



NEW HOPE CLINIC

PATIENT HANDBOOK

(Revised 3/29/2023)

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Welcome to New Hope Clinic!

We are glad to have you as one of our patients! Whatever your story is, we are here to work with you to help you be the healthiest version of you possible and get quality care without going to the emergency room or spending all your money. We hope this handbook will help you understand our programs.

It is important for you to read all of the information so you know what we expect of you and what you can expect of the Clinic.

We hope that we will be able to help you with your health care needs. But we also need you to be a partner in your care! We will be better able to help you if we have all of your past medical history and if we can keep open communication.

Our Mission Statement

To provide quality medical, dental and pharmacy services to low income, uninsured Brunswick County adults in a caring, patient-centered setting.

Program Overview

New Hope Clinic, Inc. (NHC) is a private not-for-profit organization. This is not a government program or “entitlement,” and we do not receive federal funding. We are not part of a hospital, Health Department or the Department of Social Services. As such, we rely on private donations and grants to provide free services to you. Most of the people you see here are volunteers who give their time to help you get well and stay well.

NHC will do whatever we can, whenever we can. However, we cannot promise that we will be able to provide the services you need. Programs may change at any time, so keep an eye out for any changes!

Clinic Eligibility

****All patients must turn in the required paperwork to determine if they qualify before services can be provided.**

This process is easy, and we will help as much as we can.

- Patients must complete clinic enrollment paperwork and turn in documents every year, or if your financial or household situation changes. You will be notified when it is time to renew your eligibility to the Clinic.
 - **Failure to re-certify on time will result in dismissal from clinic services.**
 - If you do not re-certify on time you may not get medications from our pharmacy and future appointments will be cancelled.
- Contact NHC immediately if:
 - you become covered by Medicare, Medicaid, private insurance or other health insurance or medical benefits
 - your income changes
 - you move out of Brunswick County
 - you start going to a new primary care doctor
 - you change your address or phone number
- As soon as you file taxes each year, please provide a copy of the return to the Clinic. The Clinic will need a completed 1040, 1040EZ or 1040A form and schedules.
- You will apply for Medicaid, Vocational Rehabilitation or other assistance at NHC's request.
- **Current patients whose household income increases may now continue to get care at NHC!** If you have current eligibility and have been getting primary care at NHC for at least 6 months, you can earn up to 200% of the Federal Poverty Level to qualify. We are suggesting a contribution of \$10 per visit to help us continue providing services, but on one will be refused due to inability to contribute. Patients in this income range may no longer qualify for the charity care of some outside services and programs, so NHC staff will work with each patient to understand what is available.

Once You Have Qualified

Once you have qualified as a patient, NHC becomes your primary health care provider (PCP).

- **Be a partner in your care.** NHC works hard to provide quality comprehensive care at little or no cost to you. We ask that you follow your treatment plan.
 - Examples: get prescribed medicines and take as directed; complete test and lab orders before appointments; call for appointments before you run out of refills; let us know if any of these items are difficult for you.
- You may not see another physician for other than emergency medical services without telling NHC first. We will arrange needed healthcare referrals. Seeking care from another primary care physician may result in being discharged from NHC.
- Notify NHC after any emergency room visit and hospital admissions.
- The volunteers you see at NHC do not have your medical records at their offices. **Do not call our volunteer doctors at their offices.** All phone calls and correspondence should be directed to NHC.
- There are limits to what the Clinic can do. **We do not provide:**
 - Emergency medical services
 - OB/GYN care
 - STD treatment
 - Pain Management
 - Prescriptions for narcotic or psychiatric medications.
 - Care that is covered through Vocational Rehabilitation, Worker's Compensation, or an insurance settlement.
 - We do not complete school, sports, work, DOT or disability determination physicals.
- Choose carefully and prepare for your appointments! NHC tries to serve as many patients as possible with the limited resources we have, but appointments are limited. There may be times when you ask for a service and be told that there is a long wait for an appointment. Come to each appointment prepared with all your questions, and always bring all medication containers.

General Clinic Information/Guidelines

- **Services provided at NHC are free.** Donations are accepted and help keep the Clinic open to serve you and others. Most clinic workers are volunteers. NHC could not run without their support. Please take time to thank those who serve you.
- Please be sure to always provide NHC with a working phone number and set up a voicemail with your name so we can contact you for appointments and/or referrals.
- Please turn all cell phones off when entering exam rooms.
- Having weapons, drugs or alcohol at NHC is not allowed. If you are under the influence of drugs or alcohol, you may not be served. This is a **smoke-free** campus and you are asked to not smoke on clinic grounds.
- NHC is closed for major holidays, bad weather and in cases where there is a lack of volunteers. Please contact the Clinic or check our Facebook page for closing information.
- Please be respectful. Patients may be dismissed from NHC for disorderly conduct, dishonesty, rudeness to staff or volunteers, use of illegal substances, failure to comply with the requirements and expectations of NHC providers and staff, or any other reason it deems necessary.
- If you feel you have been treated unfairly, or if you have a concern about NHC, ask to speak with the Executive Director.

After-Hours Coverage

- If you have a true medical emergency, call 911.
- The Emergency Room (ER) is for life-threateningly serious medical conditions that need immediate care. But how do you know if your condition qualifies as an emergency?
- If you are a NHC patient and have a healthcare problem but aren't sure how soon or where to go for care, try calling us at **(910) 845-5333** and ask to speak to a nurse or medical assistant.
- If our office is not open, call one of our partner organizations:
 - Novant Health care line: 910-721-CARE (2273)
 - Novant NHRMC VitaLine: 888-815-5188

Missed Appointments

Our ability to care for patients is severely affected when a patient does not keep their appointment (no call/no show). Please call ahead and cancel as soon as you know you will not be able to make it to an appointment.

- **Appointments that are not cancelled 24 hours in advance will be considered a “no call/no show.”**
 - 1st “no show”: patient will get a phone call warning them of the policy
 - 2nd “no show”: patient will get a written warning
 - 3rd “no show” in 12 month period: **patient is discharged**
 - Excessive cancellations (3 or more) will be considered a “no show” and may result in discharge.
- If you are discharged from the Clinic for missed appointments, you will be eligible to re-apply one year after the dismissal date.

Late for Appointments

If you arrive over 10 minutes late for an appointment, we cannot guarantee we will be able to see you that day. We will do our best to work your visit in around other scheduled appointments.

Specialty Clinics & Services

Special clinics may be available for current patients when volunteers are willing to provide these services. Clinics are held at various times at our volunteer’s preference.

Eye Care

NHC provides eye exams for current NHC patients for medical eye care such as diabetic retinopathy, glaucoma, cataracts and non-urgent eye injuries. If you need help with glasses or contact lenses, contact your local Lions Club for Vision Assistance.

Pharmacy Services

- Current patients may be eligible for a limited number of free medically necessary prescriptions through NHC.
- We only keep certain medications in stock. **The Clinic does not prescribe or fill narcotic or controlled medications.**
- Every effort is made to prescribe generic medications when the Clinic is not able to cover the cost.
- The NHC pharmacy cannot fill prescriptions written by doctors outside of the Clinic. Have the hospital or other doctor send your visit notes to NHC.
- Contact NHC for refills of medications up to one week before you run out. Requests received after 12pm on a pharmacy day will not be available until the next pharmacy day. Be sure to list all medications, prescription numbers, and supplies you need.
- **Medications may only be picked up when a pharmacist is in the building.** Pickup times may change based on volunteer availability. If you are unable to pick up your medications, then you may give written permission for another individual to pick up your medications and make sure the individual has a photo ID with them at the time of pick-up.
- You have 3 weeks to pick up your medications, then the medicine will be returned and you may be responsible for buying it at another pharmacy.
- The Clinic will not pay for over-the-counter medications.
- NHC will not replace lost or stolen medications without a police report.

Dental Care

NHC provides basic exams, x-rays, extractions, and limited additional services. NHC dentists may decide not to do complicated extractions. NHC uses anesthesia, but does not provide IV or gas sedation. NHC does not assist with dentures, partials or other prosthesis.

Referrals

You may need services provided outside of NHC. Local hospitals and doctors work with us to provide testing and services at little or no cost to you, but do not ignore any bills you receive. **Charges for these services belong to you.** Discussing any fees, payment plans and services outside of NHC is between the patient and the provider. **Do NOT list NHC as the insurer or guarantor on any forms.** NHC does not cover emergency room expenses or ambulances.

To have the cost of a specialty appointment covered through NHC, you will need a referral from a NHC provider. If we make a referral appointment for you and you do not keep it or cancel it, then you will be subject to the same “no show” rules as you would at NHC. We will not reschedule the appointment, so you will need to do that yourself and set up private pay arrangements.

Many of the specialty appointments are through Cape Fear HealthNet (CFHN). One of the forms you sign allows us to share your information with CFHN so you can receive their services.

Ways You Can Help

- Be patient, understanding, and appreciative. Tempers can stop volunteers from returning. Remember to say thank you.
- Pick up after yourself, your children, and others in the Clinic.
- Be prepared when you come to your appointments. Complete testing as requested and bring all medications, glucose meters, blood pressure and blood sugar records.
- Although services are free, you can help keep the Clinic open by donating whatever you can. Ask your church to support us with a special offering. Name NHC for memorials or honorariums. At Christmas, birthdays or the loss of a loved one, send a monetary gift to the Clinic as a way of honoring them.
- Although patients cannot volunteer to provide direct patient services, there are other ways to help. Ask a staff member how!
- Tell the community about the difference New Hope Clinic makes in your life. Your personal story has a lot of power!