

# 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.

#### **Health screenings: knowing your health**



Part of the mission of the Cumberland Memorial Hospital is to “fulfill our obligation to our community by fostering effective wellness and preventive services appropriate to the needs of the people in our region.” We take our mission seriously and we understand that there are many people in Cumberland and our surrounding communities that are not able to have routine health screenings for various reasons.

This year we were determined to provide special health screenings free of charge at various events. In May, during Hospital Week, we along with the Cumberland Medical Clinic and the Healthier Cumberland Coalition, sponsored the Know Your Numbers-Know we Care Health Fair. There, we provided free health screenings to over 300 residents of Cumberland and surrounding communities. In July, we took our Health Screenings on the road and provided them to fair-goers at the Inter-county Fair in Turtle Lake. Our screenings always include cholesterol, blood glucose, and blood pressure checks and a health care professional that is qualified to read the health screening results and to share information with participants as to how they may improve their numbers.

It is exciting for us to meet our patients in surroundings other than a hospital room to discuss their health and any questions or concerns they may have.

**Cumberland Memorial Hospital, Cumberland**

#### **Aurora school-based health program transforms lives of children with asthma**

Five years ago, many students at Sherman Multicultural School of the Arts felt they were limited by sitting on the sidelines in gym, not participating in sports or any kind of fun physical activity, all because of their asthma.

But today, the top female sprinter in the school is asthmatic. An asthmatic boy, who thought he could never participate in sports, is now traveling around the country in a youth basketball league.

This wonderful transition is thanks to the hard work of the dedicated caregivers at Aurora St. Luke’s Medical Center behind Aurora’s school-based asthma program.

When respiratory therapists Monica Doperalski and Robin Ewing came to the elementary school five years ago to start a program aimed at educating children about their asthma, they discovered the problem was much bigger than they expected.

“We took an informal survey and found about one third of the kids had symptoms of asthma,” says Monica.

Why such a high number of suspected cases?

There are over a dozen triggers to asthma, with the most common being secondhand smoke, mice, cockroaches and humidity. Because children often don’t have control over most triggers, they are more likely to become asthmatic.

In one particular fifth grade classroom alone, 15 out of 20 children had confirmed cases of asthma.

“The children thought the best way to manage their asthma was to either go to the emergency room or to use their rescue inhaler,” says Robin.

But neither of these options is a way to prevent asthma. That’s where Monica and Robin stepped in with their

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## Wisconsin Hospitals Community Benefits (continued)

innovative asthma education program. The Aurora “asthma school” helps kids:

- understand the disease and its early warning signs
- illustrate what’s happening to their bodies when an asthma attack occurs
- identify triggers in their homes, school and environment
- learn ways to control their disease

Monica and Robin visit different age groups of students for six weeks at a time, keeping themselves visible at the school for the entire school year. They have developed interactive and fun classroom sessions that creatively encourage learning.

One of the most popular activities allows the kids to build their own asthmatic airway using tubing, rubber bands, cotton, wax paper and homemade, artificial mucus to illustrate what happens to their airways during an asthma attack.

For the first few years of the program, Monica and Robin had the challenge of gaining the children’s trust. But now, the children look up to them. “I had one little girl come up to me and say, ‘Can I have asthma too?’ She had heard about all of the fun things that we do with the asthma school and wanted to be a part of it.”

As the children’s education progressed over the course of five years, Monica and Robin are now seeing results. “It’s rewarding to see that the kids are really getting this, and their attitudes about their disease have changed. They finally understand which inhalers to use to prevent an attack and which to use when they are having an attack,” says Robin. “Some have even convinced their parents to stop smoking and have helped them understand that they need to get their own asthma under control.”

It’s amazing the progress this school-based program has made in just five years. Aurora, in partnership with the Wisconsin chapter of the American Lung Association, has applied for a grant from Centers for Disease Control to expand upon this important work. The goal is to work with the American Lung Association to expand their “Open Airways” asthma program to apply to a wider age range, since the current curriculum is geared toward third through fifth grade.

**Aurora St. Luke’s Medical Center, Milwaukee**

### ***Dean & St. Mary’s Neighborhood Asthma Clinic***

Ben loves to play on the ski slopes, volleyball sand pits and basketball courts. But his lifelong asthma is not a good teammate. Working in a job without health insurance, Ben can’t afford the daily medication he needs to keep his asthma under control.

His grandmother told him about the Dean & St. Mary’s Neighborhood Asthma Clinic, which provides inhalers at no cost and offers a safety net for his overall health, thanks to the doctors and nurses who volunteer there. In 2009, 94% of the 774 patients served had no health insurance. The professional services and free medications provided to those patients had a value of approximately \$626,387.

**St. Mary’s Hospital, Madison**

### ***Community education – arthritis seminar***

In recognition of National Arthritis Awareness Month, Langlede Hospital provided a morning of arthritis education that was free and open to the public. Presenters included a Langlede Hospital Physical Therapist, Registered Dietitian, Pharmacist and Orthopedic Surgeon. The speakers covered topics including Exercise & Arthritis, Pain Management with OTC medications, Eating Healthy to Feel Great and Joint Replacement.

Participants enjoyed time for all of their questions to be answered by the panel of experts and concluded the morning with a complimentary lunch.

**Langlede Hospital – An Aspirus Partner, Antigo**

### ***Children’s Hospital provides funding to test for immunodeficiencies***

If Dawson had been born just six months earlier, he might not be the smiling 1-year-old he is today.

You’d never know by looking at the happy toddler that Dawson has a rare disease that is fatal if not caught early. He has a severe cellular immunodeficiency, officially, leukocyte adhesion deficiency III. His white blood cells do not work effectively – meaning a simple cold or flu bug could be devastating.

That’s why investigators at Children’s Hospital of Wisconsin identified the need to add a test to Wisconsin’s newborn screening panel for severe combined immunodeficiencies (SCID), commonly known as the “boy in the bubble” disease. SCID received widespread attention in the movie, “The Boy in the Plastic Bubble,” when John Travolta portrayed a boy with the disease. The symptoms appear as colds or infections and caregivers and physicians may not diagnose SCID unless they see the larger trend of infection problems. Investigators soon discovered that the test not only detected SCID, but other primary immunodeficiencies.



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## Wisconsin Hospitals Community Benefits (continued)

However, adding the test not only entailed years of testing complemented by the brain power of the physicians at Children's Hospital and the Wisconsin State Laboratory of Hygiene, where the test is performed, it also required funding. With the help of the Jeffrey Modell Foundation, an organization dedicated to raising awareness about SCID, Children's Hospital provided the funding to get the project going.

"As physicians, we saw the need for this test. If SCID and other serious immunodeficiencies are caught early, they can be cured in 95 percent of cases. If it's not, they usually are fatal – which leaves parents devastated, not understanding what happened to their child," said Jack Routes, MD, medical director of Allergy and Clinical Immunology at Children's Hospital. "When we proposed our idea, hospital administrators didn't question it. Their attitude was that if there was a need for our kids that we could fill, we'd find the money to cover it. There was no question."

In 2008, Children's Hospital invested more than \$13 million in research to help improve the lives of children and their families through translational research projects such as the newborn test. From new discoveries in hemophilia to early identification of juvenile diabetes, the goal of investigators at Children's Hospital is to find life-saving cures and treatments for children.

Fortunately, Dawson was born at a time when this type of disease could be identified, saving his life. "We didn't even know what he was being tested for," said Melissa, Dawson's mother. "We knew about the newborn screening test, but we didn't know about the additional test. I can't think about what could have happened to him if the test hadn't been there when he was born."

"This project is just one example of how the support, infrastructure and funding of translational research through Children's Hospital advances health care for kids, in addition to saving the state millions of dollars in health care costs by identifying the disease early on before children are morbidly ill," said Robert Kliegman, MD, executive vice president of Children's Research Institute, a partner organization to the hospital. Kliegman also is pediatrician-in-chief at Children's Hospital. "Children's Hospital truly is a place that invests in our children."

**Children's Hospital and Health System, Milwaukee**

### **Health fair screening brings unexpected results: Anderson is one of 5.7 million**



JoEllen Frawley, Colleen Anderson

Diabetes is a chronic condition where a person's body either does not produce or react to insulin properly. While diabetes can be controlled, it can also severely impact a person's life if left unchecked. Complications from uncontrolled diabetes can range from cardiovascular disease to blindness.

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, 23.6 million Americans have diabetes. Of these, 5.7 million don't even know they have it. Colleen Anderson was one of the 5.7 million until March 27, 2010. That was the day she and her husband decided to take their son and nephew to KidFest in Spring Green, an annual event for kids and parents sponsored by Sauk Prairie Memorial Hospital & Clinics (SPMHC), Richland Hospital and the River Valley School District. At KidFest, SPMHC staff offered free blood glucose and cholesterol screenings. In addition to the free screenings, staff from SPMHC's American Diabetes Association-

certified Diabetes Self-Management Education program were on hand to educate parents and kids about diabetes with a variety of games and materials.

Anderson initially thought her husband might benefit from a free screening. They both knew diabetes was in their family history and it was certainly something they should know more about. Her husband was a bit reluctant, so they decided to do it together.

Within 10 minutes, Anderson knew something wasn't right. Her glucose reading was higher than it should have been, indicating possible diabetes.

She was immediately pointed in the direction of SPMHC's Advanced Practice Nurse Prescriber JoEllen Frawley and the diabetes program booth at KidFest. Understanding the shock and sensitivity of the situation, Frawley took Anderson aside for a private conversation.

"I just thought it was neat because she just really gave me good recommendations and she got everything taken care of really fast," Anderson recalled. "I felt like I had enough information before I left that I was like 'wow' and 'this was so worth it'."

The following Monday, Anderson went to SPMHC for more tests. With the results of those tests she was diagnosed with diabetes. She has since made some lifestyle changes and is already feeling better.

Looking back, Anderson is able to laugh about the experience. "They call it a KidFest and here I'm the one that gets the benefit out of it."

**Sauk Prairie Memorial Hospital, Prairie du Sac**

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## Wisconsin Hospitals Community Benefits (continued)

### ***Healthier living educational opportunity provided in Lafayette County***

A coalition of Lafayette County health and wellness facilities joined forces to provide educational opportunities and support in our area. Healthy Family Connections...Health & Wellness Fair for our Community, was held April 4 at the Darlington High School. More than 100 guests enjoyed this free event that included tips, resources and education to help make healthier lifestyle choices. Spanish interpretation services were available throughout the event.

A diverse group of businesses and vendors were available in the gym to give ideas on local health and wellness opportunities. Keynote speaker Rebecca Schultz, a Darlington native, spoke on integrated holistic health, which encourages health promotion, disease prevention and healthy lifestyles. A wide variety of breakout sessions were held including “maintaining brain health as we age” presented by Carol Nimlos of the Alzheimer’s Association, “Kids in the Kitchen-fun cooking activities for kids” presented by Mary Knellwolf of the Lafayette County UW-Extension, “Healthy Cooking; Dinner & a Brown Bag Lunch” was demonstrated by Barb Eicher, “Stroke Prevention: You need more than Luck!” by Dr. David Lewis of WI Heart & Vascular Institute, “Stroke Chain of Survival: It starts with you!” presented by Shari Ruesga, RN of Memorial Hospital of Lafayette County(MHLC), and “Yoga for Health & Vitality” was demonstrated by Jai Kellum.

Free stroke risk assessment screenings were offered by MHLC, Lafayette County Health Department and Family Health of Lafayette County. They included risk factors, blood pressure, pulse, blood sugar level, total cholesterol and a follow up action plan. Other free screenings included body composition screening by Meriter Hospital, confidential depression screening by Lafayette County Human Services and posture analysis by Whalen Chiropractic. Children’s car seat inspections were provided by the Darlington Police Department and MHLC, as well as fun activities for kids provided by the Girl Scouts and Families First of Lafayette County. There were also plenty of free giveaways and all enjoyed the free healthy snacks.

This very special educational opportunity was made possible by the planning efforts of Memorial Hospital of Lafayette County, the Lafayette County Health Department, and UW Extension of Lafayette County. Also providing support for this event is the Dora Ritter Wellness Center, Lafayette County Commission on Aging and the Aging Well Living Well Coalition.

**Memorial Hospital of Lafayette County, Darlington**

### ***Memorial Medical Center in Ashland provides free screening equipment***

Memorial Medical Center in Ashland purchased multiple cholesterol and blood sugar meters along with metabolic testing equipment that is used without charge at community health fairs.

“Last year several people discovered they have high blood sugar. Others had high cholesterol readings and were encouraged to discuss treatment with their physician. Some of the people we tested do not see a doctor regularly but said they planned to do so when they heard their numbers and we told them what the numbers mean,” said Deborah Ollanketo, RN, certified diabetes educator, with Patient Education Services of Memorial Medical Center.

Metabolic testing equipment measures a person’s resting calorie needs, calculates the calories burned while doing simple daily activities such as walking, eating or driving, and also figures how many calories a person would burn during 30 minutes of moderate exercise. This information is then used to determine the number of calories needed to maintain current weight, lose weight or gain weight depending on the individual goal.

“The benefits of metabolic testing are the accuracy and the ability to identify calorie needs unique to the person tested,” said Theresa Hoyles, registered dietitian with Clinical Nutrition Services of Memorial Medical Center.

**Memorial Medical Center, Ashland**

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



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