

# TRANSPLANT CENTER UPDATES



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## **Detroit Transplant Outreach Clinic: Meeting Patients Where They Live**

Fifteen years ago, the University of Michigan Health Transplant Center began an initiative to establish transplant outreach clinics to care for underserved populations in need of pre- and post-kidney transplant

care. The transplant team identified areas in Michigan that could benefit from having access to a local clinic to support transplant care.

The first of these transplant outreach clinics opened in Kalamazoo in 2009, followed by clinics in Midland, Rochester Hills, Grand Rapids, Lansing and, most recently, Detroit. Each location was selected to reach populations most in need.

We had been planning to establish an outreach clinic in Detroit for some time, and the closing of DMC Harper University Hospital's kidney transplant program propelled us to quickly establish a clinic for the more than 145 patients without local access to crucial ongoing care, including management of immunosuppressive medication and monitoring to detect organ rejection.

Many of these patients also had limited resources to address barriers to care such as insurance and prescription coverage and transportation challenges. Detroit's high prevalence of kidney disease and low economic resources were also critical factors in opening the clinic.

Like other transplant outreach clinics, the Detroit clinic model is based on providing local kidney transplant evaluation services. Acute hospital-based services,

surgeries and care during the critical first 90 days post-transplant occur at University of Michigan Health in Ann Arbor. What sets the Detroit clinic apart is the ability for us to see patients earlier post-transplant in their community, ensuring easier access and convenience.

Because of local care available sooner for Detroit patients, they're able to avoid the long commute to Ann Arbor, parking challenges and the overall cost of transportation. The local clinic also means patients and caregivers minimize time away from work and the associated lost wages. Other advantages of the local clinic include pre-transplant visits for individuals on the kidney waiting list, lab work completed during clinic visits and on-site social work visits.

The Detroit clinic is staffed once a month with a multidisciplinary transplant team composed of a nephrologist, surgeon, physician assistant, social worker, nurse and medical assistant who evaluate potential patients for transplant and provide ongoing care. Approximately 20 pre- or post-transplant patients are seen each month.

The Detroit outreach clinic allows the transplant team to offer personalized, face-to-face U-M Health care within the community, with feedback indicating high levels of patient satisfaction. It also enables the team to work more closely with referring physicians and to partner with local independent pharmacies to ensure patients have access to necessary medications.

Like all transplant outreach clinics throughout Michigan, the Detroit clinic carries out the University of Michigan Health mission to advance health to serve Michigan and the world.

## **Contact Us**

For more information about the Kidney Transplant Program at U-M Health Transplant Center visit:

**[www.UofMHealth.org/transplant](http://www.UofMHealth.org/transplant)**