



HOW TO GET STARTED

Creating a sustainable DOCS program might seem overwhelming at first, but we've broken it down to a few simple steps that will help you jump-start your first event.



IDENTIFY A COMMUNITY IN NEED

Spend time getting to know their culture, their perceived needs, and their interests.

DEVELOP A FRAMEWORK

Create a basic organizational structure that works for your institution.

RECRUIT VOLUNTEERS

Recruit students to organize and run the fair and physicians to oversee all clinical services.

PLAN THE SERVICES

Decide what services will be provided based on the community's needs. Start small.

DEVELOP A BUDGET

Seek funding for the first fair. Budget must include medical supplies, table rentals, advertising, etc.

HOST AND EVALUATE YOUR FIRST EVENT!

If you have questions about these steps, please ask us for details.



Work with local communities to identify their unmet needs.

Understanding the needs of our community is an integral part of promoting health and providing quality care. Engage your community in meaningful conversations about their health and well-being. Create opportunities for the community to provide their thoughts and ideas on the services that your DOCS program could provide. As these ideas develop and community needs emerge, identify local community leaders and partners to join the DOCS effort.



Establish an organizational framework. Teamwork is essential to DOCS and its success. Create a system that works for your institution.

DOCS is a student driven effort with advising from dedicated faculty. Medical student volunteers organize and operate clinics, health fairs, and other special initiatives throughout the year in well-defined teams. It is important that your DOCS structure is well defined to ensure efficient and effective efforts. Teams can be organized by roles based on core responsibilities, such as: management, public relations, external affairs, and research and quality improvement.





Recruit volunteers. Volunteer physicians are vital to DOCS.

Recruiting compassionate, driven, and dedicated volunteer physicians is essential to the success of DOCS - as both a service to the community and an educational opportunity for students.

We recommend that you start by identifying residents within primary care specialties who are passionate about community service. Such residents can be catalysts to spread your message through their respective departments.

Additionally, creating a culture unique to your DOCS program and building community is extremely important. This sense of community is imperative for bringing volunteers back. DOCS cannot function without dedicated physicians and residents!

Key specialties to recruit are:

Internal Medicine, Family Medicine, Pediatric, Med/Peds, Obstetrics/Gynecology, Psychiatry



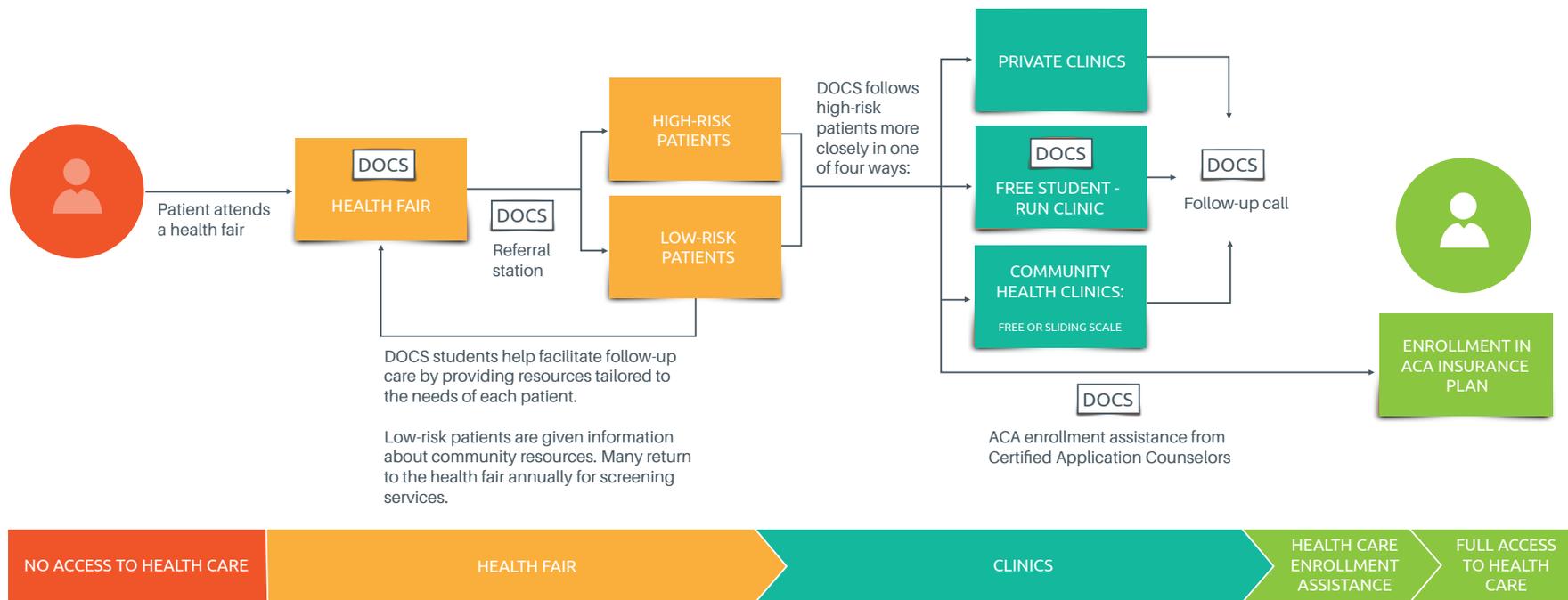
Plan what health services to provide. It all starts with one health fair.

The DOCS model creates opportunity for patients to receive a multitude of healthcare services. Over time, we have developed a specific model that fits the needs of our students and communities — and we are ready to help you adapt a model that will work for yours.

This model aims to close the gap in health care disparities among the underserved. First, patients attend DOCS health fairs where they receive screening services for common conditions such as diabetes, dyslipidemia, and hypertension. High-risk patients are then referred to follow-up care at community clinics (sliding-scale pay) or at DOCS student-directed clinics (free of charge). DOCS can also help patients obtain any necessary sub-specialty care in the broader healthcare system.

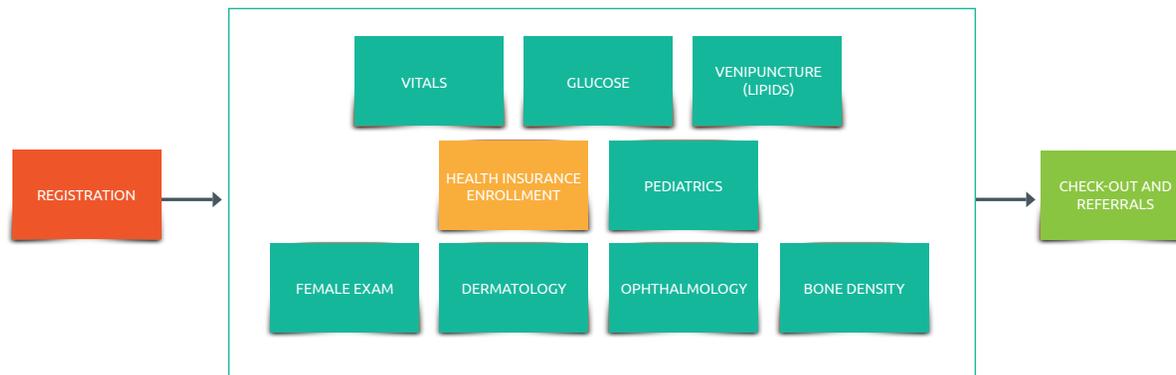
Regardless of their risk profile, all patients are offered assistance with signing up for health insurance through the Affordable Care Act (ACA) by medical students serving as Certified Applications Counselors. Unfortunately, many patients do not qualify for ACA plans; these patients are still followed and assisted by DOCS.

The following graphic below outlines several ways by which DOCS aims to close the health care disparity gap.



Each health fair station adds an important piece to the puzzle of understanding patients and their health care needs.

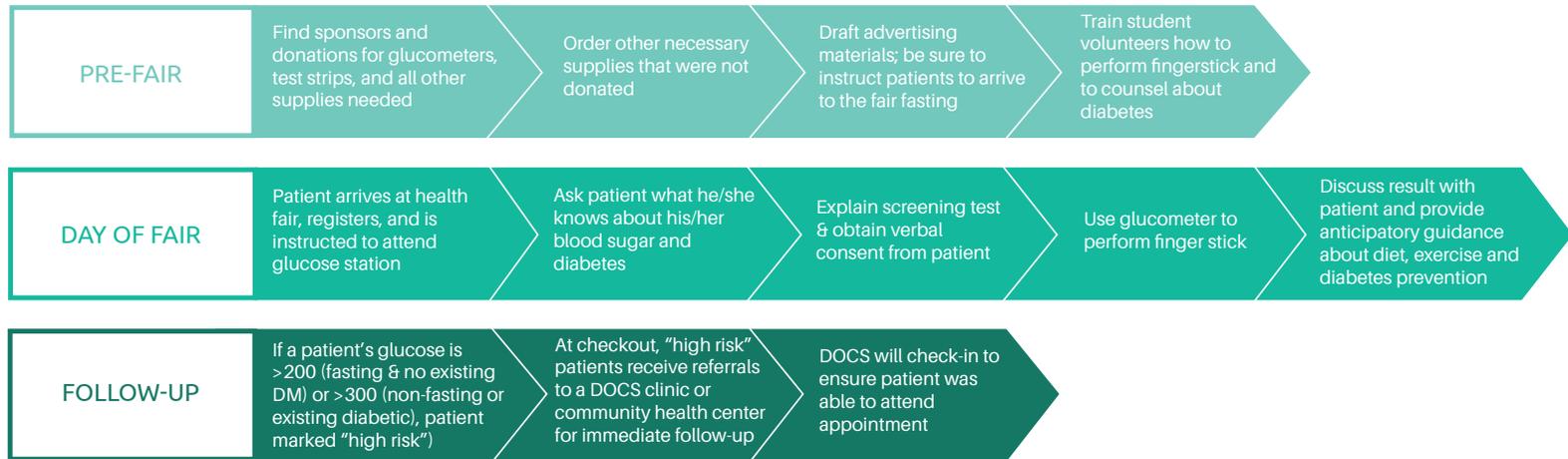
By screening patients at several stations, the DOCS team is able to collect critical information to better understand their needs. These screenings allow DOCS to identify important information to share with patients at check-out. If needed, DOCS refers patients for follow-up care with local physicians, or provide them information about community resources.



Sample station: Glucose

Identify the needs of your community prior to the fair. Continue to evaluate these needs during and after the fair to provide the best service possible.

Glucose screening is just one example of the logistical flow of a health fair station. We recommend it as an essential station to any fair. Screening for diabetes is simple and straightforward, but diabetes remains a silent yet highly prevalent disease nationwide. Use the information below to consider what you need to prepare leading up to the fair as well as what needs to happen on the day of the fair.



Develop a budget. Identify all costs that are necessary and reasonable in order to provide sustainable opportunities to your community.

Work with your team to identify communities with expressed needs, create opportunities for dialogue, recruit volunteers, and organize and advertise your health fair! Identify a Finance and Fundraising Director to organize a strategic method for allocating funds. These funds are provided through three major avenues: (1) grants, (2) the support of donors, including philanthropic organizations and medical school alumni, and (3) fundraising within the community, for example, donations from local restaurants to provide lunch to student volunteers or gift certificates to grocery stores to subsidize supply costs.

Determine how to appropriate funds by drafting a budget for each health fair or clinic. Key items to budget for: medical supplies, tent, table, and chair rentals, and advertising. Do not hesitate to contact us for budget information in greater detail.



Prepare to launch and evaluate your first fair.

Launching your first DOCS event is extremely exciting and rewarding. It can also be a daunting task, so preparation is key! Organize your volunteers and supplies ahead of time, arrive early to set up, and prepare to see many patients. Remember to be flexible, knowing that issues you can't predict might arise. Plan to debrief with your team afterward to analyze and evaluate the fair and discuss how things went.

Do not hesitate to connect with the DOCS Media and Outreach Team for more detailed information and resources as well as tips for organizing or expanding your first health fair or clinic.

Please contact us to let us know how it went!

Want more information on the Department of Community Service (DOCS) model?

For more information on the history and benefits of a DOCS program, please visit:

udocs.med.miami.edu

Still have questions? The University of Miami DOCS team is ready to help. Whether it is to develop a DOCS program at your institution or to share your model of medical philanthropy with us: we share the same goals.

Please email your questions and feedback to Daphne Papathomas, Executive Board member at

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