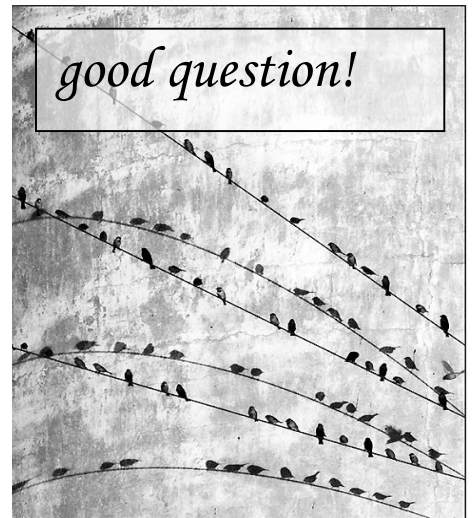


getting the most out of free care

Rock Dove strongly encourages people to use the most exclusive resource available to them. That means if you have health insurance, go to a doc on your plan; if you can afford to pay for care, pay someone good who's supportive of your identity, politics, and health; if you're eligible for Medicaid, sign up and get it; if it's a service Rock Dove can provide, ask us and we'll help. But for many of us, none of those are options and we end up getting our care at free and low-cost clinics in the city. When you can, ask someone who's gone to a clinic before what their experience was like (or ask Rock Dove—we can serve as a clearinghouse for that kind of information for our community). But for those of us checking out a clinic on our own, you should ask anything and everything you want to know. These are some questions we like to ask that we find help us get better care:



chick

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questions for clinics

- (1) **When can I come in?** Ask their exact location, hours (they often vary day-to-day), & last appointment (sometimes, for example, even if they're open til 5, you need to get there by 4:30 to be seen that day).
- (2) **Do you have drop-in hours or do I have to make an appointment?** Remember that even with an appointment there can be a long wait, and plan for that. If there is a waiting list and you have what you think may be an urgent condition, tell them that—often they can get you in sooner.
- (3) **What services are covered for free?** Do they cover routine exams? Do they have specialists? If they refer you to a specialist, is that covered? Do they give prescriptions? How much do you pay for those?
- (4) **Who is eligible to get care?** Are there age limits? Do I have to live in a certain neighborhood? Prove a certain income? Do they require documentation of citizenship or residency? Do they serve folks with HIV? Cancer? Other pre-existing conditions? Are there any other limits? Will they see me multiple times?
- (5) **How much does it cost?** Do you accept insurance? Which types? Medicaid or Medicare? If there is a sliding scale, what is it? What do I have to bring as proof of income? If I just lost my job or my income has recently dropped, do I have to bring proof of that? What if I work off the books—what can I do? Does the sliding scale cost include specialists? Prescriptions?
- (6) **Are your services anonymous or confidential?** Anonymous means you don't have to give your name. Confidential means they promise not to tell anyone, which doesn't extend to some important areas.
- (7) **What languages do your staff speak?**
- (8) **If I'm under 18, do I need parental consent to get services?** Prescriptions? Referrals?
- (9) **Can I bring my child with me to my appointment?** Do you have toys and books for kids?
- (10) **Does your staff receive any training in working effectively with queer and/or transgender people?**