



THE EL BARI COMMUNITY HEALTH CENTER IN SAN ANTONIO, TEXAS: PROVIDING FREE, CULTURALLY COMPETENT, AND COMPASSIONATE CARE FOR ALL

MISSION STATEMENT

El Bari Community Health Center is a volunteer-run community health clinic in San Antonio, Texas. El Bari was established in 2014 to provide much-needed health care services for those who did not qualify for health insurance coverage, even under the Affordable Care Act. It also responded to the need to coordinate health care for a rapidly growing Muslim community. El Bari is located at The Muslim Children's Education and Civic Center in Northwest San Antonio.

El Bari Clinic works to increase access to high-quality health care services for under- and uninsured community members regardless of religion, race, or ethnicity. Patients are primarily working-class ethnic minorities; about 50% of them are Muslim. These patients are often economically disadvantaged but uninsured, with incomes above the threshold for Medicaid qualification but below the threshold needed to afford health insurance coverage. **El Bari's success in engaging with the community has been made possible by demonstrating culturally competent and compassionate health care.** Notably, its care and outreach team reflect the population it serves. The clinic has successfully filled this need in the community, reporting high patient engagement and low no-show rates. Patient-centered care is the primary mission of the El Bari Clinic, allowing patients to engage with their health and their health care providers fully.

KEY STRATEGIES

In response to the Covid-19 pandemic, the El Bari Clinic leveraged several funding resources to begin the El Bari Telemedicine Initiative. This initiative arose from the need to continue managing chronic disease, mitigate the growing number of community members visiting emergency departments, and minimize urgent primary care visits during the pandemic. **Before 2020, the clinic had already been utilizing telemedicine, but primarily served patients in person.** However, existing infrastructure allowed for a seamless transition to greater use of video and phone visits. While maintaining a person-centered care approach, the El Bari Telemedicine Initiative also served to reduce transportation as a barrier to accessing health care.

El Bari Clinic also performed community outreach and safely continued regular office visits during the pandemic. Continued partnerships with the University of Texas Health Family Medicine and the South-Central Texas Area Health Education Center (AHEC) allowed the clinic to engage nursing, medical, dental, and public health students to implement educational programs and vaccine outreach surrounding Covid-19. **The clinic has held seven Covid-19 vaccination drives through the pandemic, one Covid-19 testing drive, and several health fairs.**

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