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Prescribed Reading: November 2012

CentraCare Clinic

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By David Tilstra, MD, Clinic President

As the new president for CentraCare Clinic, I am committed to providing excellent service and the highest quality of care to those we serve — and, I believe you are, too. Providing the highest quality of care really is not possible without an awareness of each patient’s health literacy level — and doing what we can to improve that level. I’d like to challenge each of you to keep health literacy on your radar screen — every day — during every patient encounter. Noticing when someone doesn’t understand, or catching that confused look or comment, and providing further explanation can change the course of a patient’s health. Taking time to use “teach-back” to ask patients to tell you what they understood you to say is a small investment in time to ensure their medication will be taken correctly, or that they know what symptoms to watch for.

Patients need strong decision-making skills as they move forward into the new era of shared health care responsibility between physician and patient. Oral language skills are critical so patients can articulate their health concerns and symptoms. Patients also may need to be able to understand graphs or other visual health information, operate a computer, obtain and apply relevant information to their decision-making and calculate or reason numerically. The American Medical Association says that poor health literacy is “a stronger predictor of a person’s health than age, income, employment status, education level and race.” Please keep health literacy in mind so that none of our patients mistakenly take medicine erratically, miss follow-up appointments or misunderstand instructions like “take on an empty stomach.” You can make a difference by keeping health literacy on your radar!

Leading with Care until the end

Our condolences to the family and friends of Fran Martini, who passed away Oct. 22. Fran worked in health care locally for more than 53 years and was employed by CentraCare since 1996 when the surgeons she worked for joined CCC. Fran worked in the clinic’s Quality Improvement department and was the first recipient of the Leading with Care award in 2011. Outstanding customer service always was foremost in Fran’s mind. She will be greatly missed by her family and friends at CCC.

Are you registered to vote?

Your voter registration remains current until you move, change your name or do not vote for four consecutive years. If you are not registered to vote or need to update your registration information, you may do so at your local polling location on Election Day, Nov. 6, as long as you can provide proof of residence. For voter registration info, visit www.sos.state.mn.us. To find your polling place, visit pollfinder.sos.state.mn.us.

Are you traveling out of the country?

The Family Medicine Clinic at CentraCare Health Plaza now is certified as an International Travel Medicine Clinic by the Minnesota Department of Health. As the only certified provider of the Yellow Fever immunization in Central Minnesota, the clinic provides this immunization for people traveling to areas such as Africa and Central America.

Family medicine physician Daniel Smith, MD, has special interest and experience in international medicine. He provides pre-travel counseling, required immunizations, water/food safety education and other health-related tips for people planning international travel.

Anyone requiring pre-travel immunizations should call (320) 229-4917 for an appointment. Many travel-related immunizations are needed at least 30 days before traveling.
Welcome to these new providers

Ann Gustafson-Larson, CNP, is a nurse practitioner and certified diabetes educator who joined the Endocrinology Clinic. She has a master’s degree in nutrition and food sciences from Iowa State University and completed her master’s degree and adult nurse practitioner training at The College of St. Scholastica in Duluth.

Nellie Kippley, PA-C, is a physician assistant who joined Nephrology. She completed her master’s degree in Physician Assistant Studies from Salus University in Elkins Park, Pa.

Paula Lindhorst, MD, Palliative Care, is a board-certified family medicine physician who completed her family medicine residency as well as a hospice and palliative medicine fellowship at the University of Minnesota.

Cat Standfuss, CNP, is a certified nurse practitioner in Melrose who received her master’s degree and family nurse practitioner training from Minnesota State University in Mankato.

Welcome to our new employees

Kirsten Anderson-Decker, Registration
Christina Hanson, Nursing, River Campus
Geraye Menk, Registration, River Campus
Christine Neu, Nursing, Plaza Internal Medicine
Bonnie Raddatz, Nursing, Dermatology
Megan Vollmer, Medical Information, River Campus.

Recognizing years of service

25 Years: Mary Lomax, River Campus
20 Years: Gayle Rosha, Plaza Family Medicine
15 Years: Julie Tiemann, River Campus
10 Years: Carrie Hayes, River Campus; Janelle Johnson, MD, Women & Children; Jennifer Richter, Heart Center; Sara Thorson, St. Joseph; Ulrika Wigert, MD, Sauk Centre
5 Years: Darren Chihos, MD, Hospitalist; Kara Gerads, River Campus; Connie Kieffer, Business Center; Albert Mercuri, MD, Hospitalist; Doris Scharmer, Surgery; Maura Szydlofski, River Campus

Please complete mandatory education

The Medicare Fraud & Abuse Mandatory Education computerized module needs to be completed by all CentraCare employees by Dec. 1 for CCHS to be in compliance with regulatory requirements. To complete this module, go to CentraNet and click on the education tab.

Kudos to . . .

- Hospitalist Hanadee Alamaldin, MBBS, who was honored with the SCH Physician of Excellence award. Her nominee said she is very thorough and has a very compassionate approach with patients. She provides our patients and their families the respect they deserve.
  - CCC - Women & Children received a $2,000 grant from Target for its Reach Out and Read Program.
  - CCHS-Long Prairie started a Reach Out and Read Program with funds raised at annual golf outing. Reach Out and Read encourages literacy in the home by giving children ages 6 months to 5 years new books at every well visit to their health care provider.
  - CentraCare Health System – Long Prairie clinic and Eagle Valley Clinic recently received rural health clinic (RHC) recertification from the Minnesota Department of Health. RHCs ensure the delivery of essential medical services to rural and underserved communities. To be certified as a RHC, the clinic must meet certain criteria, submit necessary paperwork and undergo an onsite survey by the state.

2013 employee benefits update

Medical Plan: Blue Cross Blue Shield of MN (BC/BS) will be the new Third Party Administrator of the CCHS Medical Plan beginning Jan. 1, 2013. The medical plan design and coverage will not change. Explanation of Benefits statements will come from BC/BS. Employees will NOT have to complete a new Benefit Enrollment form and get new medical I.D. cards by Jan. 1. There will not be open enrollment for the medical plan. All employees should have received a letter in the mail with this information and other 2013 benefit changes. Employee meetings will be scheduled to review the changes and answer any questions.

Benefits Open House:
• 10 a.m. to 1:30 p.m. Nov. 28, Plaza, Windfeldt Room
• 7 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Nov. 29 or 7 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. Nov. 30, St. Cloud Hospital Conference Center

Annual Enrollment is Nov. 14 through Dec. 12. Enrollment forms for medical/dependent care expense plan, legal plan and supplemental life insurance are due to Human Resources by 5 p.m. Dec. 12.

Free flu vaccinations still are available for all CCHS employees, volunteers and medical providers. If you have not yet received your annual flu vaccine and would like one, please talk to your supervisor.

Lower co-pays: Employees covered under the CCHS medical plan can receive their prescriptions with a lower co-pay at these Tier 1 pharmacies: CentraCare Pharmacy - Heartland, Health Plaza, St. Cloud Hospital and Becker. All other pharmacies are covered under Tier 2. For added convenience, these pharmacies will mail prescriptions to employees outside of the area.