

Leadership Profile

Chief Executive Officer



Fall River, MA

The Opportunity

The HealthFirst Family Care Center, Inc. (HealthFirst) seeks a Chief Executive Officer who is passionate and empathetic, and who excels in serving a culturally diverse population. This is an opportunity to become the future-directed leader of an already-successful \$20 million FQHC that has many areas for growth and enhancement. It is located in the picturesque coastal area of Southeastern Massachusetts. The next CEO will be an excellent communicator and relationship builder with a strong understanding of primary care delivery systems, health care financing, regulations, and most importantly, the community and patients it serves.

The Organization

HealthFirst originated in 1971 under the Model Cities Program, in direct response to the clear need for accessible medical and dental services among predominately lower income and ethnic minority residents. The City of Fall River provided substantial support for this initiative, leading to its subsequent renaming as the Community Development Service Center.

Over the past five decades the Center has catered to three generations of families, with its service area expanding to encompass several diverse communities including Portuguese, Hispanic, Cambodian, African American, and Brazilian Portuguese populations. Consequently, their staff members reflect the rich tapestry of cultures they serve, ensuring seamless access to care for all patients, regardless of linguistic, financial, or cultural obstacles.

The culture of HealthFirst stresses enthusiasm, honesty, positivity, reliability, and respect. The atmosphere is warm and familial and features many long-term employees.

Throughout its history, HealthFirst has remained a steadfast resource for individuals navigating challenging circumstances. The mission of HealthFirst is to provide the highest quality health care to everyone in our diverse community. HealthFirst is a Federally Qualified Health Center (FQHC) and relies on funding from many other sources including grants, donations, fundraising events, annual appeals and capitol campaigns. These funds allow HealthFirst to provide programs and services designed to meet the health care needs of everyone in the Greater Fall River area, regardless of their ability to pay. See www.HealthFirstFR.org.

Their services include:

- **Adult & Pediatric Medicine**

Medical Staff has been specially trained in Family Medicine, Internal Medicine, and Pediatrics to handle a wide range of health needs offering complete medical care for children from newborn to age 21, and adults through end of life. HealthFirst's medical team provides primary care services, ongoing management of chronic diseases in patients, as well as management of common minor and acute illnesses. The facility has well over 35 exam rooms for primary care patient visits.

HealthFirst also works with Brown Medical School to train medical students and works with many local universities and colleges to precept nurse practitioner and physician assistant students.

- **General Dental Services for Patients of all ages**

HealthFirst's Dental Center offers a wide range of dental services. These services include routine dental or teeth examinations, teeth cleanings, fluoride treatments, sealants, fillings, extractions, selective root canal treatment, crowns (caps), partial and complete dentures. Their state-of-the-art facility houses ten operatories with digital x-ray units, a panoramic digital x-ray unit, and electronic dental records. They are also able to provide assistance in cases involving tooth pain and tooth emergencies.

In addition, the Center includes many talented dentists and dental hygienists who are dedicated to providing the best dental care to clients and their families. HealthFirst's staff has been educated at some of the most prestigious dental schools around the country; they also have a diverse group of exceptional dental assistants, a professional front desk team, and a seasoned dental outreach coordinator.

- **Healthy Smiles Dental outreach program**

HealthFirst's experienced Healthy Smiles team includes Massachusetts licensed dentists, hygienists, dental assistants and outreach coordinators. The Outreach services address the need for increased access to quality dental health care to children in Fall River Public Schools, preschools, and other outreach programs.

- **Women's Health Services**

HealthFirst is committed to providing comprehensive women's health in accordance with The American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists (ACOG) and the American Academy of Family Physicians (AAFP) clinical practice guidelines. HealthFirst's medical staff believes that building healthy relationships is vital to a woman's health and well-being. From well-woman exams, infertility consultations, family planning and menopausal management and everything in between, they treat patients as a whole, no matter what the female-specific concerns may be.

- **Care Management of Chronic Diseases**

As part of a holistic approach to treating chronic diseases such as asthma, diabetes, and heart disease, HealthFirst's team of registered nurses, physicians and Certified Diabetes Educators assist patients in developing treatment plans and goals. Their diabetes program is accredited by the Association of Diabetes Care & Education Specialists. A team member is always available to assist patients with questions about their health.

- **Hepatitis Eradication Program**

Today's Mission: HealthFirst strives to provide purposeful, nonjudgmental, holistic treatment that reduces barriers and improves the health of their patients.

Tomorrow's Vision: To eradicate Hepatitis C by engaging patients and community with innovative care that increases quality of life.

- **Opioid & Alcohol Recovery Program**

The HealthFirst Opioid & Alcohol Recovery (OAR) Program is a structured office-based addiction and alcohol treatment and recovery program utilizing Suboxone, Naltrexone and Vivitrol medication for opioid, heroin and/or alcohol use disorders. Patients in the OAR Program are also provided with individual, couples, family and/or group counseling to help patients maintain their recovery, as well as assisting their loved ones in understanding a substance use disorder and treatment. The OAR Program is offered to both patients and non-patients of HealthFirst. For those who become patients, the OAR team works collaboratively with our on-site providers to address medical, psychiatric, and social barriers to sustained recovery.

- **Behavioral Health Services**

Mental health counseling is offered to all HealthFirst patients. These sessions may also include loved ones to help support progress in treatment.

- **Dietetic and Nutritional Counseling**

A registered dietitian works with physicians, patients and medical case managers to develop nutritional goals and healthy eating strategies that work well with HealthFirst patients' lifestyles. The Center's registered dietitian provides Medical Nutrition Therapy to help treat certain medical conditions, as well as Diabetes Education and Management to help control diabetes.

- **Fall River WIC Nutrition Program**

The State of Massachusetts Women, Infants, and Children (WIC) Nutrition Program is the Commonwealth's premier community-based nutrition program operated by HealthFirst. Healthfirst's nutritionists provide nutrition and health education and on-site cooking demonstrations for women and their children (including infants, babies, and toddlers) to teach proper nutrition. Healthy food, breastfeeding support, and referrals to healthcare and other support services are provided free of charge to Massachusetts families who qualify. WIC's goal is to help keep pregnant and breastfeeding women and kids under the age of five healthy.

- **Specialty Referrals:**

HealthFirst has developed partnerships with a variety of medical specialists to provide specialty care services for patients both on-site and in the greater Fall River community. HealthFirst also coordinates patient care with specialty providers at Boston Medical Center to get patients the best care possible.

- **Interpreter Services and Community Initiatives:**

HealthFirst is committed to offer the best services to Limited-English speaking patients and their families. Their trained on-site interpreters are able to speak English, Spanish, Portuguese and Cape Verdean Creole and are available during the Health Center hours of operation. If an in-person interpreter is not available for a specific language, they may utilize telephonic or video remote interpretation. When assisting American Sign Language patients, they offer LanguageLine InSight videos available via an iPad. If an in-person ASL interpreter is needed, they request services from the Massachusetts Commission for the Deaf and Hard-of-Hearing. They are also able to support video remote interpretation in a number of other languages spoken in the community. Interpreter services bridges linguistic and cultural gaps. These services are provided free of charge to the patient.

- **School-Based Health Center**

HealthFirst and the Diman Regional Vocational Technical High School have recently announced a unique partnership by opening the first school-based health center in the Greater Fall River area. This will help to further Healthfirst's mission of providing quality health care to everyone in our diverse community

- **Other On-Site Services:**

Include National Physical Therapy, Standard Pharmacy, and Southcoast Health Lab Services. These are independent agencies from HealthFirst but good referral sources for patients since they are in the facility.

- **Patient Benefits:**

HealthFirst accepts many private insurance plans including state-sponsored health insurance plans such as Mass Health Limited, Children's Medical Security Plan, and Health Safety Net.

The Position

The next CEO of HealthFirst must be a true leader of this just under \$20 million organization. In partnership with the Board of Directors, the CEO is responsible for formulating and proposing plans, policies, and strategies for HealthFirst. Upon approval by the Board, the CEO will take charge of executing these initiatives. Overall operational responsibility for the health center lies with the CEO, who also acts as the primary liaison between the center and external stakeholders, agencies, and the wider community.

Direct and indirect supervision of almost 200 health center staff (non-union), including the leadership team, falls under the purview of the CEO. Additionally, working alongside the CFO and COO, the CEO ensures compliance with relevant regulations and guidelines outlined in Federal awards, providing oversight to the sub-recipient, as necessary. In addition, the CEO:

- Maintains a transparent, effective relationship with the Board of Directors.
- With input from the Board, conceives, prioritizes, develops and recommends plans, policies and short- term and long-range strategies for the health center in response to community needs, and oversees their implementation through the leadership team.
- Informs the Board on major strategic issues of the health center and community, providing background and recommendations to assist the Board in its policy deliberations, strategic thinking and decision making.
- Serves as an agent of change for the organization and promotes its mission, vision, and core values. Sets the example and holds direct reports accountable for building, maintaining, and supporting a culture that fosters effective and respectful working relationships, desired patient outcomes, and achievement of organizational goals.
- Establishes an environment of trust, fairness, and consistency. Works with the leadership team and staff to ensure that there are open lines of communication at all levels of the organization.
- Recommends an organizational structure to ensure quality management of the health center.
- Recruits and selects leadership team members and evaluates their performance on an annual basis.
- Is accountable for overall operations of HealthFirst and for appropriate delegation of operational responsibilities to leadership team members.
- Analyzes health center operations relative to established objectives and ensures that appropriate steps are taken to provide efficient and effective patient services.
- Reviews and prioritizes department goals, objectives and performance standards as developed by leadership team members to ensure their consistency with overall health center goals and strategies. Ensures timely reporting of same on a regular basis.
- Oversees the development and establishment of fiscal plans, systems and controls for the health center to ensure the financial viability of the organization. Ensures reporting of same on a regular basis.
- Oversees development and implementation of personnel policies and procedures consistent with MA law, HRSA directives, and licensing criteria. Ensures that personnel policies are implemented consistently in an effort to avoid MCAD claims and, when necessary, defends the organization against such claims based on compliance with policy and procedures.
- Oversees established progressive disciplinary process consistent with established HR policy and procedures.
- Participates in monthly Board of Directors, Finance Committee, Quality Improvement Committee, Safety Committee, HR Committee (when scheduled), and Credentialing Committee (when scheduled) and chairs weekly Administrative Strategy Meetings.
- Prior to submission to the Board of Directors, reviews details and assumptions utilized in the preparation of the annual Operating Budget, making appropriate recommendations when necessary.
- Prior to submission to the Board of Directors, reviews details and assumptions utilized in the preparation of the monthly Financial Statements and support documentation making appropriate recommendations when necessary.
- Ensures overall compliance with federal and state regulations, licensing and best practice standards through leadership's establishment of quality management and assurance systems.
- Oversees Sub-Recipient Monitoring Process in collaboration with the CFO and COO, reporting results to the Board and Sub-Recipient's Board on a regular basis.
- Directs development and establishment of adequate and equitable employee interests and ensures their welfare is preserved and protected.
- Encourages on-going collaboration of the health center and community partners in order to build a healthier community.
- Prepares agendas for Board Meetings, Finance Committee Meetings and weekly Administrative Strategy Meetings.
- Participates in monthly CEO calls with the Mass League of Community Health Centers in order to stay abreast of issues.

- Serves as lead advocate, encouraging advocacy in others, in federal and state legislative issues impacting FQHC's.
- Oversees the development, preparation, and submission of grants, contracts, and required periodic reports to funding and regulatory agencies, service providers, and other organizations or individuals.
- Continues to increase self-knowledge through pursuit of current information on healthcare-related legislation and reform, managerial theory and practices, improvements in healthcare delivery, federal grant activities, etc.

The Candidate

The right candidate will be a well-rounded leader with experience in a community health center or community health organization, ideally FQHCs. They must have strong financial and analytical skills and an inclusive and proactive approach to communication and problem-solving. The CEO must be highly visible and fully engaged overseeing all the areas of HealthFirst. The ideal candidate will have a master's degree in public health, business, healthcare or public administration, and a record of effective collaboration with clinical providers.

The CEO will have a keen understanding of health care financing and budgeting. The ability to procure grant funding and develop/promote community fundraising events is also very important. An understanding of substance abuse, addiction, behavioral health, and the social determinants of health is necessary for success in this role. A thorough understanding of and experience working in a multicultural and diverse organization. Being multi-lingual is a big plus.

As the "face" of HealthFirst, the next CEO must thrive in a high-visibility role, both internally and externally. They will welcome the challenge of elevating the public profile of HealthFirst and should be facile in marketing and promotion. They must know how to work effectively with an engaged and supportive Board of Directors.

The ideal CEO candidate will also:

- Show a career track of successful leadership, including the ability to effectively delegate, develop, and develop/utilize staff to their full potential.
- Articulate, convey, and represent HealthFirst's mission of providing the highest quality health care to everyone in our diverse community.
- Inform the Board concerning current trends, challenges, and activities in the health field to facilitate governance and the formulation of policy.
- Develop, foster, and uphold an organizational culture of teamwork, collaboration, kindness, and respect.
- Understand federal, state, and local programs and grants management, including procurement, compliance, reporting, etc.
- Have an unwavering commitment to quality programs and care, community/public health, and data-driven program evaluation.
- Inspire and motivate others through strategy, innovation, compassion, respect, trust, and by example.
- Be decisive, creative, and solution oriented.

Personally, they will:

- Be a warm, outgoing person, able to quickly strike productive relationships with people of widely varying backgrounds, ethnicities, and socioeconomic levels.
- Be an effective manager of people by being accessible, visible, data-driven, results-oriented, and committed to high standards.
- Possess exceptional written and verbal communication skills.
- Show high integrity, kindness, humility, and a positive attitude.

Critical Success Factors

Success of the hired candidate over the first 12 to 18 months will be determined by factors such as:

- Being recognized as the “Face” and leader of HealthFirst, both internally and externally.
- Providing leadership in recognized growth needs – fundraising, marketing and promotion, elevating the profile of the organization, strategic partnerships/alliances, and more expansive behavioral health/substance abuse programs.
- Board development and growth.
- Increased financial and budgeting rigor.
- Strengthening the culture of accountability.
- Continued employee satisfaction with improved channels of communication from the C-suite.
- Completion of present short-term strategic goals.

The Location

Tucked between Newport, RI and Cape Cod, Southeastern Massachusetts is filled with history, mystery & the sea. Historic cities and picturesque towns still echo New England summer holidays of long ago. Well-known thanks to secluded beaches, state parks of exceptional beauty, pretty waterfront restaurants and eclectic art galleries with stunning art objects, this part of Massachusetts is a great example of idyllic tourist destination. Located south of Boston, and east of Rhode Island, Southeastern MA is commonly used to describe areas with cultural ties to both Boston and Providence and includes the cities of New Bedford and Fall River and their respective suburbs.

Fall River offers a mix of urban amenities and suburban tranquility. Situated along the Taunton River and Mount Hope Bay, Fall River boasts a rich history tied to its once-booming textile industry. Today, the city retains remnants of its industrial past while embracing modern developments.

Residents enjoy a variety of housing options, from historic homes to contemporary apartments, often at more affordable prices compared to nearby urban centers. Fall River provides easy access to major highways and the commuter rail, making commuting convenient for those working in nearby cities like Providence and Boston. The city's diverse population contributes to its vibrant cultural scene, with various ethnic festivals, culinary delights, and artistic endeavors enriching community life. Outdoor enthusiasts appreciate the abundance of parks, waterfront areas, and hiking trails, offering opportunities for recreation and relaxation.

Fall River's educational institutions cater to students of all ages, with public schools, private academies, and higher education options available. Additionally, the city provides essential services such as healthcare facilities, shopping centers, and dining establishments to meet residents' needs. While Fall River faces socioeconomic challenges like any urban area, its strong sense of community and ongoing revitalization efforts make it an appealing place to call home for many.

Compensation

An attractive compensation package will be constructed commensurate with the background and experience of the selected candidate. Most significant is the opportunity to assume a prominent leadership role in the organization and the community at large.

For More Information

We welcome and appreciate referrals. Interested parties should send resume and cover letter to: HealthFirst-CEO-2417@ZurickDavis.com. For additional information, please contact Jeff Zegas (JeffZegas@ZurickDavis.com) or Ellen Mahoney (Ellen.Mahoney@ZurickDavis.com) at 781.938.1975. All contact with our office will remain confidential.

HealthFirst Family Care Center, Inc. is an Equal Opportunity Employer (EOE).

HealthFirst celebrates and supports diversity and varied perspectives. Striving to eliminate discrimination and to hire applicants of diverse backgrounds, cultures and thoughts. HealthFirst does not discriminate against any individual on the basis of race, color, national origin, religion, sex (including pregnancy/breastfeeding, transgender status, and sexual orientation), age, physical or mental disability, genetic information, or any other protected class.