

## Spring 2021 News and Appeal

### “Preventing Mother-to-Baby HIV Transmission and Providing HIV Care Remain Core to our Mission.”

Dear Friends and Supporters,

While the world reels from the COVID-19 pandemic, The Dominican Republic continues to have one of the highest HIV rates in the Caribbean. Clínica de Familia was the first and is now the largest HIV program in the eastern region, operating an internationally-recognized inclusionary comprehensive care program for children, adolescents and adults. Now confronting these dual infections, compounded by increased economic insecurity, social isolation and despair, we need your support more than ever.

Founded 22 years ago to pioneer efforts to prevent transmission of HIV from mother-to-newborn, our program has reduced transmission rates to nearly zero.

Individuals who test positive for HIV are enrolled into our comprehensive HIV program and receive a range of services tailored to their needs. Enrolling 220 newly diagnosed clients in 2020, we now provide continuing care to nearly 2,400 clients with HIV. Our HIV program are dependent upon individual donations and grants. Your contribution, which can literally save lives, would make a crucial difference today.

Thank you for considering this plea for help.

With gratitude,



**Stephen Nicholas, MD**  
President,  
Children's Global Health Fund



**Mina Halpern Lozada**  
Executive Director,  
Clínica de Familia La Romana

## Clínica de Familia UPDATES

Mina Halpern Lozada, Executive Director

### COVID NEWS



Some of our resilient staffmembers

The DR continues to have one of the highest rates of COVID in the Caribbean region. COVID-19 has been a significant challenge for Clínica de Familia La Romana, requiring many adaptations in the way that services are provided. Our detailed contingency plan lays out policies and procedures to protect staff and vulnerable clients.

We have added more community-based services – making more home visits, delivering food and medications to clients with HIV – and also now offer telemedicine mental health and medical and consults. Protecting the health of our staff is also a priority. Increased communication and supportive check-ins from colleagues, supervisors and the leadership team have improved staff well-being and dedication. Staff understand that the work they do daily is vital to the health and well-being of our clients. We applaud them for their resilience.

### AWARDS & HONORS



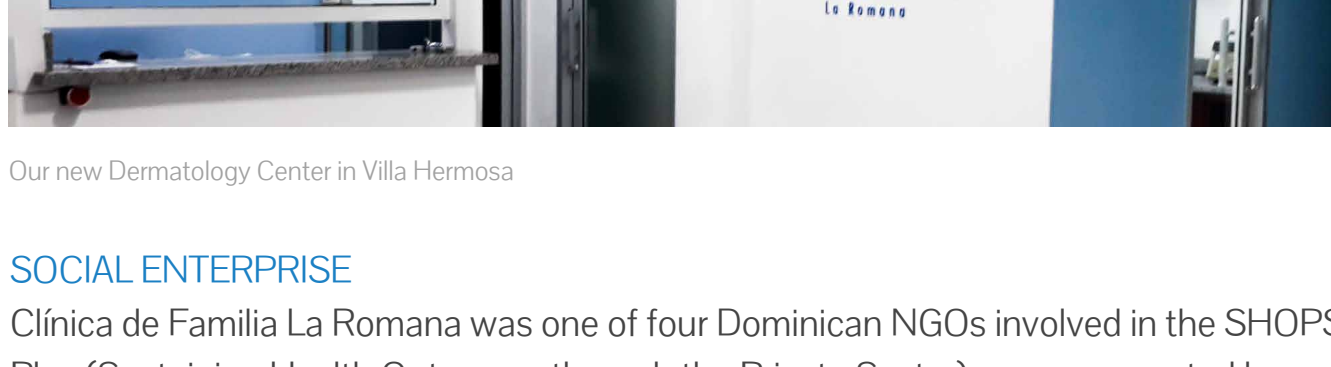
Our staff celebrating International Women's Day 2021

#### Celebrating Women on the Front Line

Clínica de Familia celebrated International Women's Day on March 8th, affirming our commitment to forging a gender-equal world. Our female leaders and healthcare workers were honored for their achievements at three events.

- The **Dominican Women's Ministry** recognized Juliana Roa, Health Promotion Manager, for her contribution towards improving the health of the community.
- Mina Halpern, Executive Director, received a plaque from the **La Romana Provincial Government** for her contribution to ensuring access to quality care and treatment for people with HIV, and for helping to build a more just and equitable health system.
- Mina was also honored by the **Children's Hospital of Philadelphia (CHOP)** Global Health Program for her work helping families in the Dominican Republic battle the novel coronavirus.

## Services/ Initiatives



Our new Dermatology Center in Villa Hermosa

### SOCIAL ENTERPRISE

Clínica de Familia La Romana was one of four Dominican NGOs involved in the SHOPS Plus (Sustaining Health Outcomes through the Private Sector) program, created by USAID with government partners to strengthen the efficiency and sustainability of HIV services in the DR. NGOs serve nearly 40% of the people living with HIV on treatment under the national HIV care program, but they are highly dependent on funding from the US government and other international donors. SHOPS Plus consultants worked with Clínica de Familia from 2018 - 2020 to help us to transition to a social enterprise model to help sustain our HIV services. This video, released in 2021, describes the process and improvements achieved through this grant.

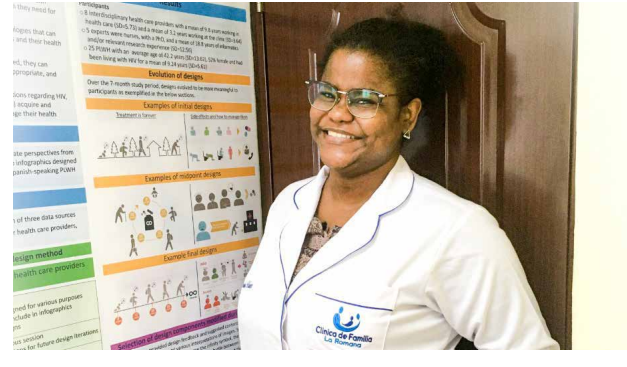
<https://www.shopsplusproject.org/resource-center/sustaining-hiv-response-dominican-republic>

### NEW CLINIC SITE

Our new Dermatology Center in Villa Hermosa, opened in 2020, is one result from our SHOPS Plus collaboration for business expansion and income generation. This Center provides clinical and cosmetic services to the general public, and also houses our Adolescent Program, laboratory services and a satellite Family Planning office. With this second clinic site, we are expanding our reach into Villa Hermosa, a city adjacent to La Romana experiencing rapid population growth primarily of working class families, where access to affordable quality health care services is limited. This new business initiative will be boosted in 2021 by a start-up grant and loan from the Pincus Family Foundation.

### RESEARCH

Research is a core component of Clínica de Familia's global health work. The clinic is on the frontier addressing emerging public health challenges and creating new ways of working with at-risk populations in low resource settings. Drawing from our work with thousands of clients, our original studies and publications identify best practices and inform global health knowledge and planning.



Dr. Pamela Baez, Director of Research, with infographics study data

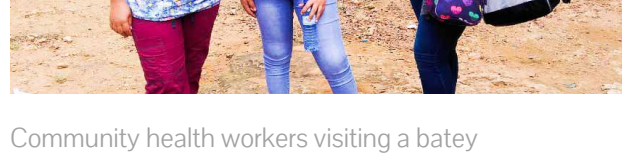
In fall, 2020 Dr. Pamela Baez, Director of Research, presented on our first year of implementation of the pre-exposure prophylaxis (PrEP) program at the XIV Virtual Conference on Global Health and discussed research in the time of COVID-19 at the Research Affinity Group virtual seminar, both organized by Children's Hospital of Philadelphia.

Our research findings are also disseminated through peer-reviewed publications. A list with links to recent publications is available on the clinic's website.

<https://www.clinicadefamilia.org.do/investigaciones/>

### CLIENT- AND COMMUNITY-CENTERED SUPPORTS

Our comprehensive approach views clients in the context of their lives and supports them outside the clinic, strategies that have been especially vital during this pandemic. Our Community Health Promotion program made 2,548 home visits in 2020, to provide adherence support, medications and palliative care for clients with HIV unable to come into the clinic. Our Social Service Department conducts socioeconomic evaluations on each new HIV client, and provides supplemental services and resources to those most vulnerable. In 2020 clients spending a sharp increase in food insecurity and financial hardship. We responded by expanding by 300% the number of clients receiving supplemental food packets, increasing the number of families in our kitchen garden project and also providing financial assistance to more clients who would otherwise be unable to cover their medical transportation costs. Such resources made qualitative improvements in clients' health and wellbeing.



Community health workers visiting a batey



Seedlings for a kitchen garden

## WHY I GIVE

By Dr. Kelsey Egan



Dr. Egan presenting the STI study

As a medical student at Columbia University in 2014-2015, I and a classmate, Libbey Van Dyke, pursued our interest in global health research at Clínica de Familia Romana, where we were warmly welcomed and integrated into the life of the clinic. We helped to set up a study - an assessment of the prevalence of sexually transmitted

infections and associated risk factors in high-risk populations - and recruited participants from three comparison groups: pregnant teens, commercial sex workers, and people with HIV. The design included collaboration among academic investigators, clinic staff and community contacts, addressing issues of ethics and equity, including free treatment and compensation for participants. I learned how to, above all else, make sure that participants benefit from the research.

My experience at Clínica de Familia solidified my career path in research with underserved populations. I am now a pediatrician and researcher in Boston, serving a diverse urban and primarily low-income patients.

As the name suggests, the Clínica de Familia is truly a family, always supporting each other with energy and positivity. I give to Clínica de Familia because I prefer for my donations to benefit an organization that I trust and feel connected to, and know will go directly to clients.

See full interview here: <https://bit.ly/3io515d>



By Doris Richardson, Clinical Psychologist

## STAFF TESTIMONIAL

I have worked as a clinical psychologist at Clínica de Familia La Romana for the last four years. I like working at Clínica de Familia because it has given me the opportunity to grow professionally and as a human being. I am surrounded by people who exhibit the essence of family, full of love, respect, and collaboration. I also love my work because I can save lives; there is no greater satisfaction than seeing our clients improve and empowered to accept their HIV diagnoses.

Through our support, they are able to accept their health condition not as a tragedy, but as a part of their life moving forward. Really, the quality of life that we help our clients achieve in Clínica de Familia is unlike any other place. It is great working at Clínica de Familia. Even when there are difficult moments, be they personal or work-related, Clínica de Familia is there to support us. I am proud to work at Clínica de Familia because I have grown so much here. I didn't even realize what I was capable of until Clínica de Familia helped me unleash my potential.

See this and other testimonials here: <https://bit.ly/3cp7msS>

## PLEASE DONATE!

Mail checks to: Children's Global Health Fund  
254 McLain Street Mount Kisco, NY 10549

**DONATE NOW ONLINE**  
<https://childrensglobalhealthfund.org/donate/>

### SPECIAL OPPORTUNITIES:

- Set up Recurring Contributions to provide sustained support.
- Include Clínica de Familia in your Legacy Giving Plans.

Connect with us to learn how: <https://childrensglobalhealthfund.org/contact/>

#### Our relationship

Children's Global Health Fund is a 501c3 charitable organization with the mission to save the lives of vulnerable children and families globally by raising funds for and providing support to organizations improving family health in developing countries. Our current priority is Clínica de Familia Romana, an internationally recognized model for patient care, professional education and training and clinical research.

View Clínica de Familia's 2020 Annual Report here: <https://bit.ly/3cp3ube>

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