

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.

Program reaches isolated rural families

Thanks to the Shawano County Rural Health Initiative, 321 Shawano County farm families now have access to health care services they didn't previously have.

Executive director Rhonda Strebel has worked with 750 individuals—35 to 40 percent of Shawano County's farm population—including Amish families and Hispanic workers, all who live in isolated rural communities. The program gives them access to preventive care, health risk assessments, mental health services and community wellness groups.

Recently, Strebel performed a health risk assessment on a 60-year-old farm couple. Each was overweight and had elevated blood pressure, blood sugar and cholesterol levels, putting them at high risk for diabetes, hypertension and other disease. The pair committed to making drastic changes in their diets and lifestyles, and when Strebel revisited them six months later, the numbers were impressive.

"She lost 45 pounds, he lost 40 pounds, and they got it all under control just by making lifestyle changes," Strebel said. "That's what's really neat—to see people be excited about having these tests done and the changes they've made."

The Shawano County Rural Health Initiative began in 2004 as a \$120,000 three-year pilot program, funded largely by Appleton Medical Center parent organization ThedaCare and the agricultural community. It has grown especially in the last year to encompass wellness groups, healthy cooking workshops and mental health services. As part of The Rural Health Initiative's "Sewing Seeds of Hope," farm families are allowed four free counseling sessions with a ThedaCare Behavioral Health therapist who travels to Shawano County.

"All of these services are free to farm families, and it's good to see health care providers working together to support this program," Strebel said.

She said this program is very doable in other communities. If the Rural Health Initiative receives the grant it recently applied for, the group will conduct surveys and gather evidence to share with other communities — evidence that shows the program has made a significant difference financially and in the well-being of farm families.

ThedaCare, Appleton

Partnering for a safer community

It is important for communities to have public and private entities work together to serve the best interests of its citizens. Community Memorial Hospital is committed to being a good corporate citizen and seeing Menomonee Falls thrive and grow. Menomonee Falls is their home community.

In 2009, Community Memorial donated a first aid vehicle to the Menomonee Falls Police and Fire Departments to serve as their new Emergency Services Command Center. The value of the donation was \$85,000.

Community Memorial used a mobile clinic for many years to deliver first aid and other related health services in the community outside the walls of the hospital. It was decided that that the hospital could provide these same services more efficiently using a van and tents to provide services at health fairs, safety fairs and community events. The van gives a better ability to maneuver when participating at events.

Since the vehicle's conversion to an Emergency Services Command Center, it has been used at many community functions, including a safety fair, Waukesha County drug collection, neighborhood watch events, Falls Fest, parades and other community events.

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Wisconsin Hospitals Community Benefits (continued)

“Through the generosity of Community Memorial Hospital, our village has a valuable public safety tool that we otherwise would not have been able to afford,” Menomonee Falls Police Chief Anna Ruzinski said. “The mobile command post allows both police and fire to work in a unified location and be better equipped to handle major incidents in the village. Furthermore, it serves as a base station and public relations tool allowing for public safety to be more visible at community functions.”

Community Memorial Hospital, Menomonee Falls

Providing annual clinical breast exams

Judy Tjoe, MD, is a board-certified, fellowship trained surgeon who specializes in breast disease in the Aurora Breast Health Program at Aurora Sinai Medical Center. She dedicates her practice to the care, education and treatment of women with breast cancer, as well as those who have a high susceptibility to breast cancer, and has been actively involved in Dia de la Mujer Latina for four years, as well as other breast screening events for underserved women. She recently received this note of thanks from the American Cancer Society:

Good Afternoon Dr. Tjoe:

I hope you are well. Thank you and Aurora for volunteering at this year's Dia de la Mujer Latina event! You and your team provided 101 clinical breast exams to women who often do not have access to early detection resources. Of those screened, seven were referred for mammograms through Wisconsin's Well Woman Program.

The importance of this screening resource was validated by the line of women waiting to enter the building before 8:00 am and the subsequent line of women patiently waiting to receive a clinical breast exam. Thank you for joining in the fight against cancer and supporting the priority to address the unequal burden of cancer experienced within the Hispanic/Latino community.

Sincerely,

*Joanell Henry-Tanner, Vice President, Health Disparities
American Cancer Society, Midwest Division, Inc.*

Aurora Sinai Medical Center, Milwaukee

2nd annual Men's Sport and Health Expo held in Park Falls

An event geared to men—and the women who love them—returned to Park Falls. In March the Flambeau Hospital Foundation sponsored the 2nd Men's Sport and Health Expo.

The hospital foundation's mission is to support the vision of the hospital: “Improving the health and well being of the people in the community.” This event highlighted a variety of recreational opportunities available in our area and blended together necessary health screenings to promote physical activity and wellness.

“The recreational industry combined with health care has proven to be a winning combination,” stated Jane Bentz, Flambeau Hospital Foundation Coordinator.

The featured speaker at this year's event was Jim Gantner, a Milwaukee Brewer second baseman from 1976-92. Gantner spent his entire career with the Milwaukee Brewers. He was part of the team that won the American League pennant in 1982. Gantner coached for several years after he retired and currently works for the Brewers organization. He spoke on “The Importance of Setting Goals.” There was a wild game cooking demonstration with tasting.

New this year to the expo were kayak demonstrations, rod casting and lure demonstrations, “Ask the Docs,” fueling performance – nutrition for active individuals, Pamida 3-point basketball shootout, animal health info, and smoking cessation information.

Other highlights of this event included free health screenings for:

- Balance
- Blood Pressure
- Body Mass Index (BMI)
- Heart Risk Assessment
- Dental information
- Flexibility
- Feet
- Glucose (blood sugar)
- Grip strength
- Hearing
- Oxygen
- PSA
- Spine
- Vision

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Wisconsin Hospitals Community Benefits (continued)

Free CPR / including AED training was offered. All participants in the CPR training left with a free “CPR Anytime for Friends and Family” kit, valued at \$50, to share their life-saving training with their neighbors, family and friends.

Sports information was offered on topics like four-wheeling, camping, cycling, golf swing analysis, grilling, guide services, fishing, hunting, kayaking, motor cross, aquatic programs, taxidermy and trapping.

There were health presentations offered by Marshfield Clinic emergency physicians Dr. Maurice Murphy and Dr. Scott Carpenter, “Wilderness Survival Tips,” and new to the event this year was “Ask the Docs.” Besides Drs. Carpenter and Murphy, Dr. Louay Danial and Nurse Practitioner Rick Anderson held a panel for the audience to ask questions anonymously.

Over 200 people enjoyed an afternoon of good information and good health. As a note, women were welcome to attend also.

Flambeau Hospital, Park Falls

Helping un- and under-insured women through free mammogram program

Findings of the Community Profile conducted by the Milwaukee Affiliate of Susan G. Komen for the Cure® – research underwritten by Aurora Health Care – reveal that women are putting off needed preventive breast cancer screenings due to economic hardships and changing health insurance plans with high deductibles insurance and high co-pays.

The free mammogram program at Aurora Lakeland Medical Center was established in 2004 to support preventive breast screening for women who have no insurance or the kind of plans with high deductibles and co-pays. Eligibility for these free services is based on proof of income and completion of a simple one-page form and costs are funded through the Aurora Foundation, which is supported by a combination of employee and community donations. The hospital’s breast care coordinators participate in community outreach events and distribute flyers to clinics and physician offices to promote availability of the program.

During 2008 breast care coordinators Aurora Lakeland Medical Center assisted 46 women through the program. Thirty-four received bilateral screening mammograms, seven had unilateral diagnostic mammograms, and four women had bilateral diagnostic mammograms. Six of the women received breast ultrasounds, and four underwent additional studies.

Aurora Lakeland Medical Center, Elkhorn

Aurora Midwifery and Wellness Center

The Aurora Midwifery and Wellness Center (AMWC) provides access to high-quality, holistic obstetrical/gynecological care to a medically underserved population of Milwaukee. Nearly 90 percent of patients ages 15-44 live in zip codes with the highest infant mortality rates—neighborhoods noted for housing insecurity, unemployment and poverty. AMWC addresses teen pregnancy, prematurity, access to quality care, interpersonal violence, risk assessment and infant mortality.

The nurse-midwives of AMWC engage in community-oriented primary care, reaching out to African-American and Latino populations in the schools. This outreach includes prenatal group visits every other week at North Division High School—and community clinics including Aurora Clarke Square Family Health Center and Milwaukee Health Services. Each nurse-midwife is community-based within Aurora’s integrated health care delivery system while remaining actively engaged in teaching and community-based participatory research projects in Milwaukee.

When combined with deliveries at all Aurora UW Medical Group Clinics as well as Milwaukee Health Services, AMWC’s deliveries result in fewer low birth weight babies for both adolescent and adult women.

Aurora Sinai Medical Center, Milwaukee

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



Read more about hospitals connecting with their communities at www.WiServePoint.org.