



CAP AGENCY

COMMUNITY ACTION PARTNER



2023 ANNUAL IMPACT REPORT

Building a healthy community one person at a time.



**RIVER VALLEY
HEALTH SERVICES**

Relationships Respect Dignity

PROVIDING ASSISTANCE
TO THE UNINSURED AND
UNDERINSURED



On June 27, 2023, Bill Swanstrom and Dr. Richard S. Scott presented "Activating a Free Healthcare Oasis for the Uninsured and Underinsured." This innovative proposal was a finalist at the American Heart Association's Business Accelerator, EmPOWERED to Serve event in Minnesota.

LETTER FROM OUR BOARD CHAIR

DR. RICHARD S. SCOTT



River Valley Health Services has become a safe, welcoming refuge for all those who do not know where to turn. Most of our clients have nowhere to go to receive the health care they need. It is either too expensive, too far, or not responsive to our clients' language or cultural needs. Many don't feel safe because they are new to our country and don't know

who to trust. But they hear from a friend or a caring neighbor who tells them they can go to River Valley Health Services. "You can trust the people at River Valley," their friend tells them. "The people at River Valley really care about you." And sure enough, the team at River Valley does everything in their power to help. Not only does our medical and nursing staff provide for their health care needs, but our entire staff plays a role in addressing the holistic needs of all those who walk through our doors or stop by our booth at community events. Our team listens to their story and discovers what other needs they may have. Our team then assists them in accessing available resources and services through our partners to help them secure housing, access affordable and culturally appropriate food, secure legal assistance, find employment or obtain other essential services to help them get on their feet and begin to thrive again. I regularly hear stories from clients who share, "River Valley has saved my life... saved my family... even saved my career." I also hear from our healthcare providers how RVHS has helped them "fall in love with medicine all over again."

These stories not only warm my heart, they also fulfill a long-standing personal and professional goal many of us share here at River Valley Health Services... to be a part of something that really matters... to make a difference... to help people feel like they belong, and to enable them to participate fully in our community.

Our commitment to providing compassionate, timely and culturally responsive health care to those with little or no medical insurance is more critical now than ever. We serve some of our community's fastest-growing and most diverse segments, and the demand for our services is growing.

As you read through the rest of this Annual Report, you will learn about our plans to expand our services into Scott County. You will learn how we expanded our Board of Directors to include the voices of those we serve. You will learn how we have and will continue to accomplish so much with so little because we have discovered how to work together to maximize what we each contribute to fulfilling our mission.

I am confident as you get to know us better... you too will want to become a part of what we do... adding your contribution to ours in making our community a healthier and better place for all of us.

Affectionately,

Dr. Richard S. Scott, EdD, MPH, RN/PHN
Board Chair, RVHS

A YEAR OF GROWTH AND IMPACT

BILL SWANSTROM Executive Director

As we reflect on the strides made by River Valley Health Services (RVHS) in 2023, it is with a sense of pride and anticipation that I share our journey of the past year. Our services have expanded, and the client numbers for 2023 were strong. Our most significant milestone was establishing a new home for our Shakopee Clinic in collaboration with the CAP Agency. RVHS will reopen its clinic in Scott County after being without space for over two years. The CAP Agency refurbished the space, transforming it into a welcoming facility. Our goal is to open doors in 2024, and we are actively working towards equipping and staffing the clinic to provide our services, starting one day a week, every Tuesday.



In the summer of 2023, the RVHS team received the Minnesota Lions Diabetes Foundation's award, "Catch the Dream, Life Without Diabetes!"

One of the fantastic things about our small, non-profit, free healthcare clinic is that we can spend enough time with a patient to accomplish life-changing outcomes. On the cover of last year's 2022 Annual Report is a patient named Betty and her lovely dog, Lucky. With Betty's permission, I am pleased to share that she is thriving along with Lucky and is now a patient representative member of our Board of Directors.

Our achievements in program development have been notable. We started the year with the Minnesota Department of Health Arthritis Program "Walk with Ease." The six-week innovative program reached many individuals who have chronic arthritis, including Spanish speaking patients, for the first time. Together, we learned to take advantage of proven arthritis self-management through a structured program conducted at the Shakopee and Chaska recreation centers. The RVHS staff had to become certified instructors to lead the participants.

Recognition of our efforts came with the American Heart Association's Business Accelerator, EmPOWERED to Serve event in June, highlighting the groundbreaking work of our free clinics. The Minnesota Lions Diabetes Foundation's "Catch the Dream" Award was another feather in our cap, honoring our innovative approach to diabetes care and prevention. One of the core competencies of River

Valley has been our work in diabetes screening and care, especially for high-risk groups such as Hispanics, veterans and those with limited resources.

Complimenting these efforts, we began working with the Veggie Rx program at the University of MN Arboretum, which provides free vegetables via prescription to our high-risk, patients suffering from diabetes.

Financially, we closed the year with a solid fund balance, ensuring our ability to continue providing quality services and outreach. We provided services to nine hundred patients, conducted outreach to four hundred attendees and did this with a team of volunteer health care providers, volunteers, and part-time employees.

Looking ahead, our Shakopee Clinic will be a nucleus for diabetes care and community outreach in Scott County. We are also exploring the addition of varied medical services to meet the diverse needs of our patients. The CAP/RVHS model we presented at the American Heart Association competition is a blueprint for our innovative infrastructure development and has reinforced our grant applications to the Minnesota Department of Public Health and others.

As we forge ahead, we are conscious of the funding challenges that still need to be solved. We stand on the precipice of an exciting new chapter, ready to broaden the scope of our impact on the community we serve. Our donors are unique, delivering prayers, equipment, funds, and service.

We are here to help those with nowhere else to turn.
~Bill

Bill Swanstrom

River Valley Health Services, Executive Director

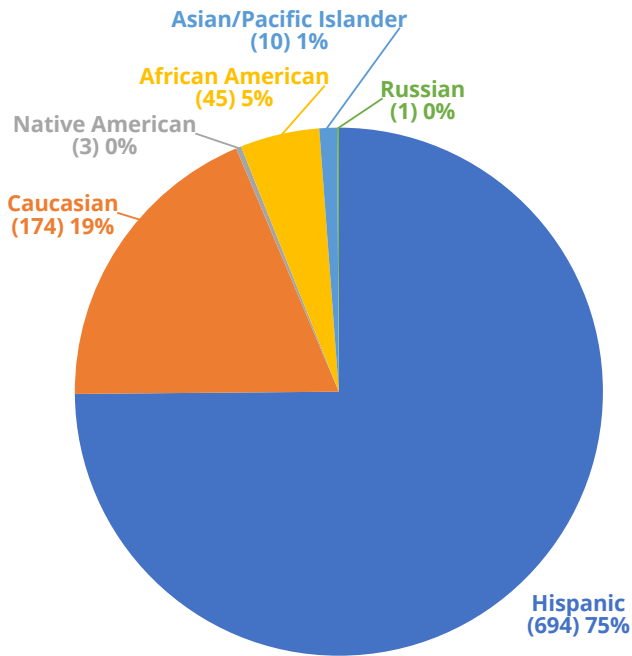
MBA, LISW, MPH, Veteran

Member: VFW American Legion DAV

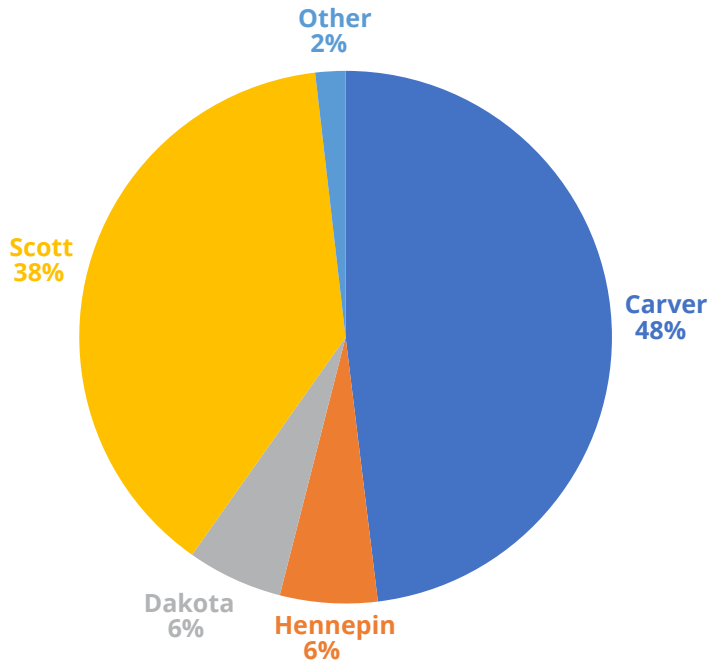


RVHS CLIENT STATISTICS

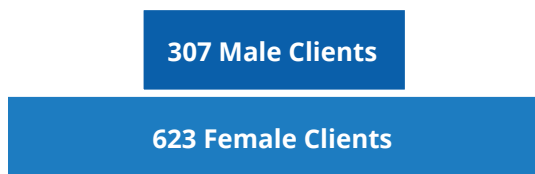
CLIENT RACE/ETHNICITY (SELF-IDENTIFIED)



COUNTIES REPRESENTED



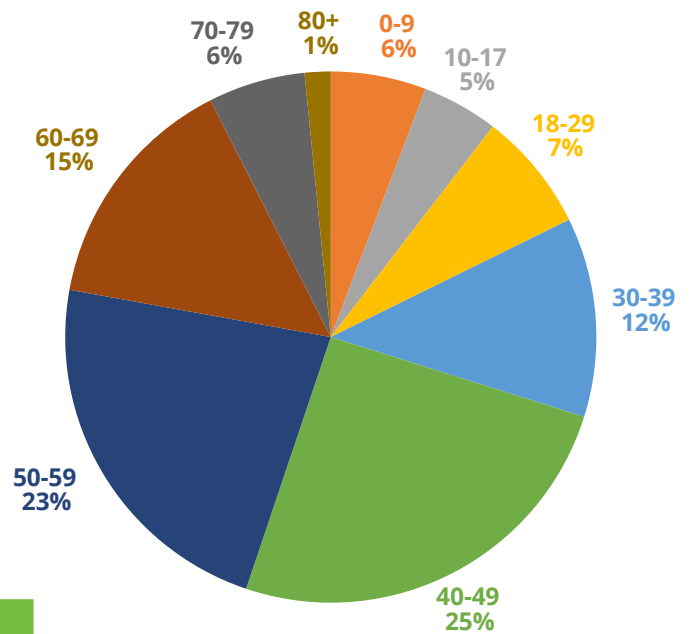
MALE / FEMALE CLIENTS



TOTAL CLIENT VISITS




AGE RANGE



2023 CLIENT STORIES





 A middle-aged man was referred to RVHS for medical evaluation after his Department of Transportation (DOT) physical indicated possible diabetes, which was jeopardizing his employment with a trucking firm. Without medical insurance and facing unemployment, the patient was in urgent need of healthcare support.


RVHS confirmed his diabetes diagnosis, with an initial A1C level over 14. We initiated treatment with Metformin and provided comprehensive education on diet and self-care, including glucose monitoring at home. Our intervention enabled him to meet the DOT medical standards, thus securing his job and financial stability.

Over the subsequent months, the patient demonstrated remarkable compliance with his treatment plan, significantly decreasing his A1C to 7. This improvement not only safeguarded his health but also his family's financial security.

During his follow-up appointment, the patient expressed profound gratitude and was visibly moved, attributing the maintenance of his livelihood and family safety to the care provided by RVHS. Despite having regained insurance, he opts to continue his follow-up care at our clinic, a testament to the trust and relationship built with our team.

 A parent to a son under RVHS care, faced multiple family challenges. Residing with her sisters, brother, and their father—who had a history of incarceration and potential immigration issues—the family was experiencing financial hardship. The seasonal decrease in employment opportunities further exacerbated their situation, leading to food insecurity. RVHS responded by supplying essential groceries to sustain the family until Carver County's additional aid became available.


 A pregnant adolescent girl presented to RVHS with concerns about decreased fetal movement. Dr. Willey attended to her. Despite being new to the country and language barriers, the girl expressed reluctance to seek emergency care due to the absence of insurance and associated costs. Compounded by her mother's inability to leave work for fear of job loss, they planned a hospital visit for the upcoming weekend when her mother was off work. Dr. Willey confirmed fetal well-being but noted a scheduled induction without the girl's understanding of why. Dr. Willey and Nurse Heidi collaborated with Allina to clarify the induction rationale and reassured the girl about emergency care, irrespective of insurance status. Subsequently, the student delivered a healthy baby days later.


 RVHS recently assisted a newly settled patient in the country with a financial dilemma stemming from a lack of health insurance. After incurring a few thousand dollars in charges from an emergency room visit for abdominal pain, the patient sought our help to navigate the complexities of medical billing and insurance application. Our team facilitated the initiation of a payment plan and connected the patient with Portico, a non-profit that aids in securing medical insurance. We managed to defer the payment obligations while the patient's application for medical emergency assistance was being processed. Within two weeks, the patient returned to RVHS, this time with insurance coverage for the prior ER visit. Additionally, we provided education on the appropriate use of urgent versus emergency care. The patient is now enrolled with RVHS for ongoing healthcare services.

*"You literally saved my life and my family!
God bless you all." ~Transportation worker
with a diabetes diagnosis*

2023 CLIENT STORIES




 A recent immigrant and mother, presented at RVHS with intercostal pain, just ten days after her arrival. The RVHS team noted her lack of appropriate attire for Minnesota's severe winter, as she only wore sandals and a sweatshirt. Beyond medical care, which included a prescription for her pain, one of our providers personally offered her boots as a gift to the patient in an act reflecting RVHS's commitment to patient well-being. Further support was provided through a referral to the CAP agency, which furnished the patient and her children with essential winter clothing.

 A young woman presented at our clinic exhibiting fully dilated pupils, dark circles under her eyes, and a demeanor suggestive of psychological withdrawal. Her inability to maintain eye contact and reliance on a family member to communicate indicated severe distress. Further evaluation revealed that the patient had endured a traumatic ordeal, having been held against her will at the border for an extended period.

Her family, upon her arrival in the U.S., observed alarming behavioral changes, including compulsive hygiene and self-deprecating remarks

coupled with tearfulness. Additionally, she was experiencing auditory hallucinations and delusions. Recognizing the gravity of her mental state, our team acted promptly to address this psychiatric emergency.

Collaboration with a nearby hospital facilitated her access to specialized care, resulting in a formal assessment and the initiation of appropriate pharmacotherapy. A subsequent follow-up at our clinic confirmed a marked improvement in her condition. This case underscores the critical role of healthcare providers in recognizing and acting on social determinants of health, particularly in serving vulnerable populations. River Valley Health Care's intervention exemplifies our commitment to bridging healthcare disparities for immigrants.

 (M), who was diagnosed with cancer last year, has been undergoing chemotherapy at a Cancer Center. Her part-time employment status, a consequence of her medical condition, has led to financial constraints impacting her ability to afford groceries and medications, including those required for diabetes management.

On several occasions, M has sought assistance from RVHS. We have provided support through Veggie Rx, supplying vegetables, and financial aid for food. Recently, she contacted us for help with medication costs post-chemotherapy. A misunderstanding arose when M sent a form instead of the actual prescription, and it was discovered that she had not been able to purchase all the necessary medications due to financial limitations.

RVHS nurses diligently coordinated with the Cancer Center and local pharmacies to rectify the confusion regarding her prescriptions. Ultimately, we ensured that M fully understood her medication regimen, enhancing the effectiveness of her chemotherapy.

2023 CLIENT STORIES



M has expressed profound gratitude for the accessible support RVHS provides, which has been instrumental in navigating her healthcare journey.

Recently moved from out-of-state, (R) came to RVHS in need of refills for her depression and anxiety medications. Without insurance and not qualifying for state insurance, she faced significant challenges in obtaining her medications. Dr. Willey prescribed the necessary medications, with costs covered by RVHS. R also scheduled a follow-up appointment for a full physical and a complimentary eye exam. She left RVHS feeling extremely grateful for the care and services provided at no cost to her.

A patient from a different country who had not sought medical attention in the United States for a year visited River Valley Health Services with a complex assortment of medications, some unfamiliar to our team. Providers Maria (PA), Heidi (nurse), Adriana (interpreter), and Isabelle (clinic assistant) dedicated two hours to meticulously reviewing his medication list. Their efforts ensured he received the necessary prescriptions for managing his blood pressure, diabetes and heart disease.

The significance of this encounter lies in the patient's delayed healthcare engagement due to his uninsured status. RVHS's intervention was pivotal, supplying needed medication and averting the possibility of serious complications from untreated heart disease.

A patient scheduled for an appointment at RVHS was redirected to Urgent Care for an X-ray by the provider, who identified the need for immediate assessment. Following the urgent care visit, where she received a nebulizer treatment,

the care provider sent a prescription for an inhaler to a nearby pharmacy. Unfortunately, the pharmacy was closed before the patient could retrieve her medication.

RVHS staff intervened, contacting the urgent care provider to transfer the prescription to a different pharmacy with extended hours. Despite a lengthy hold time with the pharmacy, RVHS advocated for the urgency of the patient's situation, stressing the need for the inhaler due to her shortness of breath.

A follow-up call a week later confirmed the patient was recuperating, albeit feeling fatigued, highlighting RVHS's commitment to patient care continuity.

A middle-aged woman reached out to River Valley Health Services, suffering from severe headache, fever, dry cough, and body aches. Our staff evaluated her symptoms and organized the direct delivery of the required antibiotics and medication to her home. We also scheduled a follow-up appointment to monitor her recovery and confirm the resolution of her symptoms.



COMMITMENT | RECOGNITION

We received a grant enabling us to offer the Walk with Ease program and continued our commitment to free diabetes and health screening services.

We started 2023 with the Minnesota Department of Health's arthritis self-management program, Walk with Ease. We conducted the program in English and Spanish. The six-week program reached many individuals who have chronic arthritis. The RVHS staff became certified instructors and led the participants at the Shakopee and Chaska recreation centers.

We worked with volunteers, police departments, churches, community organizers, senior centers, and veterans, bringing our diabetes and health screening services to diverse populations by attending county fairs, church and community center gatherings, and community outreach events. We make testing easy and actionable, including having a nurse write a script with results and a referral.



Let's Walk MINNESOTA

Walk toward better health.

Reduce pain, improve your health and be more active

Join Walk with Ease, the Arthritis Foundation's doctor-recommended program that is proven to reduce pain while improving your overall health. The six-week program provides instruction and tips to safely make walking a part of your everyday life. If you can't do so your best for 30 minutes, the program is for you—would you like another class at another site?

Walk with Ease can help you:

- Reduce joint pain
- Feel good while getting in shape
- Learn how to walk safely, confidently, and at your best pace
- Increase balance, strength, and stamina
- Learn stretching and strengthening exercises

Program Details:

- Walk with Ease (beginner/intermediate)
- Dates: April 16 to May 19
- Times: To Be Determined
- Where: Chaska Community Center, Shakopee Community Center
- FREE PROGRAM

mi DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH **Space is limited. Sign up today! Call 952-567-8285** **RVHS RIVER VALLEY HEALTH SERVICES**



CATCH THE DREAM, LIFE WITHOUT DIABETES!

River Valley Health Services was honored with the Minnesota Lions Diabetes Foundation's award, "Catch the Dream, Life Without Diabetes!" As we expand our services with the new Shakopee Clinic, we will directly support the fight against diabetes and offer life-changing services and diabetes screening in our community.

NEW BEGINNINGS



The RVHS Shakopee Clinic at the CAP Agency will begin delivering services every Tuesday in 2024.



The People at RVHS are the Real Deal.

"I first got to know River Valley Health Services (RVHS) at a Shakopee event. After some tough times, including a coma and battling COVID, I called them up when I came back to Minnesota in 2022. Heidi from RVHS was like an angel; she and Bill really helped me out, finding me a place to live and sorting out my health. I'm a survivor; I live life, life doesn't live me. The people at RVHS were like a warm blanket in the cold. They're the real deal, not just going through the motions. I remember one freezing night, Dr. Willey and Heidi stayed late with me until a tow truck came. That's genuine kindness.

RVHS asked me to join their board, and I said yes to give back and share my insights. I want to help make things better here. I met some council members and Congress folks recently and talked about homelessness. They seemed surprised it is in our community. I told them, homelessness has many faces, it doesn't just look one way.

Bill and Heidi helped me fight for my health insurance, which took six months to get approved. There's a lot that needs fixing. Not everyone can zip off to Minneapolis for help. I'm here to find ways to help our people, locals and immigrants alike." ~Betty Allen



2023 DONORS & PARTNERSHIPS



“Scott Carver Dakota CAP Agency (CAP) is excited to welcome River Valley Health Services (RVHS) back to our Shakopee location. The unwavering support of CAP’s board of directors for this project highlights their commitment to providing additional resources for the needs of our community. CAP values our longstanding partnership with RVHS, and we are excited to see this new space utilized.”

~Jeff Hansen, Executive Director,
Scott Carver Dakota CAP Agency, Inc.

Donors

Allina Hospitals & Clinics
Arthritis Foundation
Chaska American Legion
Chaska Legion Auxiliary
American Heart Association
CAP Agency
Carver County Public Health
Chanhassen Rotary
Chaska Lions Club
Dr. Michael Wilcox
Faith Lutheran Church
Individual Donors
Norwood Young America
Lions Club
Retel Foundation
Shakopee Eagles
Shakopee Lions Club
St. Francis Regional
Medical Center
University of Minnesota/
Veggie Rx Program
VFW Chaska
Waconia Lions Club

Community Partnerships

Allina Hospitals & Clinics
Allina Partners Care Program
Allina Pharmacy Shakopee
American Legion
CAP Agency
Carver County CDA
Carver County Public Health
and Human Services
Chaska Police Department
Community-University Health
Care Center (CUHCC)
Disabled Veterans of Minnesota
East Creek Family Center
Family Vision Clinic Savage
FISH
Goldsmith Eye Care
HealthPartners
His House Foundation
Hope Dental
HyVee Pharmacy Shakopee
Infinity Eye Care
Love INC
National Association of Free
and Charitable Clinics (NAFC)
Minnesota Council of Nonprofits
Minnesota Community Care
(La Clinica)
My Health
New Creations Lutheran Church
Park Nicollet Health Services
Portico Healthnet
Ridgeview Medical Center
St. Francis Regional Medical
Center
Scott County Public Health/
Human Services
Scott County WGH Group
Shakopee Chamber of
Commerce
Shakopee Community
Assistance
Southside Community Clinic
Southwest Chamber of
Commerce
SW Metro District 288 East
Creek Family Center
Target Optical, Chaska
VSP Eye Program
Unite Minnesota

RVHS TEAM MEMBERS



ADRIANA, HEIDI AND MARITZA HAVING FUN TOGETHER!



HEIDI

RN, BSN, PHN

I have been an RN for 25 years and have a background working in Labor and Delivery, Postpartum, and Level 11 Nursery. I love working at RVHS because I have a heart and compassion for helping our clients.

ADRIANA

*Spanish Interpreter/
Community Outreach*

I have been a Spanish medical and community interpreter for many years. I love working at RVHS because we help patients find the resources they need when they do not know where to go. I love being able to help people in my community with the language barrier.

VICTORIA

Physician Assistant

I have worked in primary care, taking care of the Shakopee Latino community for 24 years. Currently, I am working for the Shakopee Mdewakanton Sioux community. I love working at RVHS because I can continue to help the underserved.

DAVID WILLEY, MD

Dr. Willey's practice includes the whole family from newborn to grandparents. His current positions: Physician at Catalyst Medical Clinic, PA, Chaska; Medical Consultant at Carver County Human Services; and Medical Director at SMSC Clinics, Prior Lake, MN. His professional affiliations are the American Academy of Family Physicians (AAFP) and the Minnesota Academy of Family Physicians (MAFP). His Hospital Affiliation is with St. Francis Medical Center, Shakopee, MN.

MARITZA

*Spanish Interpreter/
Community Outreach*

I've been with Scott, Carver, Dakota CAP Agency and River Valley Health Services for many years. I'm bilingual in both English and Spanish. It is a privilege to support and give back to the community I live in.

BILL SWANSTROM

Executive Director

My passion is to use my prior private sector experiences along with my more recent LISW/MPH training on behalf of the clients of River Valley. It's extremely rewarding.

ISABELLE

Clinic Assistant

I graduated Summa Cum Laude from the pre-medicine program at the University of Wisconsin-Eau Claire. My experiences as a Hispanic-American help underscore my compassion and aim to bridge healthcare's cultural and social disparities. I am honored to be a part of this organization/team.

Looking
Forward
to 2024!



The RVHS team is standing in the newly remodeled Shakopee Clinic.
RVHS team left to right: Victoria, Bill, Adriana, Maritza, Dr. David Willey, Heidi and Isabelle.

2024 FUNDING NEEDS

OPERATING CAPITAL

- Personnel & Staffing
- Outreach Personnel
- Marketing & Advertising
- Translation Services

CLIENT NEEDS

- Food
- PPE
- Medication
- Transportation
- Medical Visits

SHAKOPEE CLINIC

- Furniture
- Signage
- Computers
- Medical Equipment
- Medical & Office Privacy Screens

SUPPLIES

- Office Supplies
- Medical Supplies
- Technology
- Storage

Board of Directors

Richard Scott, RN/PHN, MPH,
EdD, CHS Administrator/
Public Health Director,
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Shakopee Schools
Health Services; *Secretary*

Glenn Johnston, RN
(Retired); *Treasurer*

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LISW, MPH, Veteran;
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Erica Denzer, RN
Patient Care Manager Surgical
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Foua Khang
Blue Cross & Blue Shield of MN

Betty Allen
Patient Representative &
Volunteer