

Longstanding Support of 50-Year-Old Kennedy Community Health



Pictured above are dental assistant Crismery Andujar and Dr. Kiran Naik in a Kennedy Community Health dental clinic.

Photo credit: *Christine Peterson, Telegram & Gazette*

As described in this recent [Telegram & Gazette article](#), the [Edward M. Kennedy Community Health Center](#) (“Kennedy Community Health”), one of the leading Federally Qualified Health Centers in the country, celebrates its 50th anniversary in 2022. The Foundation has been a proud supporter of Kennedy Community Health for more than 20 years, providing grants totaling more than \$580,000 to help build its capacity and expand access to its services in sustainable ways.

Notably, Kennedy Community Health was the first community health center in the country to have a dental lab, which was funded through one of the Foundation’s first-ever Activation Fund grants in 2000. The lab enables onsite construction of prosthetics, dentures and other products, providing increased cost efficiency while offering higher quality, customized fittings and convenience for patients. Still in operation today, the lab’s services are sustained through third-party reimbursements from MassHealth and private insurers.

The Foundation again partnered with Kennedy Community Health in 2013 to expand access to primary care for residents of the Milford area through Round 3 of the Synergy Initiative. Foundation investments totaling \$380,000, together with funding from the MetroWest Health Foundation, enabled the construction of a satellite health center in Milford, which opened in March 2014. Today, the facility serves more than 5,000 patients

annually.

Also in 2014, Kennedy Community Health received an Activation Fund grant for expansion of its optometry practice in Worcester from one exam room to five, reducing wait times from more than eight months to just a few days. The project has been sustained through a partnership with Massachusetts College of Pharmacy and Health Sciences, which supplied equipment and students/preceptors for staffing.

Most recently, the Foundation awarded an Activation Fund grant in 2020 for the purchase of additional dental chairs to equip the organization's new Milford facility, located directly across from the existing Milford site. Nearly triple the size, the new building is expected to open in late fall 2022 and will enable Kennedy Community Health to serve an estimated 4,000 additional patients.

Founded in 1972 as the Great Brook Valley Health Center in a Worcester housing project, Kennedy Community Health now operates three medical facilities and six school-based health centers serving 26,000 patients annually in Worcester, Framingham, Milford, and the surrounding communities of MetroWest and Central Massachusetts. Comprehensive health services offered include primary and urgent care, dental care, optometry, pharmacy, behavioral health, substance use treatment and social services, women's health, HIV/AIDs treatment and services, medical specialties, nutrition counseling, laboratory, and health education programs.

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