

HEALTHFINDERS COLLABORATIVE, INC.

To provide quality, accessible, and culturally sensitive health care services at no cost, to low income, uninsured residents of greater Rice County.

November 2008

HEALTHFINDERS MEETS A UNIQUE COMMUNITY HEALTH NEED

In 2007, Northfield made headlines regarding the rising concern for an emerging gap in the treatment and support for individuals battling with opiate addiction, particularly heroin. Several community organizations such as: Rice County Public Health, Rice County Family Services Collaborative, Rice County Chemical Health Coalition, Northfield Healthy Community Initiative, local hospitals and medical clinics, including HealthFinders, local law enforcement departments, and others have joined forces to address this concern.

Treatment for heroin addiction will sometimes require an individual to attend a 21 or 30-day inpatient program. In such a treatment protocol, buprenorphine has shown to be successful to prevent withdrawal symptoms. Unfortunately, when an individual is facing an opiate addiction, it is more complicated than just wanting to quit. The withdrawal symptoms are very painful (ie. deep aches, intense flu-like symptoms, vomiting, etc...) and without proper medical care, the individual can often revert back to heroin or other opiate drugs as a means to find relief from the pain. Buprenorphine has been found to be very effective and despite that it is not meant for everyone, it has been proven to be almost invaluable to most recipients. Buprenorphine cannot be prescribed without a consistent, ongoing medical provider following the health status of the patient. Rice County has worked diligently in promoting our need to have local medical providers provide treatment. Currently, Dr. Kris Matson from Northfield

Family Clinic and Dr. Charles Reznikoff from Hennepin County Associates are medical providers serving Rice County patients. Efforts continue to be made to increase this team of certified healthcare professionals in Rice County.

The journey does not end here. Buprenorphine can be expensive for uninsured individuals and therefore, patients have chosen to NOT follow-thru with their treatment. In 2007, HealthFinders Collaborative awarded \$2,800 to the Rice County Family Services Collaborative, Chemical Health Provider Team to provide funding for Buprenorphine during a patient's application process time in getting enrolled in an inpatient program and/or an insurance plan. This past year, the funding helped at least seven uninsured patients in receiving their needed Buprenorphine during this gap of time. The majority of these patients fall within the gap between applying for health insurance and it beginning.

It is great to be an active partner in providing assistance to low income, uninsured Rice County residents falling within the healthcare system gaps. HealthFinders is always proud to be a part of a community collaboration where all organizations join forces, distribute resources and help our fellow community members.

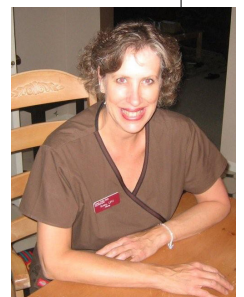
The need to help our opiate addicted patients has not been fully solved, however, Rice County continues to address this need and work collaboratively throughout our community.

VOLUNTEER SPOTLIGHT (EXCERPT FROM VOLUNTEER NEWSLETTER)

Kristy North, an OB/GYN nurse at Cannon Valley Clinic in Faribault, has volunteered with HealthFinders for more than two years.

Kristy states, "I think the most rewarding part [of volunteering at HealthFinders] is how appreciative most patients are. They are so pleasant and don't mind waiting to be seen. It's really an enjoyable way to volunteer and it's also a lot of fun to work with different providers."

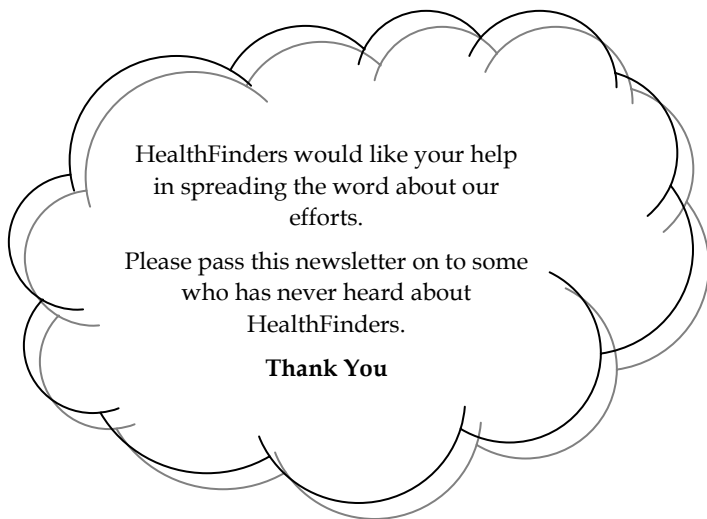
[For a copy of the volunteer newsletter, please visit www.healthfindersmn.org](http://www.healthfindersmn.org)



Clinic Statistics (June 2005—October 2008)	
Patients Served	978
Clinic Visits	2343
Number of Rx's filled	3905
Present Date Statistics	
Diabetic Program (Max Capacity = 22)	22
Pura Vida Program	8
Clinic Volunteers	67
Student Volunteers	15

Patient Testimonial

A patient stated, "HealthFinders has given me an opportunity to access the healthcare I needed when no one else would. In the past, I have had to go to the emergency room for minor illnesses that flared up because I waited too long and didn't get treated when I was first sick. I have healthcare insurance available through my job but the premiums are much too high leaving me with only \$200.00 per month to pay rent and food. I was denied MN Care because 'I made too much money' and there was [insurance] through my employer. HealthFinders gave me the medical attention I needed and I am grateful for their devotion to our community's well-being."



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HealthFinders offers the following services with the assistance from local organizations providing in-kind donations and the generosity from individuals and organizations like you who donate to provide financial means to accomplish our mission!

- **Free clinic visits two nights a week** –
Tuesday and Thursday from 5:30pm – 8:30pm
- **Medication Assistance Program** – Individuals without prescription medications insurance receive prescription and over-the-counter medications at no cost through participating pharmacies and HealthFinders.
- **Diabetes Program** – At all times, HealthFinders has a maximum of 22 patients enrolled in this program where they will receive all the necessary tools and education needed to control their blood sugar levels.
- **Pura Vida Program** – This six-month cyclic program provides the tools and education necessary for a maximum of 8 individuals to gain a better understanding and a hands on approach on actively engaging in a healthier lifestyle.
- **Referral Services** – In efforts to not duplicate services, HealthFinders takes the extra steps needed to refer and advocate on behalf of patients with existing services available in Rice County. This is in efforts to insure HealthFinders constituents are aware and access the necessary service needed for ongoing and consistent care.

All these programs are possible because of our dedicated clinical and non-clinical staff volunteers. If you are interested in giving a few hours of your time on a monthly or quarterly basis, please call or email Angie Koch at 507-330-4031 or koch.angelica@healthfindersmn.org

HealthFinders' Want Ads

- Clinic Volunteers
 - Medical Providers
 - Nurses
 - Receptionists
 - Spanish Interpreters
- Board Members (throughout Rice County)
 - Treasurer
 - Co-Medical Director
 - Board of Director
 - Co-Chair
- Volunteers interested in Fundraising/Events
 - 2009 Gala Fundraiser

