

Care, Comfort and Hope

Wisconsin Hospitals Community Benefits

Access to Primary and Preventive Health Services

Hospitals do what they can to move health care services out of the clinical setting into the heart of the community. Community health screenings and education classes help raise awareness of small, and sometimes, large steps that individuals can take to improve their health. When people learn more about how their lifestyle decisions affect their health, they make changes that ultimately lead to better health, which raises the health status of the entire community.

WIAA sports physicals at Aurora BayCare included free heart screening

For the start of the 2009 school year, student athletes participating in Wisconsin Interscholastic Athletic Association (WIAA) sports were able to register for sports physical assessments and heart assessment at Green Bay's Aurora BayCare Orthopedic & Sports Medicine Center. The sports physicals meet school and WIAA requirements. Components included:

- A full health screening by a physician
- An evaluation of any muscle/skeletal issues by an orthopedic surgeon, if needed
- A vision exam
- A variety of interactive stations to measure flexibility and strength
- A functional assessment
- A video-based program to diagnose students who may be at risk for ACL injuries

A new component of the sports assessment in 2009 was the free cardiomyopathy screening to test athletes' heart health. Although the total value of the sports physical is \$350, students were charged a \$30 fee that was donated back to the student's athletic club or school's athletic department.

Students were advised to dress in shorts and gym shoes, bring their sports card and be accompanied by their parent or guardian to sign a parental consent form.

Aurora BayCare Medical Center, Green Bay

Free screenings for heart health at Aurora BayCare Medical Center

To raise and build awareness of February's designation as heart month, to improve access to care and promote preventive medicine, Aurora BayCare Medical Center offered free screenings, starting in December of 2008, to test cholesterol levels, blood sugar, blood pressure and body mass index. Nineteen individuals were tested in December, and although the promotion was designed to culminate with heart month, more than 500 community members were scheduled for their tests through June of 2009.

Aurora BayCare Medical Center, Green Bay

Aurora Medical Center in Oshkosh hosts stroke and heart attack prevention fair

Aurora Medical Center in Oshkosh supported heart-healthy month in February by offering a free stroke and heart attack prevention fair for patients and caregivers, as well as people from the community.

Aurora professionals presented heart-healthy activities to lower the risk of heart conditions and disseminated a variety of health information provided by dietary services, the chest pain center, cardiac rehabilitation, diabetes education and stroke education departments. Free blood pressure screenings and body mass index testing also were provided.

Aurora Medical Center in Oshkosh

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Wisconsin Hospitals Community Benefits (continued)

Free Heart Healthy classes

Edgerton Hospital and Health Services realizes that not everyone has the means to afford training on how to lead a heart-healthy lifestyle. This is a service that we're proud to offer our community, free of charge. Every week we offer a free class, such as managing cholesterol, reading food labels, strength training, diabetes and heart disease, stress management, relaxation techniques and others. Each class is led by a registered nurse or other trained health care provider. The classes are designed specifically for anyone who may be at high-risk for heart disease or have previously suffered a heart attack.

Our patient, Kelly, was happy to share her success story. "I've had high cholesterol in the past, sometimes very high, and I have tried a variety of cholesterol lowering medications with little luck. I have had a variety of bad side effects with the medications and am now concentrating my efforts on diet and exercise. Edgerton Hospital's class taught me the skills needed to lead a healthier lifestyle, and it was the instructor's passion that inspired me to do more now. Since the class was free and included specific information on how to become healthier, stronger and live longer, there seemed like no excuse for me not to attend. I plan to attend more Heart Healthy classes and appreciate the opportunity to do so. Thanks to Edgerton Hospital, I am feeling strong, healthy, sleeping better, living better and even replacing medication with exercise. Yes, we've all lost weight at our house, even the cat!"

It's because of patients like Kelly that we continue to offer these free classes. It's just one way that we're able to give back to the community, and we hope to continue our efforts for years to come.

Edgerton Hospital and Health Services, Edgerton

Women's heart health - touching the hearts of women

On the first Saturday of February, Langlade Hospital joins forces with Aspirus and the Family Resource Center to host an event that is dedicated to women and women's health. The morning program is designed to inform and entertain women about their health through screenings, presentations and demonstrations. A special speaker shares techniques to help women reduce stress and cope with everyday challenges through humor and relaxation. It's a fun, interactive morning designed to encourage women to relax and refresh their spirit.

Langlade Hospital – An Aspirus Partner, Antigo

Better health inspired by fashion and storytelling

Despite the alarming fact that it's their number one cause of death, too many women still are not aware that heart disease is their top health risk. In 2008, Meriter took a unique approach to create awareness and inspire women to take action to protect their own heart health. "Designs of the Heart" combined a dress design competition, a fashion show and personal stories to put a spotlight on one of our community's biggest health risks.

Every element of the program created awareness among a target group of women: from young girl scouts, to college design students, to high-risk minorities, to the hundreds of women who voted on line or attended the fashion show and heard the real-life stories of the heart survivors who were modeling.

Real life stories put a woman's face on heart disease and served as an urgent wake-up call. Wendy Rutherford, a heart attack survivor who shared her story and modeled in the show advised, "Women don't know how to be selfish since we're always caring for others. I learned the hard way that when it comes to your health, you have to be a selfish so that you can be here to care for others."

The afternoon ended with heartwarming thank yous from all the women who enjoyed this fun, fashionable, informative event – for getting their attention and motivating them to take care of their hearts.

Meriter Hospital, Madison

St. Nicholas Hospital supports national GO RED for Women movement with community-wide activities

Too few women realize that heart disease is the No. 1 killer among women in the United States. As a result, they may be taking little or no action to prevent it. The good news is that heart disease can largely be prevented. For that reason, St. Nicholas Hospital is supporting the GO RED for Women campaign by encouraging Sheboygan-area women to improve their heart health and take action to fight heart disease.

The goal of St. Nicholas Hospital and GO RED for Women is to raise awareness of the risks associated with heart disease. With one in three adult women in the United States suffering from a form of cardiovascular disease, this initiative recognizes the urgency of women's heart disease.

Cardiovascular diseases and stroke are the #1 cause of death in Wisconsin according to the American Heart Association. Statewide, 15,276 deaths (33.2% of all deaths) were caused by these diseases in 2006 (latest figures available).

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Wisconsin Hospitals Community Benefits (continued)

“Supporting the GO RED for Women movement is important in raising awareness and encouraging women to take action – NOW,” says Deborah A. Cortlandt, D.O., Coulis Cardiology and member of St. Nicholas Hospital medical staff and Physician’s Health Network.

“More than 42 million American women are living with one or more types of cardiovascular disease,” said Cortlandt. “Yet, only one in five women realizes that heart disease is their greatest health threat. If women do not know they are at risk, they are not likely to take preventive action, which puts them at even greater risk. The goal of GO RED is to not only educate women about their risk, but give them tools they need for making heart healthy choices,” said Cortlandt.

St. Nicholas Hospital, Sheboygan

Growing a community of lifesavers

Seventy percent of bystanders who respond to a cardiac emergency have either never received CPR and Automated External Defibrillator (AED) training or their training was more than five years ago, according to a 2008 American Heart Association survey. In an effort to grow a more prepared community, five school districts in Oconto and Marinette Counties have partnered with Community Memorial Hospital in Oconto Falls for the HeartSmart Youth of Northeast Wisconsin program.

Funded by a \$14,525 grant from The Medtronic Foundation, this program brings Sudden Cardiac Arrest education and hands-on CPR/AED training to middle school and high school students. American Heart Association (AHA)–certified RNs from Community Memorial Hospital go into the classrooms during students’ health and physical education classes. In the 2009 spring semester, 367 students learned how to successfully perform the first links in the AHA’s “chain of survival,”— warning signs of heart attack, cardiac arrest, stroke, and choking; early access to the Emergency Medical Services (EMS) system by phoning 9-1-1; techniques of CPR; and education in how to initiate effective defibrillation, when needed.

“As a rural community, we have to maximize our resources,” said program coordinator Lynn Stymiest, RN, BSN. Area school districts lack AHA-certified instructors to teach students CPR/AED education. The HeartSmart Youth program also provides training manikins and AED simulators.

The number of young people in Northeast Wisconsin who are educated about Sudden Cardiac Arrest and trained in CPR/AED has been tremendously increased through this HeartSmart Youth of Northeast Wisconsin program. Teaching Sudden Cardiac Arrest awareness in schools will plant the seeds for a community to grow citizens who have a life-long awareness, knowledge, and skills that can save lives now and in the future.

Community Memorial Hospital, Oconto Falls

Community education – atrial fibrillation

Langlade Hospital teamed up with Aspirus Heart & Vascular Institute to provide a free public seminar about Atrial Fibrillation. Dr. John Johnkoski, Cardiac Surgeon, and Dr. Fausto Devecchi, Electrophysiologist, presented the latest interventions available for treating the cardiac arrhythmia that affects an estimated 5.1 million Americans. They explained procedures to correct the condition, success rates, length of recovery and what is taken into consideration when determining whether a patient is a candidate for one of the various procedures.

Langlade Hospital – An Aspirus Partner, Antigo



Kneeling behind their training manikins were participants of the Neighbor-Saver CPR Course, from left, Theron Prindle, Carol Prindle, Linda Cameron, Sue Backaus and Sally Derksen. Behind them is instructor Sue Nordahl.

Neighbor-Saver CPR Course teaches CPR and choking relief

The Greater Black River Area Safety Council, in conjunction with Black River Memorial Hospital, conducted a Neighbor-Saver Saturday CPR Course on November 7 at Black River Memorial Hospital. The instructor was Sue Nordahl, RN, BSN, ME-PD, manager of the hospital’s Education Coordination Department.

Course participants were taught how to help someone who is choking or who has collapsed and has no pulse. The course was offered at no charge and the participants received a copy of the American Heart Association’s “Family & Friends™ CPR” training booklet.

Black River Memorial Hospital, Black River Falls

Submit community benefit stories to Mary Kay Grasmick, editor, at mgrasmick@wha.org.



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