Ensuring our Elders Stay Safe

Since mid-March, we have adapted our model to ensure our patients can stay safe. One patient whose medical conditions and age combined to make her especially vulnerable to the virus is Margaret, who is in her 80s and getting ready to celebrate 62 years of marriage to Robert.

When Margaret originally came to the pharmacy a year ago, she had experienced a stroke, a heart attack and had taken a bad fall all within a few weeks’ time. Since then, she has developed dementia, and her devoted husband serves as her caregiver. Robert is incredibly thankful for the pharmacy, especially now.

“I tell people when I see them that the Lord has blessed us through our doctor,” Robert told us. “We told him how we struggled with the money to get our medications and he sent us to the Charitable Pharmacy. You took good care of us — very good care of us — and we have been blessed ever since. I tell everyone about you.”

The Big Give Returns

It's back! The Columbus Foundation's Big Give is our community's rally to lift up and help nonprofits. Our needs have never been greater as we work to serve and strengthen our community.

During this 25-hour online giving event, your donation will be boosted, thanks to a $1.5 million Bonus Pool, provided by The Columbus Foundation and corporate and community partners, the largest in Big Give history!

Go to columbusfoundation.org/the-giving-store to find us and make your gift. Thank you for your support!
COVID-19 Results in Exponential Increase in Service Numbers

The CPCO team literally “sprang into action” to address COVID-19 and has worked tirelessly to provide patients with 2-month supplies of medication (as opposed to the typical 30-day fills) so they could stay safely in their homes. We also began to see patients who hadn’t been to the pharmacy for many years.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>March 12 - April 12, 2019</th>
<th>March 12 - April 12, 2020</th>
<th>% increase</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td># Unduplicated Patients</td>
<td>633</td>
<td>825</td>
<td>30%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td># of Prescriptions</td>
<td>5,024</td>
<td>6,955*</td>
<td>38%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$ Value of Prescriptions</td>
<td>$546,397</td>
<td>$2,358,922</td>
<td>332%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td># Units (tablets, grams, etc.)</td>
<td>262,502</td>
<td>589,197</td>
<td>124%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Pharmacist Residents Provide Research, Support

Two big reasons our small staff is able to conduct more than 10,000 one-on-one consultations annually are our resident pharmacists who spend a year working directly with patients and conducting research. We will miss Ronni Ehlers, Pharm.D., and Ariel McDuffie, Pharm.D., when they leave June 30.

McDuffie conducted research to explore how CPCO staff can better help our patients with a mental health-related illness access additional services and resources. Her research expanded on the mental health first aid training staff completed last year.

“It is imperative that we assist our patients in navigating the barriers they face to ensure they receive the optimal care they deserve.”

Ehlers’ research at the Charitable Pharmacy focused on the national crisis of insulin access. Even with a variety of access options, patients are still going without this critical medication and being forced to make difficult decisions like choosing between buying food or medicine.

“I think many of us know that insulin access is a huge problem primarily due to cost, and the findings from this study really demonstrate the impact it can have on our most vulnerable patients,” Ehlers said.

Community Steps up with Support

In mid-March, when we decided to close the building for our staff and patients’ safety, we faced an immediate need for funding to hire three new staff members and purchase extra medication so we could meet the overwhelming demand to fill 60-day prescriptions. We also needed two tents to triage patients in the front of the building and plenty of PPE and cleaning supplies.

Early on, funding from the United Way of Central Ohio and The Columbus Foundation enabled us to acquire all of this in a relatively short period of time. Longtime supporters Carolyn Workman and Kurt Wacker also stepped up early to lend their support. We are deeply grateful to live in a generous community that knows that, together, we can weather any storm that comes our way.