and underinsured community across the South Cumberland Plateau, primarily serving Franklin, Grundy and Marion counties.

SCCC Serves Our Neighbors:

- Over 340 patients and 1700 patient visits
- Average patient has been uninsured for over seven years
- Incidence of being unable to see a provider because of insurance status: 1,175 times
- Number of times a patient or a family member have been to the ER in the past three years: 778 times

*Data since inception on November 2, 2022

Clinic Success Stories by Eric Young, MD



It has been a very rewarding experience volunteering my time at the South Cumberland Community Clinic. I am an interventional pain physician and apply my skills to improve the function and quality of life of those suffering from painful conditions. Many of the procedures I perform provide both immediate and long-lasting relief. I have procedure suites at my offices in Manchester and Murfreesboro that my patients from SCCC come to for their care. The care I provide for these patients is provided to them at no cost regardless of the office location. Most patients that I see at SCCC are those who are either uninsured or underinsured but still try to work to provide for their families and care for themselves. The inability to work creates great adversity for the patient and their families. Typically, the patients I see have a problem that is treatable with a simple procedure. Due to cost of healthcare, they have often gone years struggling to keep working and often taking days off due to pain from a condition that has never been diagnosed or treated. I also have seen patients that suffered from acute severe pain conditions that without treatment would have led to loss of employment and income. A few months ago, a young carpenter suffered a disc herniation in his neck and loss the strength of his dominant arm. Without care he would have lost his employment and likely the use of his right arm. He was very grateful as after a few procedures and a care plan he was able to return to work within a few weeks and avoid surgery. He stopped by to thank me last month.

I also had a truck driver who was no longer able to drive due to severe back pain. He was at risk of losing his home. After a simple procedure he returned to work. He also stopped by the office just to say thanks several months after the procedure. There was a very nice man who was released from prison with severe back pain that was prevented him from rejoining the work force. After a procedure he gained employment. He and his family returned to say thank you. There are many stories like this. I just performed a procedure yesterday on a patient with severe scoliosis so that she can continue working as a sitter in home healthcare. She was incredibly grateful.

It brings me great joy to help those who need the care but lack the means in our current socioeconomic environment. There is no better place to serve than Grundy County. Grundy County is home to so many kind and hard-working people but is troubled by lack of employment options, costs of health care and insurance. Many local employment options often do not offer insurance and do not pay well. Insurance purchased on the marketplace often has unaffordable deductibles and a restricted list of providers. These issues contribute to the healthcare barriers in the community. Giving these people the opportunity to continue their employment not only helps the individuals, but also their families and communities. I believe this is why these people are so very grateful for the care provided.



SCCC's medical assistant, Maggie White Parmley second from right, was accepted to Physician Assistant school at MTSU this year. We are proud of Maggie and look forward to her return to the mountain!

Marilyn Phelps, Carol Titus, Sheri Lawrence, Cooper Lloyd, MD, Bill Titus, Maggie Parmley, Thomas Phelps, MD

A note from Board Chair, Carol Titus

Thank you for your generous support of the South Cumberland Community Clinic. SCCC exists because of you. While our clinicians, office team, Bonners, Canales, and interns volunteer to provide excellent healthcare to our patients, we provide medicine, diagnostic tests, and laboratory tests without charge because of your donations. As Drs. Young and Phelps described, our patients receive excellent treatment and are living more productive lives because of your support.

Over 18% of the population in our area is uninsured, which equals over 2,500 people in Grundy County alone. Our average patient has been uninsured for over seven years, and many have not been able to receive healthcare prior to the clinic's opening in November of 2022. We have conducted 1600 patient visits during office hours on Tuesdays and Thursdays. Our patients often have multiple diagnoses and return to SCCC many times for care.

November 1, 2025 marks our third anniversary. Our work is just beginning.

Community Health Worker Tammie Beers

SCCC is participating in a Tennessee Department of Health Rural Health Resiliency Grant through the South Cumberland Community Fund. As part of that grant, SCCC is sponsoring a Community Health Worker. We welcome Tammie Beers into this role. She will assist patients with medical care follow-up, referrals to specialists, connections to food, transportation, mental health and housing resources; thereby improving health outcomes for our patients and their families. Tammie has lived in Grundy County for several years and is involved with several missions across the Plateau.



Message from Dr. Tom Phelps

The South Cumberland Community Clinic is growing in many ways. With the new clinic opening in April 2025, clinic space quadrupled, allowing greater privacy for patients and much more room for providers for laboratory work, pharmacy storage, writing notes and teaching. The clinic has become a place that not only offers primary care medicine, but addresses the social aspects of medicine. With the addition of a community health worker (CHW), we are now able to connect patients with the resources they need to better take care of themselves. Each patient is interviewed about their needs: Do they need help with transportation? Better housing? Need recovery from addiction? Need special, advanced medical care or getting expensive medications? Child care? Do they need food? Rudolf Virchow, a 19th century physician who is the father of social medicine once said: "Giving medicine without food is like washing hands with soap and water and drying them with dirt." Ms. Tammie Beers, who lives in Tracy City, is SCCC's community health worker. She is busy getting patient access to free mammograms, free CT Scans of the lungs for those who qualify, and free PAP smears, and, handing out food.

Our clinical staff is growing as well. Beside Dr. Tom Phelps (Family Practice), Dr. Cooper Lloyd (Internal Medicine/Peds), Dr. Eric Young (Anesthesia/Pain Medicine), Dr. Joanne Filchock (Family Practice), Dr. "Buzz " Sienknecht (Rheumatology), and Beth Sperry, NP (Womens' health) have joined in as volunteers who see patients at no charge. Cheryl Lankhaar, RN (formerly NP) and Sue Roberson, RN (formerly NP) volunteer their skills and time to support the providers on their days in the clinic. Marilyn Phelps (MSSW) manages the clerical volunteer staff which includes University of the South students and many people who want to help by answering the phone and making appointments. Their jobs are critical to what makes the clinics run smoothly.

The South Cumberland Community Clinic is growing and looking forward to its mission to help the uninsured people of the mountain to be healthy and live longer.



Thank you to our
grantors during 2025:



of Tennessee
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You make our work
possible. Thank you!

Please send your
donation to:

South Cumberland
Community Clinic

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