

*Helen M. Nickless*

**VOLUNTEER CLINIC**

Dear Pharmacist,

Hello, I am writing to you today on behalf of the Helen M. Nickless Volunteer Clinic, the volunteer clinic in Bay County for patients who have no insurance. The clinic is open Wednesday nights only, from 4pm until the last patient is seen. We provide patients with free medical care, as well as laboratory and specialist referral, and we are able to provide prescriptions free of charge. As you can imagine, the medical care and prescriptions provided by this clinic are very important to the patients. Without it, most of these patients would never seek care for their chronic or acute disease states because they couldn't afford it.

We have never had to close the pharmacy doors to patients on Wednesday night; we have always had a volunteer pharmacist available to dispense prescriptions. However, there have been several times in the last few months that we have almost had to do just that because no one was available. We do have several patients who travel quite far to receive their medical care or do not have transportation available, and they would not be able to make another trip into town to get their prescriptions the next day. We are asking that you consider volunteering your time to help keep the clinic pharmacy open.

The pharmacy volunteers start at 6pm and end approximately 9:30 – 10pm. There will be one or two technicians from the Drug Shop to assist with computer entry; you will only need to check prescriptions and counsel patients. We are also aware that most of you are extremely busy and may feel that this would be too much of a time commitment. We are asking that you consider volunteering 2-4 times each year, unless you would like to volunteer more often. I also know that many of you have set schedules and may work every Wednesday night. I ask that you consider trading a night a few times a year to help out the community.

Please realize, as well, that this is not like “working” at your regular job. The patients at the volunteer clinic are patient and thankful for your services and they will tell you this. Your fellow workers will also be volunteers, people who want to be there. Lastly, this is a way to give back to the community, using your professional expertise, in a time when so many people are in need of help. We need support from our chain, independent, and hospital pharmacists to keep this service going.

Even if you can only volunteer a few hours, please let us know. We would rather have the pharmacy open for part of the night than closed for the entire night. Again, I hope that you seriously consider joining our team at the volunteer clinic. I think you will find it most rewarding! Please feel free to call me at 894-3798 if you have any questions about volunteering as a pharmacist. To start volunteering, go to <http://www.bayregional.org/volunteerclinic> and fill out an application!

Sincerely,

Vern Botts, RPh  
Supervisor of Clinical Services  
Bay Regional Medical Center