



VIM Is Here Through Moments of Fear and Uncertainty

Three years ago Mariana found herself in a distressing situation. As an uninsured small business owner her options for care seemed limited when she considered her breast, which had enlarged to 3x its normal size, had become hard, and was now very painful and causing her chills. With no other options available to her, she called Volunteers in Medicine, and she was asked to come to the clinic for testing asap.

She remembers her fear when she first came to the clinic, but also recalls how “Dr. Letovsky (VIM Medical Director) and Jennifer Fuller (Nurse Manager) were so kind to me.” She got an ultrasound which found a build-up of fluid and a bad infection. The VIM staff set her up with an appointment with a breast cancer specialist and sent her home with medication for her infection.

In the end she needed surgery. Her husband cared for her, helped her change her bandages and kept her clean. She recalls, “For me it was terrible. Every time I looked in the mirror and saw myself I thought ‘oh, I’m a monster now’.” It took two years of recovery, but she slowly began to see improvement and regain her health. Mariana says, “I want to share my story. If I can help people and I can tell them what happened to me, then VIM is able to help them.” Mariana has been in full health for one year.

The staff at Volunteers in Medicine got to visit with Mariana in early April, when she came to the clinic to donate 100 face masks she sewed for other VIM patients. Mariana owns Alterations and Designs by Alin, a small business that focuses on bridal gown alterations. Her business has since closed due to the COVID-19 pandemic, but she began receiving requests for face masks. Initially Mariana was unsure whether she should pursue this, but her husband suggested that since she wasn’t doing her regular work it was worth a try. She’s now selling her masks through her Facebook page and just received her first order for 100 masks for a local business purchasing them for their employees.



We believe in the health of our community



April 2020

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Kat Mastrangelo,
Executive Director

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Individual Health Affects Us All

I am writing this letter from my home office on the day that we would have been having our annual Volunteer Appreciation Banquet. It has been exactly one month since we transitioned the VIM clinic to our current virtual care model. Every day, the staff and I miss seeing our patients and volunteers, but I have enjoyed the daily Zoom calls to our volunteers and hope that everyone out there is able to connect to their loved ones in similar ways.

Our timing with the EPIC go-live was incredibly fortuitous. We have relied on Epic (our electronic medical record system) for our virtual care platform, and with these systems already

in place, it took us less than a week to pivot to telemedicine care. Our patients are being served by volunteer nurse and interpreter teams who have, under staff supervision, worked to provide triage calls addressing the needs and concerns of our patients as well as manage those who have chronic healthcare needs. With extensive nurse triage shifts scheduled every day of the week and our interpreters on stand-by for our Spanish-speaking patients, **we are now seeing an average of 75 calls per week.**

We have also kept our pharmacy open to ensure patients have access to their medications. Prescription refills are available for curbside pickup during regular clinic hours and we are now sending mail-order prescription refills directly to our patients' homes. Through all of these changes, our goal is to make sure our patients know they have a place to turn to with medical questions, and ultimately to keep them healthy and out of the Emergency Room or Urgent Care for their safety and for the support of the health system. **Given that the COVID virus is disproportionately affecting the Latino community, we know our care is as important as ever, and will make a difference in many lives.**

I would like to extend my sincerest thank you to those donors who have made contributions to support the increased costs VIM is seeing due to changes enacted during this difficult time. We know that many of our patients were among the first to be laid off, and many are not eligible to receive unemployment or other stimulus relief. I hope you will join me in supporting some of the other first line emergency relief groups helping to fill that gap. The Latino Community Association has an emergency relief fund that will help to buy groceries and pay utility bills, and even help with rent for many of our patients. The Giving Plate, St. Vincent de Paul, Shepherds House, Family Kitchen and Neighbor Impact have all been providing emergency food boxes. Pandemic Partners Facebook Page has taken on the role of connecting neighbors with neighbors who can help with small requests. **All of these organizations, including VIM, have easy donation buttons on their websites.** Your support will help our patients as they wait for jobs to open back up, and they can resume their valuable work in our community.

In Health, *Kat*

Charitable Pharmacy: Removing Barriers on a Path to Wellness

When Alex Winn was hired as VIM's first paid pharmacist in May 2010, he saw room for opportunity and growth in our organization's mission and began researching the charitable pharmacy designation. He says, **"My vision for the charitable pharmacy was to help remove barriers between our patients and the often expensive medications they need on their path to wellness."** After a year of developing policies and procedures, VIM's dispensary became licensed as the third charitable pharmacy in Oregon.

Alex told us a little more about why he is committed to running the pharmacy: "Volunteers in Medicine is a safety net clinic which is uniquely poised to support those individuals who are at high risk for falling through the cracks in our complex medical infrastructure. Traditionally, those same patients would go without preventive care and then turn to the emergency departments for acute care of chronic disease states.

This model falls short on two major issues, first it necessitates the patient to be sick before treatment is given, and second it's unsustainable financially and logistically, especially when maintenance medications are needed, but are unaffordable. **That is why I'm passionate about VIM's charitable pharmacy; we leverage care exponentially for our patients and help close the gaps in our community.** I often think of VIM like a medical mission which operates right here in Central Oregon, and requires no travel vaccines! Last year alone, our modest but mighty charitable pharmacy provided over a million dollars worth of medication at no cost to our most vulnerable community members."

Access has always been a top priority for Volunteers in Medicine, and as we continue to practice social distancing, it's key that we offer avenues of treatment and care for those without access to personal transportation, and to ensure that those with heightened risk are staying home. We are now shipping medications to our patients, which has brought unexpected expenses to VIM. Thus far the average cost is \$16.48 per shipment. **A donation of \$75 will cover the cost of mailing medications to 5 patients, and allow them to adhere to the Stay Home, Save Lives initiative.**

Our pharmacy staff and volunteers do everything they can to assist our patients with their individual needs. One of our native Spanish-speaking male patients with complex health problems and learning difficulties struggles to communicate and express himself verbally. Our bilingual pharmacy technician, Stella, does all she can to provide assistance with his medical needs, including interpretation services when he's required to fill medications at pharmacies other than VIM.

In this difficult time every one of us is doing what we can to give back, given the resources available to us. It will take much perseverance given the challenges we are all facing, but we know this circle of caring will continue, and we will be better for it in the future.



Alex Winn, PharmD
VIM Charitable Pharmacy Director

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20 Seconds
20 Segundos

Stay Safe & Healthy! And Remember...

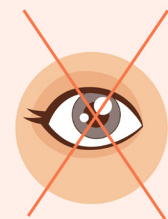
**On March 23, Gov. Kate Brown issued Executive Order:
Stay Home Except for Essential Needs**

Allowed (Must keep at least 6 feet from those not in your immediate household)

- Hospitals and health care
- Grocery stores
- Banks and credit unions
- Pharmacies
- Take-out / delivery from restaurants and bars
- Pet stores
- Gas stations
- Certain retail stores
- Outdoor activities like walking your dog, jogging, or biking in your neighborhood
- Child care facilities and babysitters (only if abiding by new rules)

Not Allowed

- Social gatherings (parties, celebrations) with people from outside your household
- Dine-in restaurants and bars
- Nightclubs and concerts
- Shopping at outdoor or indoor malls and retail complexes
- Fitness: gyms, sports and fitness centers, health clubs, and exercise studios, dance and yoga studios
- Grooming: hair salons, barbershops, nail salons, day spas and massage services, non-medical wellness spas, cosmetic stores, tattoo parlors
- Entertainment: theaters, amusement parks, arcades, bowling alleys, music concerts, sporting events, museums, skating rinks
- Outdoors: state parks, playgrounds, campgrounds, pools, skate parks, festivals



Don't touch your eyes,
nose or mouth.

Evite tocarse los ojos,
la nariz y la boca.



6 Feet
6 pies (2 metros)

Practice social
distancing.

Practicar el
distanciamiento
social.



For the latest COVID-19 information:

Oregon Health Authority

govstatus.egov.com/OR-OHA-COVID-19

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-nCoV/index.html

Oregon Governor's office

www.oregon.gov/Pages/index.aspx

Resources - More at www.vim-cascades.org/covid

Order Groceries Online

- **Newport Market** - online.newportavemarket.com/bend-oregon/service-info
Order groceries online, they are working to put a delivery system in place
- **Grocery Outlet** - www.facebook.com/BendGroceryOutlet
Order groceries online, curbside pick-up
- **Aloha Produce** - Bendfood.org
Order groceries online, they will load the groceries in your car/trunk
- **Food 4 Less** - www.food4lessbend.com
Order groceries online, curbside pick-up
- **Walmart in Redmond** - grocery.walmart.com
Order groceries online, curbside pick-up
- **Doordash** - www.doordash.com/food-delivery/bend-or-restaurants
An app for meal deliveries from local restaurants
- **Instacart** - www.instacart.com/grocery-delivery/bend-or
A grocery delivery service from various local grocery stores
- **2020 Takeout** - www.bendsource.com
A Central Oregon Guide To Pickup And Delivery from The Source



Emergency Rent and Utility Assistance

(It's important to get a letter from your employer confirming that you have cut your hours or have been laid off.)

- **Neighbor Impact** - Application can be found at: form.jotform.com/92076439399169
Rent assistance. Call 541-548-2380, ext. 210 for help with your application.
- **Pacific Power** - www.pacificpower.net
Utilities. Call 1-888-221-7070 to negotiate a payment plan.
- **Cascade Natural Gas** - www.cngc.com/customer-service/payment-options
Utilities. Call 1-888-522-1130 to negotiate a payment plan.
- **Emergency Protection for Renters** - www.oregonrentersrights.org
Information on security deposits, disability and reasonable accommodation, repairs, mold, infestation, lock-outs and unlawful ouster, termination notices and eviction, small claims court, and manufactured home parks.

Senior Loneliness Line is available to support Oregonians 55 and over

Their team of volunteers and staff are specially trained in working with older adults and can provide ongoing support, connect callers with resources, or just listen. Your information is completely confidential, and no one will follow up with you unless you request a call. To get support, call 503-200-1633 or 800-282-7035.

NeighborImpact - www.neighborimpact.org/get-help

Access to local food resources, emergency shelter and renter assistance, help with paying bills, and more.

Pandemic Partners Bend - www.facebook.com/groups/PandemicPartnersBend

A local Facebook group connecting those who need help with those who are able to give support. If you need a hand running errands, getting groceries, or setting up technology to stay connected, pandemic partners can help!

Coping Through COVID

In these very difficult times, it can be easy to feel uncertain, anxious, and unsettled. Many have lost so much; perhaps family members, independence, ability to socialize, and livelihoods to take care of our families and ourselves. We have to remember that these are profound losses and grieving is normal. There is no roadmap, in the past we have been able to be comforted by close contact with important people in our lives. We are doing the best we can in these really uncharted waters. While these uncertain feelings are difficult, if you find yourself in despair, a despair that keeps you from being able to get through this, please know that there are resources available to talk with someone. These kinds of feelings are more than just normal coping with grief and loss.

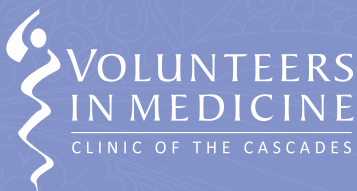
Here are some things that might be helpful as we all struggle with the current situation:

1. Try not to minimize your feelings. Talk with your family or friends over the phone, Zoom, and Skype. You are not alone and your feelings are valid.
2. Try not to minimize your kids' feelings or their feelings of loss regarding important events that have been canceled. Missing important ceremonies is a great loss.
3. Honest conversations acknowledging feelings go a long way to helping your family and friends who are anxious and fearful.
4. Try to have a routine. Plan the night before a couple of things you might want to do the next day. This is not going to look like pre-virus productivity. Try to get up and get dressed, shower, make your bed, have regular mealtimes. All of these things are important and are productive. This is not the time to become overly productive. Just being and hanging out with your family is important. Keep in close contact with your family or friends who are isolated and alone. Simply touching base every day is helpful for you both.
5. Try to go for a walk outside every day if possible. We know that being in nature, even if it means going out on the sidewalk along your street for a few minutes, is very helpful.
6. Talk to someone if you are feeling depressed and despairing. This is different than grief. The clinic has knowledge of resources available to you. Please don't hesitate to call.
7. Finally, be compassionate with yourself and others.

We are all in this together and we will get through this. We are all doing the best we can!
Stay healthy and reach out if you need help.

- Kathy Ingelse, FNP, PMHNP, VIM Volunteer Provider

Mission: To improve the health and wellness of the uninsured and medically underserved through the engagement of professionals, community partners, and dedicated volunteers.



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