

# Volunteers holding on to tradition

BY ELIZABETH ROBERTS  
STAFF WRITER

Sandra Lozano Barry serves as director at the only clinic in South Florida to successfully forge enough working relationships with labs and specialists that it can provide affordable medical care to the uninsured.

It's a business model that was forged by Light of the World Clinic founder Erwin M. Vasquez and continued after his death in 2010 by Lozano Barry and others.

"There are other, small clinics, and offices that have tried," she said of Light of the World Clinic's model. "But for whatever reason, this clinic has had great partnerships."

Because of those relationships the clinic can provide bone density scans, ultrasounds, X-ray, CT and MRIs.

Licensed physician volunteer their time, and represent 14 specialties. They offer a range of examinations, lab work, mammograms and other procedures. Since its founding, the Light of the World has grown from 35 non-licensed volunteers to 250 licensed and non-licensed volunteers.



**HELPING HANDS** Hermes Teran, of Sunrise, is examined by physician Selvon Nanan at the Light of the World Clinic in Oakland Park. The clinic has successfully forged working relationships with labs and specialists in order to provide free medical care to the uninsured. JOE VACARETTA/STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER

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Services are open to income-qualified residents. For example, an uninsured family of four qualifies if the annual income is \$49,200 or less, as long as they live in Broward County.

Demand for those services swells by the year. In 2002, when Lozano Barry joined the clinic, the operation logged 150 patient visits per month. Today, between 350 and 400 uninsured patients per month depend on the clinic for mammograms, blood

work, treatment for injuries and for X-rays.

"Everyone helps," Lozano Barry says. "If you are translating? You may be doing that now, but you may be doing vitals in the next moment, or answering the phones."

What they lack in pay, volunteers gain in other forms of compensation. There is satisfaction, of course - and sometimes something more.

"Thanks to the patients, I think I'm 10 pounds heavier - and I

told them if they bring any more donuts or homemade cake, they will have to give us a Weight Watchers membership," Lozano Barry chuckled. "This week one brought us fruit, which is perfect."

After 26 years of operating out of a leased space, the clinic moved into a medical office suite on the second floor at 5333 N. Dixie Highway in Oakland Park.

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# THE WEEK IN PICTURES



**CARING CLINIC** Above left, Brittany Mekeel of the Light of the World Clinic in Oakland Park, treats Alicia Barrientos Salazar with cupping. The clinic has successfully forged enough working relationships with labs and specialists to provide free medical care to the uninsured. Top right, Alicia Barrientos Salazar gets acupuncture treatment. Above, Dickie Wells, left, Bonnie Forrester, center, and Rachelle Tetreault go over patient treatment plans. Below, Sandra Lozano, Director of the Light of the World Clinic, works with receptionist Cynthia Cruz.

PHOTOS BY JOE CAVARETTE/STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER

