

2024 Annual Report



Bluestem
Health

From Our Board Chair and CEO



Dear Stakeholders,

We're happy to share our 2024 Annual Report, highlighting a year of significant achievements and continued progress for our organization. This year truly underscored our commitment to excellence and dedication to serving our community's health needs.

One of our most notable accomplishments was the successful HRSA Site Visit. This outcome validates our adherence to the highest standards of care and operational effectiveness, reaffirming our position as a leading healthcare provider. We see the result of having only four minor deficiencies out of 92 areas of competence as a reflection of our team's hard work and dedication.

We were also very encouraged by the considerable improvement shown in our Employee Culture Survey from 2023 to 2024. Many of our team members said, "There has been a huge improvement," and they can now go to the appropriate person—the first time—to get issues resolved. One teammate shared, "The culture around here is better than any other organization I have worked for in my 13 years in healthcare." This positive shift reflects our ongoing efforts to foster a supportive and engaging workplace environment, which we believe is crucial for the well-being of our staff and the quality of care they provide.

We also made substantial improvements to our Thompson, Main, and Kreshel Clinics. These enhancements have upgraded our facilities and significantly improved the experience for both patients and staff, ensuring that our community receives the best possible care in a comfortable and modern environment.

We are incredibly proud of these achievements and deeply grateful for the dedication and hard work of our entire team. As we look ahead, we remain committed to advancing our mission and positively impacting the health and well-being of our community.

Thank you for your continued support.

Sincerely,

Brad L. Meyer, FACMPE, Chief Executive Officer

Kevin Bagley, DHA, Board Chairperson

Our Mission

To be a trusted resource for excellent medical, dental, and behavioral health services.

Serving the Healthcare Needs of Our Community

Bluestem Health began serving the Lincoln area in September 2003. Services were provided at 1021 N. 27th Street, the same location where our Main Clinic is today.

In 2024, our services reached 22,025 patients with over 68,000 patient visits. Averaging 3.1 visits per patient, these numbers speak volumes about the trust and satisfaction our community places in our care.

We have 59 employees who have been with us for five years or more, a testament to our

ability to cultivate a workplace where employees feel valued and motivated to stay and grow with us. Our employees are the backbone of our organization.

Our employees consistently demonstrate their passion for delivering high-quality care to our patients. We prioritize creating a positive and supportive work environment, providing ongoing educational opportunities, and offering exceptional benefits to ensure employee satisfaction and to foster long-term careers within our organization.



Integrated Healthcare Team and Services

Bluestem Health continues to be the only healthcare center in Lincoln that uses an integrated care model to offer Family Medicine, Behavioral Health, and Dental services through one organization. Managing the continuum of care for our patients helps to improve their health and quality of life.

Medical

From acute care to disease management, individuals and families have access to Family Medicine and Pediatric care staffed by Family Practice and Pediatric Physicians, Nurse Practitioners, and Physician Assistants.

Dental

Whether it's routine care or emergency dental services, our Dentists, Dental Hygienists, and Dental Assistants provide patients with state-of-the-art dental care.



Behavioral

Our team of Psychologists, Post-Doctorate Psychology Graduates, and Psychology Students collaborate with our Family Medicine and Pediatric providers to ensure comprehensive care for all patients.

In addition to medical, dental, and behavioral health programs, we offer many low cost and free services, including:

- Chronic Disease Case Management
- Chronic Care Management
- Diabetic Education
- Interpreter Services
- Outreach Services
- 340B Pharmacy Program
- Medication Assistance
- Legal Services Through Legal Aid of Nebraska

Other departments which support the day-to-day operations of Bluestem Health include:

- Hospital Tracking and Referral
- Information Technology
- Compliance
- Medical Records
- Revenue Cycle Management



“

My doctor is caring and willing to listen. She allows me to ask questions, and she takes time. I have had doctors in the past who had no time for me, and she is so different—kind and caring. I would recommend her to all my friends.”

Janine

Caring for All People

22,025

Total Unduplicated Patients

68,000

Total Patient Visits

Healthcare should meet patients where they are. That's why we're committed to providing primary, dental, and behavioral health when and where our patients need it.

Breakdown of Patient Visits

	Clinic Visits	Virtual Consult	Patients
Medical	53,096	48	20,684
Dental	6,732	0	2,617
Mental Health	3,745	35	1,262
Case Management	4,773		
Patient Education	2,439		

Breakdown by Insured, Uninsured, Medicare/Medicaid

9,307

Medicaid

2,624

Medicare

4,380

Uninsured

5,714

Private Insurance

Many of our patients in 2024 were some of the most vulnerable in our community.

16,833

Income at 200% or below the federal poverty limit

1,639

Unhoused

432

Veterans

5,315

Patients served in a language other than English

2024 Quality Recognition



Expansion of Behavioral Health

We remain committed to providing a welcoming environment for our patients, emphasizing the importance of behavioral health as an integral component of overall well-being. Our behavioral health services are part of our mission to enhance accessible and compassionate care. We are proud to announce the expansion of these services, underscored by the addition of two exceptional providers who bring unparalleled expertise and dedication to our team.

Lalia Khoudeida, LCSW



Lalia is a Behavioral Health Specialist who brings more than a decade of experience in case management, advocacy, and behavioral healthcare. Her personal journey as a refugee shapes her deep understanding of the complexities faced by individuals and families from diverse backgrounds.

Fluent in Arabic, English, and Kurdish, Lalia employs her linguistic and cultural expertise to foster trust, bridge gaps, and connect meaningfully with her patients. Lalia specializes in addressing conditions such as anxiety, depression, PTSD, and substance use, offering care for adolescents and

adults. Her wrap-around approach is rooted in compassion, humility, and authenticity, helping patients feel understood and empowered. By emphasizing rapport and creating safe spaces, Lalia ensures her patients recognize they are not alone in their struggles.

Ghazal Barakat, MSW, PLMHP



Ghazal also joined us as a Behavioral Health Specialist. Fluent in Arabic, English, and Kurdish, Ghazal

encourages patients of all ages to embrace mental health care as essential to overall wellness.

Ghazal collaborates with primary care providers to offer comprehensive, on-site support, addressing the needs of underserved communities. Her dedication to normalizing conversations about mental health within medical settings is a testament to her commitment to breaking stigma and barriers. Beyond her professional expertise, Ghazal enriches her care by incorporating mindfulness practices, empowering patients to manage stress and improve their mental health.

A Holistic Approach to Behavioral Health

With the addition of Lalia and Ghazal to our team, we are advancing our commitment to providing culturally competent, patient-centered care. By expanding services across our clinics, we provide a holistic approach that seamlessly integrates behavioral health into primary care.

Understanding Patients Beyond the Numbers

For over two decades, managing type 1 diabetes became a routine—until subtle discrepancies began to emerge in John’s daily care. Despite stable laboratory markers that suggested his condition was under control, he experienced dips and peaks in his blood sugar levels. Living without continuous support and navigating the challenges of self-management, John found that the everyday strategies he’d relied on were missing critical nuances in his diabetes care.

A Data-Driven Approach

Working with our Certified Diabetes Care and Education Specialists (CDCES), a comprehensive evaluation unveiled areas that

needed refinement. An in-depth consultation with one of our diabetes educators revealed that John’s insulin dosing schedule was not optimal. Rather than splitting his doses throughout the day, he was administering insulin only once daily. This approach, while temporarily effective based on standard lab results, was contributing to significant glycemic variability. Our CDCES discovered that this irregular regimen resulted in episodes of hypoglycemia that led him to overcorrect when these lows occurred. The insights gained during this consultation shifted John’s focus from a reliance on average lab values toward a more dynamic understanding of daily blood sugar fluctuations.



Molly Petrik
RD, LMNT,
CDCES



Jeni Wood
BSN, RN,
CDCES

Federally Qualified Health Centers Across the U.S.

Bluestem Health is one of over 1,500 Federally Qualified Health Centers in the United States serving over 32.5 million patients—nearly one in 10 people.

A 2023 federal report showed that health centers served a record-breaking number of patients, of whom:

90%
had low-incomes

64%
were people of color

62%
were publicly insured

18%
were uninsured

Empowered by Education

To address these challenges, John's care team implemented a plan that integrates both innovative technology and personalized education. He was transitioned to an enhanced insulin regimen, facilitated by Bluestem Health's 340B Pharmacy program, which provided access to more effective insulin options at a lower cost. At the same time, John was enrolled in a continuous glucose monitor (CGM) program. This state-of-the-art device supplied real-time data, revealing the day-to-day variability of his blood sugar levels—a reality that his previous averages could not capture.

Paths Forward

A critical component of John's improved management plan was the commitment to regular education sessions with the CDCES team. Over a series of monthly meetings, dedicated educators worked with him to deepen his understanding of the intricacies of type 1 diabetes. They reviewed the pharmacodynamics of insulin, emphasizing why the timing and frequency of doses are crucial. In these sessions, John learned how

external factors—such as stress and dietary choices, particularly the intake of fiber and fats—could dramatically influence his blood sugar stability. One key revelation was the concept of insulin stacking, where overlapping doses contributed to the unexpected lows that he had been experiencing. By addressing this issue, John gained practical insights into optimizing his dosing schedule and minimizing the risk of glycemic imbalances.

A Model for Proactive Care

As John's awareness of his diabetes increased, so did his confidence in managing his condition. With renewed insight into the hidden patterns behind his blood sugar readings, he began to adjust his daily habits accordingly. A significant turning point came when improved insurance coverage allowed him to secure personal CGM sensors, reducing his reliance on clinic-facilitated monitoring.

Looking forward, John's care team is now exploring the possibility of transitioning him to an insulin pump—an option that promises even greater precision in managing his insulin delivery.

Health centers provide vital care for many of America's historically underserved communities, including:

9.4

million children

3.9

million patients
over the age
of 65

1.4

million people
experiencing
homelessness

419,000

veterans

Our Locations

“

I came in for a dental emergency, and Sharon was amazing!! She was very kind and knowledgeable about the process. Thank you Sharon and Dr. Clark for going above and beyond for me today!”

Amy

Main Clinic

Family Medicine
Pediatrics
Behavioral Health
Dental Care

Kreshel Clinic

Family Medicine
Pediatrics
Obstetrics
Behavioral Health
Pharmacy

Thompson Clinic

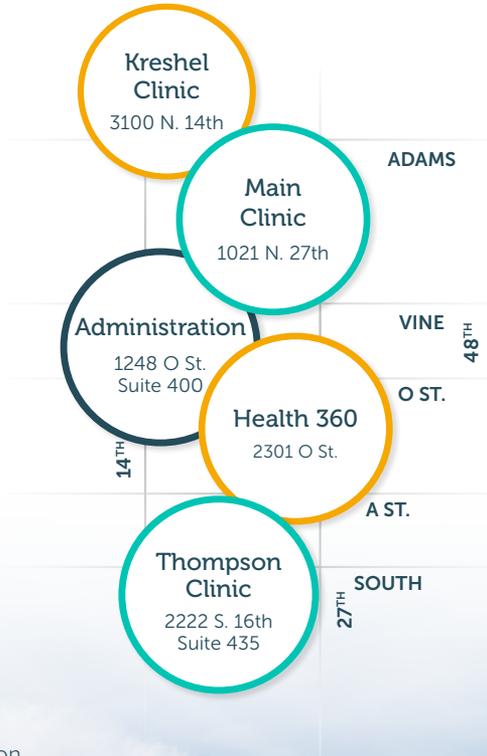
Family Medicine
Pediatrics

Health 360

Family Medicine
Pediatrics
Obstetrics
Pharmacy

Administration

Chronic Disease Management
Diabetes and Nutrition Education



2024 Financials



Revenues

Net Patient Service Revenues	\$13,176,489	54.1%
Grants	\$3,069,975	12.6%
Pharmacy 340(B)	\$6,069,628	24.9%
Incentives	\$1,390,145	5.7%
Donations	\$8,119	0.0%
Interest	\$442,007	1.8%
Medicare Cost Report Settlements	(2)	0.0%
Recovery of Bad Debts	\$97,488	0.4%
Other	\$2,030,643	8.3%
Adjustments	(1,937,757)	
Total Revenues	\$24,346,735	108%

Expenses

Salaries/Wages/Benefits	\$14,721,516	46.8%
Staff Appreciation/Training/Travel/Hiring	\$199,125	0.6%
Supplies/Medications/Small Equipment	\$3,166,523	10.1%
Legal/Accounting/Consulting Services	\$472,557	1.5%
Business Insurances	\$115,746	0.4%
Facilities Rent/Utilities/Maintenance	\$547,857	1.7%
Contracted Services	\$2,880,626	9.2%
Depreciation and Amortization	\$1,716,217	5.5%
Promotion and Outreach	\$200,689	0.6%
Memberships/Licenses/Fees	\$318,573	1.0%
Communications Services	\$369,227	1.2%
Other Expenses	\$6,761,566	
Total Expenses	\$31,470,222	78.5%
Change in Net Assets*	(\$7,123,487)	-29.3%

*Includes the transfer of the MacKenzie Scott's Yield Giving donation into our Endowment Fund.

“

My experiences at Bluestem Health are always positive. Dr. Israel always listens and answers my questions. Highly recommend Bluestem Health.”

Linda

Our Extra Special Award Recipients

This year's Extra Special Person Awards honor a remarkable group of individuals who exemplify dedication, compassion, and positivity in all that they do. Their outstanding contributions uplift those around them, making a meaningful difference every day. Here is what their peers had to share about these extraordinary honorees:



Rebecca Brodecky
Dental Clinic
Administrator

"Rebecca always goes above and beyond to get patients in, especially when they have dental issues. She is always ready to give out a helping hand and is easily approachable. We all enjoy working with her."



Rhianon Martinez
Hospital Tracking
Supervisor

"Rhianon is not only the nicest, most caring soul, but she also inspires her team to achieve things they never imagined possible. She truly cares for everyone."



Reggie Saltzman
Medical Coder

"Reggie is wonderfully dedicated to her job. She has patience while assisting with coding issues and is always pleasant, with a lovely disposition. Reggie shows drive, determination, congeniality, and strength every day. We are so grateful to have her."



Miranda Sanchez
Patient Care Technician

"Miranda is always happy to help in any way she can. She has been a huge help at the clinic, and we are very lucky to have her."



Hannah Schmitz, PA-C

"Hannah is a kind individual who goes the extra mile to support her patients and peers. Despite challenging situations, she remains positive and bright. We are so lucky to work with her."



Charles Kreshel, MD

"Dr. Kreshel loves to spend time with his coworkers and ensures his patients receive the best care. Everyone appreciates his humble ways and willingness to care."



Daniela Calderon
Receptionist

"Daniela treats every patient with dignity and respect. She works hard to help patients and staff and always welcomes new team members with a smile."



Bluestem Health Board of Directors

Kevin Bagley, Chair

Tyler Strong, Vice Chair

Lucy Flores, Secretary

Andrew Schill, Past Chair

Bob Bleicher

Derek Blumenstock

Nasir Ahmad Farahmand

Tammy Fikar-Burton

Romeo Guerra

Than Htut Win

Doyle Karst

Kerry Kernen

Jack Kramer, PHD

Michelle Roberts

“

Julia Lainhart is a very caring and good listener with her patients. The front desk people are awesome! They make you feel important.”

Destiny

Bluestem Health Leadership Team

Brad Meyer

Chief Executive Officer

Shane Ludwig

Chief Operations Officer

Jacque Fanning

Chief Financial Officer

Korey Mohr

Human Resources Administrator

Michael Israel, MD

Chief Medical Officer

Rebecca Brodecky

Dental Clinic Administrator

“

My Nurse Practitioner, John, is amazing and really cares about his patients. I have been struggling with severe depression, and he is the only person who showed real concern for me. He connected me with a psychiatrist and a counselor. Thank you, John.”

Doug

Bluestem Health Providers

Our Vision
To create
a healthy
community.



**Horacio Alvarez
Ramirez, MD**
Family Medicine



**Ghazal Barakat
MSW, PLMHP**
Behavioral Health



Jessica Buhman, PA-C
Family Medicine



Bich Chau, MD
Family Medicine



Trishia Frost, APRN-NP
Family Medicine



Sarah Grady, PA-C
Family Medicine



**John Grandgenett
APRN-NP**
Family Medicine



Arianne Hollman, PA-C
Family Medicine



Charles Kreshel, MD
Family Medicine



**Michelle Krumland
APRN-NP**
Family Medicine



Julia Lainhart, PA-C
Family Medicine



Abigail Lamp, Psy.D
Behavioral Health



Humaira Qasimyar, MD
Pediatrics



**Nishma Ramos-
Gonzalez, LIMHP**
Behavioral Health



Adam Rasmussen, MD
Family Medicine



Arathi Reddy, DMD
Dental Health

“

The staff are all kind and courteous. I was especially impressed with my new Primary Care Provider, Hannah Schmitz, PA-C. She was thorough and kind, and she listened carefully to what I had to say. Hannah also recommended treatments and referrals for me. Overall, Bluestem Health is a very nice clinic.”

Valerie



Sally Clark, DDS
Dental Health



**Reba Cooksley, DNP
APRN-NP, FNP-C**
Family Medicine



Anthony Cox, PA-C
Family Medicine



Truc Doan, DDS
Dental Health



Michael Israel, MD
Chief Medical Officer
Family Medicine



Michael Judson, Psy.D
Director of
Behavioral Health



**Lalia Khoudeida,
PLMHP, PCMSW**
Behavioral Health



Heather Kleeman, DO
Family Medicine



Caitlin Neukirch, PA-C
Family Medicine



Angela Nguyen, PA-C
Family Medicine



**Michele Overhalsler
APRN-NP**
Family Medicine



Erica Peterson, MD, MPH
Pediatrics



Hannah Schmitz, PA-C
Family Medicine



Andrew Shahan, MD
Family Medicine



Building a
more vibrant,
healthy
community
for every one.



Bluestem
Health

