

# Care, Comfort and Hope

## Wisconsin Hospitals Community Benefits

### Intentional and Unintentional Injuries & Violence

A teen arrives in the emergency department by ambulance following a terrible car accident. A child receives head injuries while bicycling without a helmet. A woman walks into the emergency department with injuries inflicted by an abusive spouse. These are stories of pain and tragedy that hospital personnel see all too often. Injury is the most under recognized major public health problem facing the country and it is the leading cause of death in people ages 1 to 44 in Wisconsin. Wisconsin hospitals devote significant resources to reduce the number of intentional and unintentional injuries that occur in the communities they serve.

#### **SANE program keeps delicate patients close to home**

According to the Wisconsin Coalition Against Sexual Assault (WCASA), it's estimated that as many as one in three women have been a victim of sexual assault at some point in her life. Of these women, 93 percent were assaulted by someone they knew and trusted. It's statistics like these that prompted Mercy Hospital Janesville to expand its emergency services to include a Sexual Assault Nurse Examiner (SANE) program, a service aimed to reduce sexual assault and help victims gain the necessary emergency services and support they need.

"One of the most important facets of the SANE program is when a sexual assault patient arrives, they are met by the nurse who will be with them throughout their entire stay," says Javon R. Bea, Mercy Health System president and CEO. "The sexual assault nurse examiner is able to spend the time with the patient who needs comfort and an examination to collect evidence."

A sexual assault nurse examiner is a registered nurse who has received specialized education and fulfilled clinical requirements to perform forensic examinations of patients who report sexual assault. Mercy's SANE program, the only one of its kind in Rock County, provides comprehensive care and has the expertise to offer effective courtroom testimony. At Mercy Hospital Janesville, specially-trained sexual assault nurses examine sexual assault patients in a private setting. Attention is focused on their care, comfort and emergency assistance.

"Nationally, a nurse examiner program is recognized as a high standard for providing the care and initial interventions for victims of sexual assault," says Glenn Milos, DO-MPH, board certified emergency medicine physician at the Mercy Regional Emergency Trauma Center. "Our team has worked diligently to ensure Mercy's SANE Program meets this standard. Through training and establishing community relationships, everyone involved is dedicated to making this program the best it can be for victims of sexual assault."

"Our department has worked hard to develop this program and are committed to providing compassionate care, education and support to victims of sexual assault," explains Jackie Friar, RN, SANE coordinator.

The program is spearheaded by Friar, who has 27 years of nursing experience with 20 of those years working in emergency care. Friar dedicates much of her time to community education and prevention of sexual abuse by reaching out to community business leaders and organizations in the area.



To recognize April as Sexual Assault Awareness Month and the growing problem in Rock County, Mercy's SANE program joined with several other Janesville community organizations to recognize 250 reported cases of sexual assault in 2008. Each case was represented by planting a pinwheel in the ground at Wedge Park in Janesville. The recognition event kicked off with a presentation by David O'Leary, Rock County district attorney, David Moore, new police chief of the Janesville Police Department, Jackie Friar, Pennie Meyers, director of Sexual Assault Recovery Program (SARP) of

Rock County. The pinwheels were left up for a month to promote awareness.

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## **Wisconsin Hospitals Community Benefits (continued)**

### **S.A.F.E. program offers sense of security for women**

Reported cases of assaults and other violent attacks against women have become a common theme in area news. In fact, RAINN (Rape, Abuse and Incest National Network) states every year, approximately two to four million women in the United States is a victim of assault. Because of this, women's self defense is becoming more and more needed for the protection of our community. Mercy Health System, in conjunction with the Janesville Police Department, took note of the growing problem and took action, offering a self-defense program called S.A.F.E.: Self-defense, Awareness, Familiarization and Exchange. This two-hour class, offered for only \$5, is taught by Janesville police officers and educates women on how to protect themselves from crime while introducing physical training methods.

"Women are taught basic self defense techniques to become more aware of their surroundings, which can help determine the outcome of a potentially dangerous situation," says Sgt. Brian Donohoue, program demonstrator from the Janesville Police Department. "Our sessions are booked out to October. This is great because it shows that we are filling a demand and most importantly, educating the women of our community how to be safe."

"The class taught me the fundamentals of how to protect myself in any situation," said a woman in the class. "You will learn how to successfully fight your way out of a dangerous situation and more importantly, the parts of your body that make the best weapons."

**Mercy Health System, Janesville**

### **Three years of Aurora support for Waukesha's Sexual Assault Response Team**

In March 2006, The Women's Center, Inc. along with Waukesha County Health and Human Service providers, looked at resources available for Waukesha County residents who were victims of sexual assault. Victims who presented at the four Waukesha-area hospitals, or were escorted by law enforcement, were stabilized and then referred to the Sexual Assault Treatment Center at Aurora Sinai Medical Center in Milwaukee. They determined that:

- Waukesha County was lacking the appropriate resources to serve the community with the continuity, professionalism and compassion that is the standard of care for victims of sexual assault.
- Residents of Waukesha County needed a more immediate, sensitive and coordinated response to sexual assault from a multi-disciplinary team of supportive professionals effectively coordinating their roles and duties with the victim's and/or survivor's best interest at heart.

All agreed: Each agency is important and has its strengths, but also limitations. The culmination of their work resulted in Waukesha County, Pro-Health Care, The Women's Center Inc., Waukesha County Sheriff's Department, Waukesha County District Attorney's Office and The C.A.R.E. Center coming together to develop Waukesha County's Sexual Assault Response Team (SART).

Sexual Assault Nurse Examiners (SANEs) in Waukesha County came to the only comprehensive Sexual Assault Treatment Center (SATC) in the state at Aurora Sinai Medical Center, to tap into and use the Center's developed resources, policies, procedures and orientation manuals, on which to model their protocols, and to be precepted by the SANES in Aurora's SATC to get first-hand experience in caring for sexual assault victims. Components of the training include support for survivors of sexual assault and their families through the aftermath, crisis intervention and safety planning during the medical investigative and judicial processes.

Today, the SANES from Aurora's SATC continue to serve as advisors to the Waukesha County SART for case-management of new and complex cases and attend bi-monthly meetings to collaborate and work together to ensure the most victim-centered, expert response to sexual assault.

**Aurora Medical Center in Hartford**

### **Caring for a sexually abused child**

When a child is sexually abused, it impacts more than the victim. That's why Gundersen Lutheran Behavioral Health offers a free support group for non-abusing parents and foster parents who provide care for sexually abused children. During the support group meetings, participants receive education on topics including belief, emotions, reaction and effects with time set aside for discussion.

### **Project Respect focuses on building healthy relationships**

Project Respect is part of a three-year partnership between Gundersen Lutheran's Sexual Abuse Counseling and Support Program and Logan High School in La Crosse, Wis. Project Respect students at Logan High School decided to create a billboard to promote the importance of respect in building healthy relationships. This billboard was a way for teens to talk to teens about the importance of respect and open communication with each other and with the adults in their lives. Project Respect's key message is "Respect Yourself, Respect your Partner, Respect by Asking and Respect the Answer." The billboard ran in two locations in La Crosse in April to mark Sexual Assault Awareness Month.

**Gundersen Lutheran Health System, La Crosse**  
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## Wisconsin Hospitals Community Benefits (continued)

### Improving access to health care for abused women: Mandy's story

An advocate met Mandy at the emergency room after her partner had physically beat her with a solid piece of wood. During the incident, he took Mandy's clothes away, so she would not leave when he ran an errand. She did run -- to a neighbor's house -- and called the police.

After Mandy was examined at the emergency room, the advocate accompanied her to a safe shelter with a prescription for pain medication and a referral to a surgeon; the abusive partner had broken her shoulder. Mandy was in an extreme amount of pain, but was unable to fill her prescription because she had no insurance and no money.

As the result of a grant from Ministry Health Care's Saint Clare's Hospital to The Women's Community, a Wausau based agency that provides supportive services for victims of domestic and sexual abuse, Mandy was able have access to the proper medication and seek further care.

The surgeon said Mandy needed surgery as soon as possible, because of the damage to her shoulder. Prior to the surgery, she was told she needed to be fitted for a sling that she would use after the surgery, and that she would have to prepay for the appointment and the post-surgery supplies. Mandy then talked with the advocate and said she was not going to have the surgery because she could not afford it. She knew there would be permanent damage to her shoulder if she did not go through with the surgery, but she needed to work and find an apartment.

"This is just one example of the difficulties our patients face and programs like this provide the opportunity for them to seek care they desperately need," said Mark Moser, manager of care coordination at Saint Clare's.

Following the surgery and recovery period, Mandy was able to secure a job she loves and apartment where she feels safe. She said she does not know what she would have done without the shelter and the money to help pay for her supplies. Though what her abuser did to her was horrible, Mandy said she has never felt better or stronger.

**Ministry Health Care - Saint Clare's Hospital, Weston**

### The Healing Center

This counseling and holistic healing center was created in 2000 in response to requests from survivors and the community for ongoing support services for sexual abuse victims, their family and friends served by Aurora's Sexual Assault Treatment Center. The Healing Center is co-located at the Aurora Walker's Point Community Clinic. During 2008, The Healing Center served hundreds of survivors who received:

- Free counseling
- Free support groups
- Free advocacy (case management)
- Free alternative healing (massage, acupuncture, Reiki)
- Free movement classes (Yoga, pilates, dance)

The Healing Center's outreach and educational sessions throughout the community reached 805 people. Survivors enthusiastically report that The Healing Center had a direct positive effect on their sense of hope, their self-esteem, their self-image and their overall health.

### Aurora's Sexual Assault Treatment Center

Since 1986, Aurora's Sexual Assault Treatment Center has offered medical, forensic and support services to over 600 children and adult clients annually. Known by its initials, SATC continues to be one of the busiest hospital-based community programs of its kind in the United States. The Sexual Assault Treatment Center collaborates with other sexual assault community programs to ensure a victim-sensitive response to sexual violence. It provides crisis response follow-up and responds to over 4,000 crisis calls each year. SATC provides Sexual Assault Nurse Examiner education across the state of Wisconsin and expert testimony in criminal proceedings. Private and government funding support more than 50 percent of the staffing costs.

### Domestic Violence Program

Aurora's Domestic Violence Program provides safe health care environments and effective responses to each patient's abuse experience. Further, it creates collaborative relationships in each community to bridge the gap for patients between health care and legal/social services, forging partnerships with numerous agencies including the Wisconsin Coalition Against Domestic Violence, Southeast Wisconsin Domestic Violence Providers Network, Milwaukee County Health Care Intimate Partner Violence Consortium, the Sensitive Crimes Unit of the District Attorney's office, Child Protective Services, and Milwaukee Infant Mortality Review.

Aurora's domestic violence professionals disseminate clinical knowledge in peer-reviewed journals and in presentations at local, state, national and international conferences. Government funds cover five percent of the salary for the clinical nurse specialist who heads up the program.

**Aurora Sinai Medical Center, Milwaukee**  
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## **Wisconsin Hospitals Community Benefits (continued)**

### **Breaking the cycle of family violence—one student at a time**

The statistics are all too familiar: Approximately three million children a year are exposed to family violence. Too often, the emotional, behavioral, physical, social and cognitive effects of domestic violence on children go unaddressed.

Recognizing this need, Froedtert Hospital contracted with the Task Force on Family Violence (now Sojourner Family Peace Center) to help make a difference in the lives of students at Westside Academies (WSA) I and II elementary and middle schools, where Froedtert provides a school nurse. Located in one of Milwaukee's Westside urban neighborhoods, the two schools have a combined student population of over 650.

Sojourner Family Peace Center staff worked with Froedtert's staff and school personnel to design a six-session program for third and seventh grade students to address their specific needs around family violence. Topics covered included media and violence, peaceful conflict resolution, staying safe, emotions and anger, communication and relationships. By the end of the very successful six-week program, students noticeably benefited from learning the differences between passive, aggressive, and assertive communication. This comment from a seventh grade student represents the sentiments expressed by many of the other students: "Doing stuff by force isn't the best way to solve things." For some of the students, this was their first time learning about non-violent alternatives to problem solving. These communication tools the students can use themselves and also share with family members.

Because of the successful outcome, the school principal approved continuing the program into the next school year. Again, Froedtert will contract with Sojourner Family Peace Center to design Phase II. The focus will be more on training the returning eighth graders—who previously participated in the program as seventh graders—to act as peer counselors, working with an adult to co-facilitate sessions for other students. Holding programs at schools like WSA is how the cycle of family violence will be broken—one student at a time.

**Froedtert Memorial Lutheran Hospital, Milwaukee**

### **Child abuse symposium hosted by Upland Hills Health**

Barbara Knox, MD visited Upland Hills Health in May to educate area health care, law enforcement workers, social workers and EMTs on crimes against children. Her lecture centered on identifying signs of physical and sexual abuse in children, appropriate diagnostic testing for suspected abuse, and recognizing normal variants that mimic abuse.

The Iowa County Department of Social Services organized the symposium, which 48 people attended. Dr. Knox gave very specific examples of child abuse cases and their identifying signs, and also focused on case studies of physical and sexual abuse and neglect. She educated each group in attendance about things specific to their line of work, including how to best document suspected abuse and how to phrase questions to children suspected of being abused.

"The training was really interesting. It definitely gave more insight into what to look for," said Kathy Honerbaum, Procedure & Infusion Center RN at Upland Hills Health.

About 200 cases of suspected child abuse are reported in Iowa County each year. Anyone caring for a child inside or outside the home, including health care staff, is required to report suspected child abuse to Iowa County Social Services.

Dr. Barbara Knox is the Medical Director of the UW Children's Hospital Child Protection Program in Madison. She cares for children who have been or are suspected of being abused and also provides medical review of child abuse cases for social services agencies and law enforcement.

**Upland Hills Health, Dodgeville**

### **Project Lifesaver**

In the summer of 2008, Jim Galloway, Vilas County director of emergency services had an idea to pursue the potential of providing Project Lifesaver services to Vilas and parts of Oneida County. Project Lifesaver is a national organization dedicated to locating lost or missing victims of Alzheimer's disease, Autism, Down's syndrome or special needs wandering individuals. The system works with personalized wristbands that emit a tracking signal. Search times are reduced from hours or days to minutes.

Along with the Vilas County Sheriff's Department, one of Jim's initial contacts was Christine Caz, Howard Young Health Care community services coordinator. Jim wanted to work collaboratively with Christine and Eagle River Memorial Hospital's Case Manager, Becky Demuth to organize an exploratory committee to see if this program could be organized and funded in the county.

Minutes are very important to Elizabeth Carlson. Her son, Zeb, a wonderful little boy with all the energy of youth, is autistic with a wandering disposition. Over the past several years his family has endured countless hours of heartache not knowing where Zeb was and if he would be returned to them. Elizabeth, a member of the core committee, has voiced how thrilled she is to have this program in place.

While Becky took on the task of working with the core committee on policies and procedures, Christine took on the role of initial marketing and fundraising. After working with Elizabeth and Chief Deputy Joe Fath from the Sheriff's

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## Wisconsin Hospitals Community Benefits (continued)

Department, Christine, Elizabeth and Joe presented the program to the Howard Young Foundation. The Foundation felt this was in excellent alignment with their mission and voted unanimously to gift the Vilas County Lifesaver Program \$15,000.

The collaboration between the Sheriff's Department, Commission on Aging, Vilas County Emergency Government and the vision and passion for this project exemplified by Becky and Christine has made this program possible and is currently up and running as of April, 2009 has four identified individuals already wearing locator wristbands.

**Ministry Health Care-Howard Young Medical Center, Woodruff**

### Exceptional athletic trainer goes the extra mile for kids

For athletic trainers, notoriety is a catch 22. Most would rather go unnoticed on the sideline at an event or work at the school with athletes and coaches to prevent injuries. It's when the game stops and everyone holds their breath that the athletic trainer is on center stage. Richland Hospital's, Athletic Trainers Sharon Panske & Kyle Berra bring their respective schools a sigh of relief and have put the Hospital's Sports Medicine Program into the spotlight in a good way.

Debbie O'Connell is the director of rehabilitation services at the Richland Hospital and oversees the Sports Medicine program and Panske. "Our Sports Medicine program is a very important part of the overall care we provide to the community," O'Connell said. "School budget constraints would make it difficult, if not impossible, for schools to have athletic trainer coverage on a regular basis. It is the hospital's commitment to the community and to the partnerships with the schools that makes the services available regularly."

Heather Fitzloff is the athletic director at Richland Center High School (RCHS). She works very closely with Richland Hospital athletic trainer, Sharon Panske, ATC. She speaks highly of Panske and her relationship with the school.

Prior to each sports season, RCHS has a registration night for parents, coaches and students. Panske speaks to the entire group at these spring, fall, and winter events and outlines the services that she provides. At events, Panske is diligent in making sure she or another member of the event coverage team is on-site.

"She (Panske) often arrives 30 minutes to an hour early before practice or a home athletic event. If Sharon is not going to be able to attend an event, she makes sure she communicates with me and leaves all supplies and communication for the doctor or substitute athletic trainer. This is all done on hospital time," Fitzloff said. "We could not ask for a better athletic trainer than Sharon Panske. Our students and entire RCHS community are very fortunate to have her working with us."

**The Richland Hospital, Richland Center**

### Seniors test their health IQ with help of program

One of the worst things about aging is having to give up pleasurable hobbies and activities because of pain or mobility issues. With the proper equipment and techniques, though, some activities can be adapted and continued. Seniors found out exactly how they could continue to enjoy gardening by attending the "What's Your Health IQ" Senior Workshop in June of 2009.

The workshop was available free of charge to any interested senior citizen, and was held at Wheaton Franciscan Healthcare – St. Francis. By 8:15 am, the room was nearly filled with seniors examining the display table of adaptive gardening tools, eagerly awaiting the first session on "Joint-Friendly Gardening." The speaker, an Elmbrook Memorial RN and Master Gardener, demonstrated the latest tools and devices for adaptive gardening and provided some tips on avoiding common injuries.

A Wheaton Franciscan Medical Group physician handled the second topic on "Common Orthopedic Issues." The orthopedic surgeon provided an overview of what causes typical injuries, and illustrated the physiology of joint problems. He and a Wheaton Franciscan Healthcare occupational therapist discussed current surgical techniques, new treatment options, strength and flexibility exercises and rehabilitation approaches to recovering from injury.

The programs finished up with a discussion about the effects of physical exercise on mental agility, with several tips on keeping the brain in optimal health. Attendees were then given the opportunity to test their mental agility, physical fitness, or recreational prowess with various Wii programs. The orthopedic surgeon demonstrated his Wii bowling skills, and seniors were able to try out a technology that they might not otherwise use.

The feedback from the program was overwhelmingly positive. One woman mentioned that she had almost given up on her gardening, but she was going to try some of the techniques from the program to get going again. The surgeon was surrounded by individuals with questions about exercise and prevention of joint injuries, and two bowling teams formed for a friendly game of pins. All in all, seniors probably raised their "Senior Health IQ" by a few points!

**Wheaton Franciscan Healthcare-Elmbrook Memorial, Inc., Brookfield**

**Submit community benefit stories to Mary Kay Grasmick, editor, at [mgrasmick@wha.org](mailto:mgrasmick@wha.org).**



Read more about hospitals connecting with their communities at [www.WiServePoint.org](http://www.WiServePoint.org).