

# EL RIO HEALTH

EL RIO  
HEALTH

Robert Gomez Building

2023 Report to the Community  
2022 Annual Report

# CEO Message



Clinton Kuntz, DBH  
Chief Executive Officer  
El Rio Health

## A Year of Growth, Resilience, and Community Engagement

As I pause to reflect on my inaugural year with El Rio Health, a whirlwind of emotions and thoughts engulf me. It seems almost surreal that a year has already flown by, yet simultaneously, it feels as if I have been a part of this remarkable organization forever. The sense of belonging and camaraderie here with our staff, patients and community is amazing. It is with great pride and honor that I share this report, which also marks the first year of my journey with El Rio Health.

## Adapting and Thriving in a New Environment

In the past year, I have enjoyed my journey of learning and adapting to a new system and a new health center. The transition has gone well, thanks to the incredible support from the dedicated and caring staff at El Rio Health. Their commitment to excellence and compassion is the backbone of our organization.

## Celebrating New Beginnings and Achievements

We marked a significant milestone with the inauguration of the El Rio University Health Center and the Buena Vida Pain Clinic. This establishment stands as a testament to our relentless pursuit of providing comprehensive, whole person, quality healthcare services to our community. To further strengthen our organizational structure and operational efficiency, we welcomed DL Poole as our new Chief Operations Officer. With a wealth of experience and an inclusive approach, DL Poole is set to help steer El Rio towards a future of innovation and excellence. We are also thrilled to announce that El Rio has been granted the prestigious ACGME Institutional Accreditation, a recognition that underscores our commitment to maintaining the highest standards in medical education and training.



## Navigating Through the Pandemic and Beyond

May 11, 2023 marked a significant turning point in our battle against the COVID-19 pandemic, with the official end of the federal public health emergency. This milestone has allowed us to transition back to in-person fundraising events, fostering a sense of community and togetherness that we have dearly missed. In this report, we delve into our concerted efforts around education and vaccination, initiatives that are crucial in safeguarding the health and well-being of our community. And we touch on our new partnership with Nosotros, which is a testament to our unwavering commitment to community engagement and support during these changing times.

## Looking Ahead: Continued Service

As we stand here today, we reaffirm our commitment to serving the community for the next 53 years and beyond, with the same zeal and dedication that has been the hallmark of El Rio Health for the past 53 years.

In conclusion, I extend my heartfelt gratitude to each member of the El Rio family for their relentless efforts and contributions. Together, we are poised to usher in a future of health, happiness, and prosperity for all.



*Thank you for being a part of this incredible journey.*



# Welcome Our New COO!



**Damone "DL" Poole,**  
PA, NHA, MPA, MBA  
Chief Operations  
Officer, El Rio Health

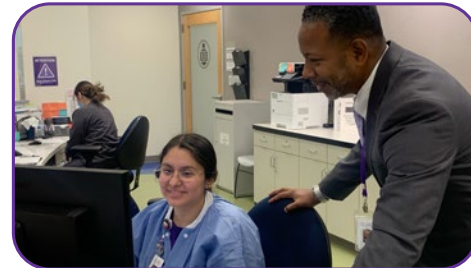
We are excited that Damone "DL" Poole has joined El Rio Health as our new Chief Operations Officer (COO). Mr. Poole comes to El Rio from LifeLong Medical Care, where he was Chief Operations Officer of this Federally Qualified Health Center (FQHC) serving the greater San Francisco Bay Area. He shares with us about his time at El Rio, so far:

"First, I am honored to be given the opportunity to reflect on my short tenure here at El Rio. Prior to joining El Rio as the Chief Operations Officer, I can truly say I did my due diligence. I read everything I could find on El Rio and spoke to many of my colleagues near and far asking if they knew anything about El Rio or if they knew anyone who knew anything about El Rio. The feedback was inspiring and cemented that, if selected, I would be joining an organization that's heartbeat is driven by the electrical pulses of unapologetic service to the community. That the staff, who could work anywhere, were dedicated to the mission, and had committed their professional life to provide high-quality medical, dental, and behavioral health care to all Tucsonans. I'm proud to say my experience, thus far, has proved all what I read and heard to be accurate of excellence.

"I work long days, which has always been my style. I fully commit and I'm surrounded by so many others starting with our CEO, our Senior Leadership team, and each of the staff that show their full commitment each and every day, which makes working for El Rio my blessing. My focus is to level set our operational abilities to mirror the clinical performance. What have I done so far? With the support of our existing operational leaders, I've restructured operations to remove reporting barriers and silos that promote inefficiencies, waste of time and inhibit access to care, all through promotions, and realignments, without adding or eliminating any positions.

"I've created an environment for inclusion of practice management resource by enhancing job descriptions to capture the operationally focused candidates we will be recruiting to fill vacant positions in addition to improved training materials we will be providing our existing operational leaders to sharpen their skills. This is just the tip of the iceberg. There's so much more to do.

"I'm having fun and I'm excited to be given the opportunity to work with this team...this family...to ensure El Rio is around to take care of our Tucson community for another fifty-plus years."



# Children's Programming

## Children's Programming

Children are at the heart of El Rio. El Rio serves over 36,000 Tucson pediatric patients each year. Our services extend beyond the exam room walls, recognizing the special needs of our young patients. Our goal is to provide children and their families the resources and services they need to live healthy and happy lives. With the help of our partners and generous donors, we are able to offer services beyond standard well and sick care.



## ROAR - Reach Out and Read

According to the American Academy of Pediatrics, reading to children in the first years of life stimulates brain development. Reach Out and Read integrates healthcare and literacy, encouraging young children and their families to read during and after visits to El Rio. At well-child visits, we give "prescriptions" for free, new books and fill our waiting rooms with reading material to foster learning and discovery through reading. Annually, we provide over 20,000 books to our pediatric patients and families.



## Asthma Intervention

For patients diagnosed with Asthma, El Rio offers specialized care which includes two to three hours of educational instruction on how to care for their condition. Parents receive education on how to manage their child's condition. Children are seen several times in the first year after diagnosis to monitor and record improvement.

El Rio's goal is for patients with asthma to be able to live life as any other – active in sports, regular attendance at school or work and improving their overall health, despite an asthma diagnosis. This program has drawn national attention and is now a model for best practice.

# Children's Programming

## Early Vision Screening

Children develop rapidly during the first five years of life and it is important to assess and support their vision, even before they can speak. The American Academy of Pediatrics recommends vision screening begin at five years of age, however, in the past we have not had much success screening children younger than about six years old.

In 2015, we bought our first Welch Allyn Spot Vision Screener. We can use it on children twelve months of age and older when they come in for a well-child visit. Without the child's active participation, we are able to discover visual problems at a very young age. In this non-invasive, pain-free assessment, we can screen both eyes at one time and identify potential vision issues, even in children who are not yet verbal.

This screening tool has been a game-changer in the care of our children. Thanks to our generous donors, we have expanded our screening services over the years and purchased additional screening cameras. It is our goal to have this service available at all El Rio pediatric health centers.



## Embedded Dental Hygienists

Healthy teeth and mouths are an important part of a healthy child. Our highly trained pediatric dentists tend to the oral health needs of children from infancy through the teenage years. We also provide dental services for children with special medical needs.

Our Fluoride Varnish Program makes it easy for children to get care that helps significantly reduce the incidence of early childhood cavities. While children wait for pediatric medical or WIC appointments, our dental hygienists offer free oral health assessments and fluoride varnish treatments. We also educate families on the importance of oral health and encourage them to establish care with our dental team.



## HealthBuilder Programming

Our HealthBuilder Team offers a variety of programming for children and families, encouraging them to take charge of their health and wellness. These free education and wellness classes include healthy cooking, diabetes education and stress management for the entire family.

Our "Self-Care for Families" six-week course teaches tools to help manage big emotions and stressors and how to calm the body and mind. "Family Bonds" encourages strengthening the family unit with activities like gardening, cooking, nature walks and art. Parents and caregivers learn strategies for setting healthy boundaries, recognizing signs of depression or anxiety, and coping mechanisms. "PowerFULL Familias" is a ten-week program where you learn to set healthy goals, practice mindfulness, move together, and eat well as a family.

## POSITIVE OUTCOMES – FAMILY BONDS

A blended family with three teenagers participated in the Family Bonds program to work on navigating new family dynamics. The variety of activities allowed for each of the teens to find a unique component of the program they liked, such as gardening, cooking and learning about the nervous system and stress response. The parents reported feeling like they improved "kid management..."

***"I recognized a lot of positive things I was already doing and gained some new information too."***

The family has requested additional support with behavior and medication management for one teen and because the Family Bonds program is jointly lead by the Behavioral Health and HealthBuilder Wellness departments, we were able to quickly get the teen established as an El Rio Behavioral Health patient.

## POSITIVE OUTCOMES – POWERFULL FAMILIAS

***"Our family was referred by my son's PCP. We liked that PowerFULL Familias helped us with an exercise routine, and we really enjoyed the cooking classes. We had a great experience in PowerFULL Familias, and it impacted us as we have been able to provide better nutrition for our child. We learned that exercise is important, and we have continued to do that after the program, as well as being able to cook meals with our son."***





## El Rio Behavioral Health Comprehensive Scope of Service Delivery

El Rio’s Behavioral Health services have **grown exponentially** since March of 2020 to meet our community’s need for mental health and substance use services.

At the height of the pandemic, referrals increased due to unprecedented presentation of anxiety, depression, isolation, and grief experienced by many. As a result, El Rio Health took action to expand behavioral health services at seven El Rio Health Center locations doubling its staff to over 120 with 23 combined psychiatrist and psychiatric nurse practitioners along with clinical therapists, integrated primary care behavioral health and crisis triage clinicians, nursing staff, case managers, peers, and front-line receptionist staff in an effort to provide quality comprehensive outpatient services. The array of on-site and telehealth therapeutic interventions include psychiatric evaluations, medication management, individual and group therapy, case management and peer recovery support services. The current population focus is adolescents, adults, and specialized geriatric psychiatric services. Plans to expand services for younger children and to establish a psychiatric residency program for medical school graduates are in process of development.



In response to the alarming Pima County community health needs assessment data about fentanyl overdose deaths, El Rio Health expanded Medication Assisted Treatment (MAT) from two health center sites to five health center sites in a decentralized model of care and implemented a Substance Use Disorder Intensive Outpatient Program (IOP) as well as outpatient groups focused on treating patients struggling with addiction. Four of our El Rio Health medical providers are board certified in Addiction Medicine.

In June of 2022, El Rio Behavioral Health developed and implemented a Pediatric Behavioral Health Program to address the public health crisis experienced by adolescents in need of comprehensive behavioral services. A team of behavioral health professionals and support staff was established at our El Pueblo Health Center, including a child psychiatrist, psychiatric nurse practitioners, licensed therapists, case managers and nursing staff. Individual, family, group, and MAT services have successfully been delivered with a focus on growth in the future to provide specialized behavioral health services to younger children.

As chronic medical disease and co-morbid mental health conditions increase throughout our communities, supported by unhealthy lifestyle, trauma, limited healthcare access, and social-economic factors, the need for a comprehensive integrative approach that treats the whole person is imminent. El Rio Health uses an integrated model designed to support the primary care providers in identifying and treating patients’ behavioral health needs related to their medical condition and/or physical symptoms related to behavioral health conditions. This approach involves providing services to primary care patients in a collaborative framework with primary care team providers. Primary Care Behavioral Health Consultants comprised of licensed behavioral health professionals within the primary care clinics meet with patients before or after their primary care visit to develop a plan for behavior change related to chronic medical conditions. They also work with patients who are experiencing a behavioral health crisis within the primary care clinic. They meet with patients and assess their needs, develop a plan for intervention and provide the link to community or specialty behavioral health services.



El Rio Behavioral Health is proud to offer high quality behavioral health services and has been recognized by the National Committee for Quality Assurance (NCQA) with Distinction in Behavioral Health Integration for providing evidence-based protocols, resources, and tools to support the broad needs of behavioral health patients.

Additionally, El Rio Behavioral Health received endorsement by The Joint Commission Behavioral Health Care and Human Services Accreditation Program. This program is noteworthy for organizations committed to providing safe, high-quality care and treatment services to patients with behavioral health conditions.

# University Health Center

On June 12, 2023 we opened our University Health Center. Located just one flight up from our HealthOn University location, this new site offers our Buena Vida Integrated Pain Clinic and Physical Therapy services.

Chronic pain is a common medical problem around the world affecting 20% of the population and costing as much as \$635 billion per year in the United States alone. Patients living with chronic pain are seen by their primary care providers up to five times more often than those without. In addition, research shows that there is a high frequency of psychiatric comorbidities in patients who live with chronic pain - patients who have pain complaints are 2.5-10 times more likely to screen positive for anxiety or depressive disorders. Often, pain management care is fragmented- patients are sent to multiple specialists and there is no communication or collaboration between them. In addition, primary care physicians are not part of the treatment planning team, and the psychological component of pain management is left out entirely.

The treatment of choice over the past three decades, opioid medications, has been found to be ineffective for most chronic pain conditions. What has been found to be effective involves an integrated model using a combination of interventions, including medicinal, psychological and interventional.



The Buena Vida Integrated Pain Clinic works to improve the quality of life of those living with chronic pain with the focus being whole person medicine, as opposed to the sole use of medication. Developed using a trauma-informed care model, the BVIPC houses an inclusive team of medical providers and behavioral health specialists, with the El Rio primary care provider considered an important part of the collaborative team.



Patients are placed at the center of their care, with the healthcare team working in tandem. Patients enrolled in the BVIPC see a medical provider and behavioral health professional during every appointment. The team also includes clinical pharmacy, physical therapy, psychiatric care, psychotherapy, case management, osteopathic manipulation, sports medicine, nutrition services, HealthBuilder classes, acupuncture and substance abuse/medication-assisted treatment services.



Outcome measures show that this integrated approach helps patients improve their functioning, their quality of life and the mental health challenges they have as a result of living with pain. Our patients report a decrease in depression, anxiety, pain intensity and an improvement in functioning as a result of their participation in the program.

# How to Find Us





# Community Collaborations

## Addressing Social Determinants of Health

El Rio has long been committed to addressing the Social Determinants of Health. Social Determinants of Health are non-medical factors that influence health outcomes. These factors can include race/ethnicity, housing status, education, safety, transportation, stress, food insecurity and more. It has been proven that addressing these non-medical needs can greatly impact a person's health.

In the Fall of 2019, El Rio and the Community Food Bank of Southern Arizona entered into a new partnership to address food insecurity within the community. El Rio organizes and staffs monthly, drive-through food distribution events at El Rio locations.

What began at one location, Southeast Health Center, has now expanded to two monthly distribution events – Southeast Health Center and Grant Health Center.



**300+**   
Employee Volunteers

 **750+**  
Volunteer Hours  
in 2023 so far!

## FAMILIES SERVED

2021 Q1 = 785  
2021 Q2 = 602  
2021 Q3 = 355  
2021 Q4 = 675  
2022 Q1 = 669  
2022 Q2 = 847  
2022 Q3 = 904  
2022 Q4 = 1,115  
2023 Q1 = 1,231  
2023 Q2 = 1,203



Although the COVID pandemic slowed us down a bit, this has been an incredibly successful program benefiting the Tucson community. This is just one example of El Rio's commitment to working outside the walls of the exam room and addressing social determinants of health, as well as one of the many collaborations with other community organizations.

 **500,000+ lbs**  
Of Food Distributed

# Community Partnership

## Nosotros & COVID-19

We've learned a great deal about infectious diseases over the last three years. One crucial piece to protecting the community against these contagious viruses is to improve one's overall health and identify other risk factors that may make one more susceptible to disease. One of these risk factors is Fatty Liver Disease and has led to our more enhanced partnership with Nosotros Comprometidos a Su Salud. Non-alcoholic fatty liver disease (NAFLD) is the most common cause of chronic liver disease in the U.S. and one of the greatest risk factors for liver cirrhosis, liver failure, and hepatocellular carcinoma.



In early 2023, funding became available through the Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA) for expansion of COVID-19 vaccination and education efforts. In addition to providing vaccine administration services, this funding also supports working with community partners on outreach and educational activities. This grant has allowed El Rio to build upon our partnership with Nosotros.

*The Nosotros Comprometidos a Su Salud* public health programs, in English: *Committed to Your Health*, fosters community-engaged research collaborations, service, and education to advance health equity in Southern Arizona. Based at the Zuckerman College of Public Health, University of Arizona Health Sciences, the Nosotros program works closely with under-resourced and underserved Mexican-origin and other Hispanic communities who experience health inequities.

Part of the regular outreach provided by the Nosotros team is weekly attendance at the Tanque Verde Swap Meet. The team provides free liver scans, outreach and education right onsite. Our enhanced partnership has now allowed for El Rio team members to attend and provide updated vaccinations to those out shopping and enjoying the swap meet. As the Nosotros team knows well, and our outreach efforts have taught us, it is important to meet the people where they are and provide services where they are comfortable. Those who are identified with symptoms of fatty liver disease are provided resources and referrals into wellness programs.

### Adopt a healthy lifestyle

- Manage weight
- Be more active
- Get your COVID-19 & other vaccines



The media campaign is the largest piece of this community partnership. Television, radio, print and social media will reflect educational resources and links to screening and vaccination services. As we continue to learn about addressing risk factors of COVID-19, we thank our partners in the community, including Nostros Comprometidos a Su Salud.



# Special Donors

We encourage you to become a member of **El Rio 1000+**, a special group of individual donors who invest \$1,000+ annually. Our commitment is to engage 1000+ individuals, giving \$1000+, **impacting 125,000+ lives**. Your benefits include invitations to special programs, personal clinic tours, health education and information on the impact of your support.

EL RIO  
**1000+**  
IMPACTING 125,000+



# El Rio Foundation



*Your Charitable  
Gift Changes  
Lives*

## El Rio Foundation is a Qualified Arizona Charitable Tax Credit Organization

Your donations to the El Rio Foundation are eligible for the Charitable Tax Credit for Arizona taxpayers. The maximum Qualified Credit Organization donation amount for 2023: \$421 for single, married filing separate or head of household; \$841 for married filing jointly. Your Arizona tax liability can be reduced dollar for dollar donated! Please consult your tax advisor for additional information.

Estate and Planned gifts help El Rio Foundation to provide quality healthcare to those in need well into the future. Estate gifts can also reduce your taxable estate and transfer tax obligations. Join our Legacy Society today!

**You can make a charitable gift online today – click **DONATE** at [elrio.org](https://elrio.org), call us at 520-205-4947 or mail your gift to El Rio Foundation, 839 W Congress, Tucson, AZ 85745.**

Please contact Brenda Goldsmith or John Fung at 520-205-4947 to discuss gifting of stocks, life insurance policies, bequests or IRA donations. Or email [foundation@elrio.org](mailto:foundation@elrio.org) for more information.

**125,472**  
People Served

**499,311+**  
Annual Patient Visits

**21+**  
Languages Spoken

**14**  
Locations in Tucson

**\$15m**  
Annual Charity Care



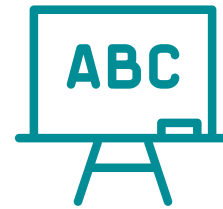
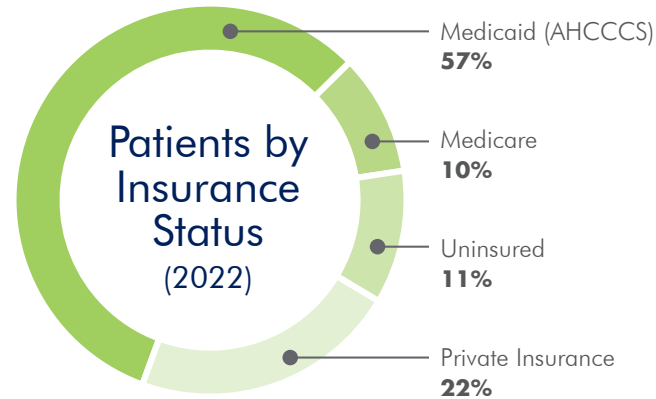
**36,878** Children 0-17  
(28%)



**71,137** Adults 18-64  
(58%)



**17,457** Seniors 65+  
(14%)



**28**  
Educational Partnerships

## REVENUE TREND

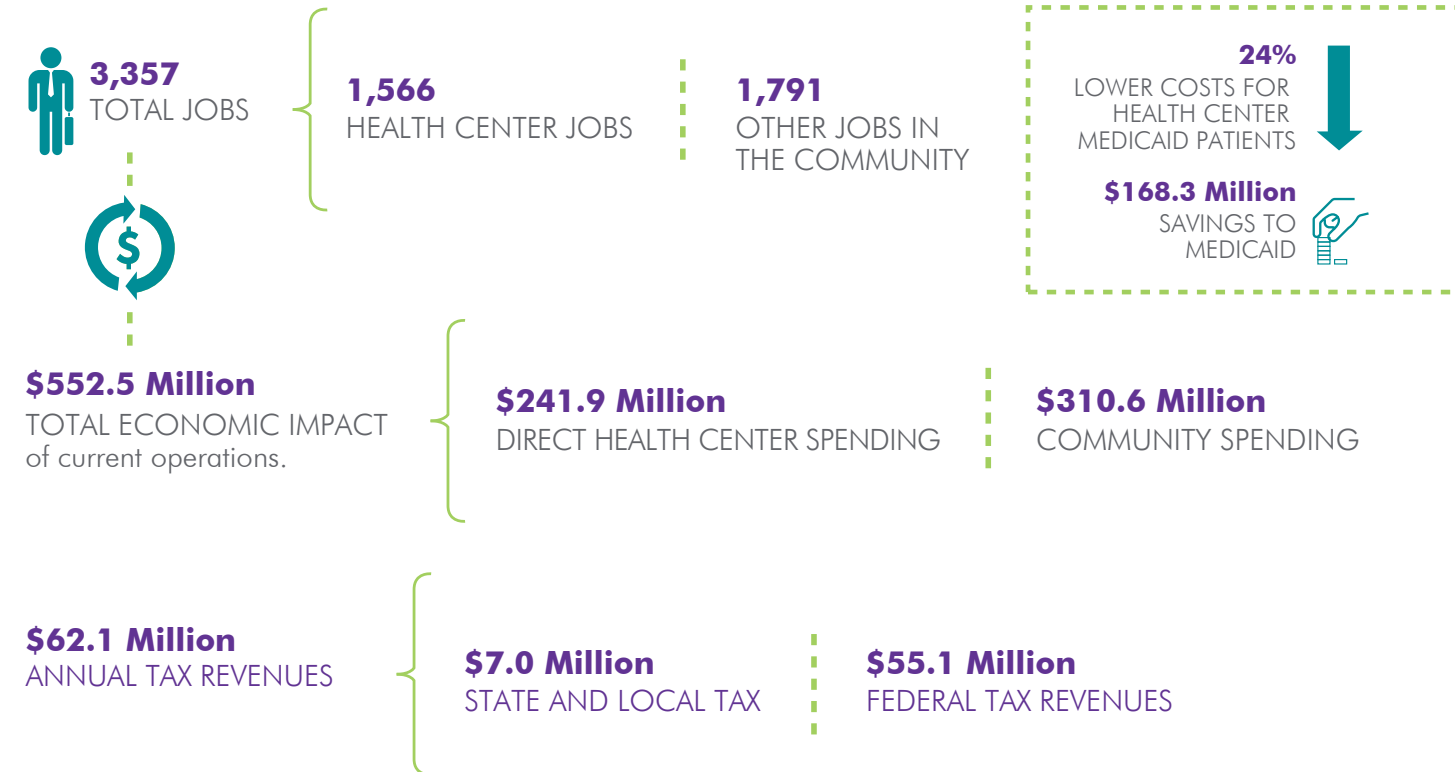
2000 .... **\$24,371,165**  
 2010 .... **\$79,856,149**  
 2016 .... **\$130,373,911**  
 2017 .... **\$140,165,030**  
 2018 .... **\$148,787,911**  
 2019 .... **\$166,944,334**  
 2020 .... **\$190,286,038**  
 2021 .... **\$220,469,198**  
 2022 .... **\$255,959,627**

## NUMBER OF EMPLOYEES

2010 .... **800**  
 2016 .... **1,047**  
 2017 .... **1,295**  
 2018 .... **1,324**  
 2019 .... **1,448**  
 2020 .... **1,581**  
 2021 .... **1,592**  
 2022 .... **1,821**



## El Rio's **JOBS** and other positive impacts on the **ECONOMY**





El Rio Health Revenue

Patient Revenue.....	\$210,063,157	.....82%
(Includes Medicaid, Medicare, Private Insurance, and Self-Pay Patients)		
Federal Grants.....	\$22,618,114	.....9%
Other Grants and Public Support.....	\$18,504,371	.....7%
*El Rio Health Center Foundation .....	\$872,495	.....0%
In-Kind Contributions .....	\$3,901,490	.....2%
<b>Total Revenue and Public Support ... \$255,959,627 .... 100.0%</b>		

Expenses

Direct Patient Services.....	\$203,646,644	.....84%
General and Admin.....	\$25,424,434	.....11%
Depreciation .....	\$7,849,299	.....3%
Interest .....	\$1,123,962	.....0%
In-Kind Expense .....	\$3,901,490	.....2%
<b>Total Expenses ..... \$241,945,829 ... 100.0%</b>		

Total Increase in Net Assets

Excess of Revenue and Public Support Over Expenses.....	\$14,013,798
Change in Fair Value of Interest Rate Swap.....	\$1,313,750
Investment (loss) income .....	(\$4,395,553)
El Rio Health Center Foundation - Restricted Funds .....	\$4,633,400
Total Increase in Net Assets .....	\$15,565,395
Total Uncompensated Charity Care .....	\$13,228,253
<b>Total Ending Net Assets .....\$140,990,966</b>	

\*Foundation is net of restricted revenue less In-Kind donations

El Rio Health Center Foundation:

Foundation Program Services .....	84%
Fundraising.....	1%
Administrative .....	15%

Revenues & Support

Grants and contributions .....	\$6,237,988	.....112%
Special events revenue.....	\$601,515	.....11%
Net investment income .....	(\$1,333,608)	.....-24%
In-kind contributions.....	\$39,888	.....1%
<b>Total Revenue ..... \$5,545,783..... 100.0%</b>		

Expenses

Program services .....	\$1,588,801	.....82%
Management and general.....	\$282,053	.....15%
Special events and fundraising .....	\$25,124	.....1%
In-kind expenses .....	\$39,888	.....2%
<b>Total Expenses ..... \$1,935,866..... 100.0%</b>		

Net Assets

Increase in net assets.....	\$3,609,917
Net assets, beginning of year .....	\$11,922,801
<b>Total Ending Net Assets ..... \$15,532,718</b>	

## EL RIO SENIOR LEADERSHIP TEAM

Clinton Kuntz, DBH  
*Chief Executive Officer*

Damone “DL” Poole, PA, NHA, MPA, MBA  
*Chief Operations Officer*

Jody Yarbrough, MBA, CPA  
*Chief Financial Officer*

Douglas Spegman, MD  
*Chief Clinical Officer*

Alexandra Davis, RN, MBA  
*Chief Clinical Operations Officer*

Ramona Durrer, RN, MBA  
*Chief Compliance and Risk Officer*

Rajiv Modak, MD  
*Chief Quality Officer*

Christopher Oben  
*Chief of Staff*

Tara Radke, MPH  
*Chief of Grants and Research*

Gregory Raglow, MD, FAAFP  
*Chief Quality/Medical Informatics Officer*

Vanessa Seaney, MSW, LCSW, CPHQ  
*Chief of Behavioral Health and Integration*

Susan Snedaker, MBA  
*Chief Information Officer*

George Toy  
*Chief Human Resources Officer*

Brenda Goldsmith  
*Executive Director, El Rio Foundation*

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**El Rio Health Administrative Office is located at  
450 W. Paseo Redondo • Tucson, Arizona 85701**



# 2022 Donors - \$400+

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Community & Health Advancement  
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BMO Wealth Management  
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Kate Breck Calhoun  
Sue Ann Breems, CNM & David Tiers  
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Alexis Chavez  
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Adella Clark  
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Donald Coleman  
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