



St. Vincent de Paul Charitable Pharmacy

January 2010

For 140 years, the Society of St. Vincent de Paul has helped Greater Cincinnatians in need, *regardless of race or creed*, through a unique style of person-to-person assistance. Members, volunteers and staff helped neighbors in need more than 80,000 times in 2009, assisting with food, shelter, utilities, clothing, and other basic necessities. Persons in financial crisis often make choices that sacrifice their health, forgoing their prescriptive medications to pay for other necessities. The St. Vincent de Paul Charitable Pharmacy -- an innovative, private sector initiative designed to provide free, professional pharmaceutical care to people in need – is the only pharmacy in southeast Ohio dedicated to this unique mission.

Charitable Pharmacy Mission Statement:

To improve the health and welfare of community residents by providing free, professional pharmaceutical care to needy clients who are screened for eligibility.

Results for 2008 & 2009

- Prescription volume increased by 29% from 2008 to 2009.

	2008	2009	Total
Total prescriptions filled	18,562	23,948	42,510
Total retail value of dispensed medication	\$1.8 million	\$2.4 million	\$4.2 million

Results Since Opening in September 2006 through January 2010

- Currently open three days per week, with prescription volume steadily increasing.
- Prescriptions filled: 53,046
- Retail value of prescriptions dispensed is \$5.1 million

Project Goals:

- Create a pharmacy of last resort for those who do not qualify for other programs or are unable to pay for discounted medication.
- Create a single resource to help low-income people access the array of options for free and discounted medication, including Patient Assistance Programs and Medicare Part D.
- Provide counseling and education by a licensed pharmacist to ensure clients take medication properly, understand side effects and are aware of possible interactions.
- Educate clients about available clinics and programs that can help them access on-going medical care. Each client meets with an advocate to assess their need for a “medical home” to receive follow-up and preventive care, mental health care, shelter, or other social services.

Geographic Service Reach:

- The pharmacy serves Hamilton, Butler, Warren and Clermont counties.

Client Demographics:

- Those helped include homeless, people who have lost their jobs and the working poor who cannot afford prescription insurance or pharmacy co-pays. Others need temporary assistance as they try to get coverage, qualify for other assistance programs or reach a gap in Medicare coverage.
- Reaching a wide cross-section of those who are uninsured or underinsured, most referrals come from:
 - Hospitals (36%) including the TriHealth system (Good Samaritan and Bethesda), University, Mercy, Christ and Jewish Hospitals;
 - Behavioral Health Agencies (20%);
 - Neighborhood, Cincinnati and Crossroads health care clinics (23%); and
 - A variety of community physician practices and other public and private health providers (21%).
- Clients fall below 200% of the federal poverty level guidelines and their living expenses exceed their income.

Pharmaceutical Resources in 2009:

- The pharmacy drug formulary has grown substantially since the opening thanks to the generosity of partners – the pharmacy currently fills about 90 percent of prescriptions presented.
- Donated generics: 33% of prescriptions. Skilled Care and KeySource Medical donate generic drugs.
- Physician samples: 19% of prescriptions. Twenty physician practices currently donate brand name medication samples.
- Ohio Repository Program: 16% of prescriptions. Unused medication harvested from long-term care facilities are being donated by Skilled Care, Med RX.
- Bulk Replenishment: 5% of scripts via AZ&Me and Novartis.
- Limited purchase (\$25,000 in 2009) of wholesale and generic medications completes the formulary.

Background & Data:

- 270,000 people are uninsured in Greater Cincinnati, an increase of more than 70,000 since 2002. About 70,000 Cincinnati residents are uninsured.
- One of every 10 households has a member who went without medication to pay for food, clothing or housing.
- People below poverty level or uninsured are 2.5 times more likely to not receive a prescription in order to pay for necessities.
- 20% of Cincinnatians have no medical home.

(Source: "Community Health Status Survey 2005, Health Foundation of Greater Cincinnati)

- ER visits are up 7% since 2003, at an average cost of \$850 per visit.

(Source: Business Courier)

Partners/Supporters:

- Leadership Cincinnati
- Academy of Medicine of Cincinnati
- Order of Malta
- Ohio State Board of Pharmacy
- UC College of Pharmacy
- Greater Cincinnati Health Council
- Health Improvement Collaborative
- Closing the Gap Initiative
- Skilled Care
- KeySource Medical