What will 2018 bring?

Annual reports look back. At this writing, La Clinica is already well into a new year. What will it bring for our community? Years always hold surprises, but we’d like to tell you about a few areas of focus.

In the fall, La Clinica will open a health center at Kids Unlimited Academy in Medford, creating new healthcare options for families in one of the lowest-income neighborhoods of Medford.

Our staff will also add Mae Richardson Elementary to its Happy Smiles dental outreach program, bringing the total served to 27 schools. We began offering dental cleanings at community sites in 2017 and will expand that in the new year.

Space is precious, and we’ll be reviewing our clinical areas in 2018 to determine where we have room for additional patients and how to make our operation even more efficient. We expect the final patient suite in our Wellness Center to open to patient care this year as well.

There’s lots more coming in 2018 as well. If you’d like a closer look, we invite you to check out our 2017–2020 Strategic Plan: www.laclinicahealth.org/about/impact/strategic.
Listening. Every day, we ask patients how we’re doing. We’re proud to say that about 98 percent say they’d recommend our services to others. Our Patient Council is a group of La Clinica patients who meet regularly to recommend improvements, and in 2017 we engaged patients even more fully, adding patient representation to several internal groups designed to make La Clinica better for everyone.

Embracing. Originating from our founding mission to care for agricultural workers and their families regardless of their ability to pay, La Clinica has long held values of equity, diversity, and inclusion. Last year, we created a formal process to ensure that our services welcome every member of our community, especially communities of color, those with differing abilities, and the LGBTQ+ community. In 2018, this Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion Council will audit our HR and clinical care processes to ensure that we are indeed living up to our standard that “all are welcome at La Clinica.”

Inspirating. What makes a successful workplace? Employee engagement—a feeling of connection that goes beyond showing up every day—is a big piece of the equation. Employees are already likely to stay at La Clinica longer than at the average healthcare organization. In 2017, we created an Employee Engagement Council that is examining engagement among our 400 employees by work site. The council will use data we’re collecting regularly to improve connection at all our health centers.

Helping. When we do our jobs right, what happens in the exam room translates into better health for our patients. We track 16 medical measures of health for the federal government—everything from progress on helping patients with high blood pressure to screening for and following up on depression. This marks the second year La Clinica has demonstrated significant improvement in most health outcome measures.

Creating. How often have you heard someone say, “I have a great idea, if only they’d listen!”? In 2017, La Clinica built listening into its decision-making structure, creating a system of employee councils and committees that have the power to move projects. The approach encourages employees to propose projects or changes they’d like to see and allows them to follow their ideas to completion.

Caring. An incredible 96 percent of our employees tell us our mission is one of their main reasons for loving La Clinica, but we know mission love doesn’t pay the bills. In 2017, La Clinica invested in a new benefit structure for all employees, bringing down employees’ medical insurance premiums by an average of 56 percent.

Joining. La Clinica maintains partnerships with dozens of community organizations, and in 2017 we developed a stronger structure for them to assure that we are able to address need for our services in the community. In 2018, we will begin regular check-ins to determine whether our partners feel they’re being well served through the relationships.

Innovating. Oregon is offering healthcare organizations the opportunity to do things differently as the state attempts to piece together approaches to keeping health care quality high and while pushing down cost. In 2017, La Clinica joined an Oregon payment-reform project aimed at Medicaid patients that is testing new ways to encourage high quality care while keeping payments to organizations steady.
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