Prescribed Reading: December 2012

CentraCare Clinic
Health Care Matters: Thank you for helping us grow

By David Tilstra, MD, Clinic President

I’m always so thankful during the holiday season — and this year I’m thankful for and excited about the many great things happening at CentraCare Health System. I would like to extend a warm welcome to the St. Michael’s Hospital staff as the Sauk Centre entity formally completes the second phase of joining CCHS. The new sign went up Nov. 30 in Sauk Centre!

I also am pleased that CCHS was chosen from among some serious (and mostly larger) competitors by New River Medical Center in Monticello to be the organization that it will align with. These opportunities and others like them are of great importance, as today’s health care climate insists that health care systems continue to grow to best serve patients.

Each partnership successfully made by CCHS will help us become stronger, more viable and better able to carry out our vision to be the leader in Minnesota for quality, safety, service and value. Thank you for doing your part to help our patients experience excellent service and the highest quality of care!

Providing award-winning care!

CentraCare Clinic recently received Gold Performance in the Partners in Excellence award from Health Partners for our Total Cost of Care program. This measure represents our clinic’s risk-adjusted cost effectiveness combined with quality in managing our primary care population. The total cost of care includes all costs associated with treating members including professional, facility inpatient and outpatient, pharmacy, lab, radiology and other ancillary services.

The last Minnesota Community Measurement Reports showed the following:
• CCHS was ranked highest in colorectal cancer among the large health systems in the state.
• CCC was ranked highest for adolescent immunizations
• CCC received excellent ratings for optimal asthma care.
• CCC has very competitive rates for C-sections for first-time moms.

Congratulations to all involved in this process.

Internal Medicine has access again!

Thanks to successful physician recruitment efforts, the Department of Internal Medicine is scheduling new patients within approximately two weeks from their request. If you know of someone who may need an Internal Medicine physician, please have them contact Kim at (320) 252-5131, ext. 52962, to schedule an appointment with Drs. Camelia Florea, Denise Guanzon, Tiffany Rickbeil or Xiaofang Sheng-Tanner.

Welcome to our new providers

Girish Luthra, MBBS, FACS, is a board-certified general surgeon with River Campus, who received his medical degree from the University of Ibadan College of Medicine in Ibadan, Nigeria. He completed his general surgery residency at the University of North Dakota in Grand Forks as well as a fellowship in minimally invasive surgery and bariatrics at the Geisinger Medical Center in Danville, Pa. Dr. Luthra has special interest in bariatric and minimally invasive surgery.

Linda Lindberg, RN, MSN, CNP, Nephrology, received her bachelor’s degree in nursing from Minnesota State University, Moorhead, and her master’s degree as a family nurse practitioner from Minnesota State University, Mankato. She is certified by the American Academy of Nurse Practitioners. Linda has been a nurse with the kidney program since 1989 and has a wealth of experience in caring for persons with chronic kidney disease including those who require dialysis. She is a member of the American Nephrology Nurses Association.
Welcome to these new employees
Anna Dahlby, Clinic Services, Plaza – Family Medicine
Melany Linn, Nursing, Women & Children
Brenda Maus, Human Resources, River Campus
Barbara Merten, Nursing, Women & Children
Kelsey Norman, Nursing, Women & Children
Kelsey Watson, Business Center

Brenda Maus joined the Human Resources team Nov. 26. She works with providers and employees at River Campus, Becker and St. Joseph as well as the physicians at Melrose, Long Prairie and Sauk Centre. Brenda’s office is in the lower level of River Campus. She can be reached at 240-2153 or ext. 52153.

Recognizing years of service
20 years: David Shuster, MD, Pulmonology
10 years: Chris Supan, Business Center
5 years: Hanadee Alameldin, MD, Hospitalist; Sheri Haroldson, MD, Hospitalist; Jacqueline Mathis, Endocrinology; Kathleen Selvog, Big Lake Clinic

Employee benefit year-end reminders
- Flexible spending account balances for 2012 are on your pay stub under Balance YTD (su less claims). This is your sign-up amount minus claims reimbursed. Any 2012 claims must be submitted by March 15.
- If you enrolled in Dependent Care Expense, your last 2012 deduction will be Dec. 28, 2012. Dependent care balances will be paid Jan. 11, 2013, if a claim is submitted by Jan. 2.
- To ensure your W-2 reaches you in a timely fashion, complete the “Employee Data Change Form” on CentraNet and return to Human Resources.
- 2013 403(b) limits are $17,500; age 50+ $23,000.

Medical expense changes for 2013
Beginning Jan. 1, 2013, the Medical Expense (FSA) plan will have a $2,500 annual limit per employee versus the current $5,000 maximum. (This is an IRS change due to health care reform.) There are no changes to the dependent care maximum. Employees must re-enroll in the medical expense/dependent care plans each year. Enrollment forms for 2013 are available on CentraNet under Forms. Please keep the new $2,500 maximum in mind when planning for 2013.

Clinic will be closed these 2013 holidays
New Years Day - Tuesday, Jan. 1
Memorial Day - Monday, May 27
Independence Day - Thursday, July 4
Labor Day - Monday, Sept. 2
Thanksgiving Day - Thursday, Nov. 28
Christmas Day - Wednesday, Dec. 25

Paid Time-Off policy reminders
The CCHS Paid Time Off policy states that “Employees are required to use PTO when taking any time off from work with the exception of employer-required absences due to low workload.” Such absences in the clinic are referred to and clocked as unpaid Clinic Leave Time (CLT). CLT may be used for the afternoon hours of Dec. 24, 2012. CentraCare Clinic will close at noon Dec. 24. Employees who work Dec. 24 may clock either PTO (paid time) or CLT (unpaid time) for missed afternoon hours.

Employees who do not work Dec. 24 (but are normally scheduled on Mondays) must clock PTO, but can choose to use four or eight hours. Remaining hours are to be clocked as CLT. CentraCare Clinic will be closed Dec. 25. Employees who do not work (but are normally scheduled on Tuesdays) must clock PTO for their regularly scheduled number of hours.

I.S. staff move to new building
The majority of the Information Systems staff have relocated to their new building at 1600 County Road 134 (southwest of CentraCare Health Plaza). The IS Help Desk number remains ext. 54540. Refer to the CentraNet/Phone Directory for updated phone numbers.

Eating right on the run!
Join Zonya from 6:30-8 p.m. Feb. 5 in the Windfeldt Room at CentraCare Health Plaza as she blasts through the “no time to eat right” roadblock. From the fast food window to desk drawer delights, you’ll learn about the best speed-feed tricks to keep you energized and focused. Zonya also shares her unique strategy for keeping your kitchen stocked with her top 15 must-haves and her virtually work-free solution for weekly menu planning. Discover “one minute mini-meals” and family dinners you can have on the table just 15 minutes from the time you walk in the door. Zonya Foco is a registered dietitian, professional speaker, TV host, best-selling author, guest presenter for “Oprah & Bob’s Best Life Challenge” and nutrition spokesperson for Health Alliance Plan of Michigan.

Purchase the $5 tickets at Gift Gallery - St. Cloud Hospital and CentraCare Health Plaza; Byerly’s service counter; and all Coborn’s and Cashwise service counters. Call (320) 255-5642 for more information. Tickets may be purchased at the door, but seating is limited. Sponsor: CentraCare Heart & Vascular Center.

The nature of what we do
Check out the 2012 CCHS annual report at www.centracare.com/community/annual_reports.html. This publication highlights a variety of services, successes and financial performance. It also showcases benefactors who partner with CentraCare to improve health and health care in the communities that we serve.
Give the gift of independence and safety

Consider giving Link to Life as a gift to loved ones and friends who you may be concerned about living safely at home. This personal response system signals for help at a touch of a button, provides a daily check-in and includes a reminder system. Link to Life also offers a monitored medication dispenser to ensure medications are taken on time and in the right amount. As a benefit to employees, receive half off the first three months of either service. For more information, call 255-5700.

Got sick kids?

CentraCare Clinic’s Pediatric Walk-in Care is available from 8 a.m. to 4 p.m. Monday through Friday at CentraCare Health Plaza. Our pediatric providers see children with acute/urgent care needs such as: ear pain, cough/cold, sore throat, fever, vomiting/diarrhea, minor injuries/lacerations, pinkeye, rash, stomach pain and urinary symptoms. No appointment is required.

Patients needed for heart research study

The CentraCare Heart & Vascular Center is seeking patients to participate in a clinical research study of an investigational triglyceride lowering medication and how it works in reducing the risk of having a heart attack, stroke or other cardiovascular event in patients who also are taking a cholesterol lowering medication. For information about this study, contact Research Coordinator Jen Humbert, RN, at (320) 251-2700, ext. 57560, or e-mail humbertj@centracare.com.

CCHS floral arrangement at funerals

An employee brought forward a concern related to inconsistencies within CCHS related to the various floral arrangement at funeral policies. After review of the individual policies, it was agreed that a CCHS policy would work well for this subject. The most significant change to the entity practices was the common definition of immediate family for this policy, which is now: spouse, significant other, children, mother, father, mother-in-law, father-in-law, and step-relations. The new CCHS policy is available on the CCHS HR policy section of CentraNet for your review.

Nicotine dependence program available

Quit tobacco through five, weekly group sessions led by experts from the CentraCare Heart & Vascular Center. The class runs five consecutive Tuesdays with the first session beginning at 5:30 p.m. Jan. 15 in the Heart Center’s third floor library. Find success through the program’s personalized treatment, support group, medication therapy, relapse prevention and self-help plan. For more information or to register, call (320) 251-2700, ext. 57448.

Weight loss surgery seminar planned

Bariatric Surgeon Girish Luthra, MBBS, will lead a weight loss surgery informational seminar at 2 p.m. Dec. 17 at River Campus. Attendees can learn more about weight loss surgery options, benefits and risks of surgery, insurance coverage, and the pathway to surgery. To register for a seminar, call (320) 240-2828.

Take Heart receives Spirit of Caring award

CentraCare Health Foundation presented Take Heart St. Cloud – Survivors Network with the 2012 Spirit of Caring Award for its role in providing CPR training to 30,000 people in Central Minnesota. The Survivors Network is a support group for cardiac arrest survivors who volunteer to spread the word about what is needed to survive cardiac arrest and the importance of CPR training. They speak to groups and organizations to heighten awareness and increase the chance of survival for future cardiac arrest victims. The $5,000 grant will be used to provide equipment for ongoing CPR trainings in Central Minnesota.

Educating about emergency room use

Navigating the emergency room and knowing when to use it can be confusing for many people. To help, ECHO (Emergency, Community, Health, and Outreach) has created a short six- to eight-minute video, “Understanding the Emergency Room,” available in English, Spanish, Hmong and Somali at www.echominnesota.org/library/understanding-emergency-room

Viewers will learn when to use the emergency room, how the emergency room works and where to go when a medical problem occurs. To request a free copy, e-mail olson@echominnesota.org.

Plan, prepare for winter weather

Stay safe by being prepared for winter weather.

At home:

• Have plenty of flashlights and fresh batteries.
• Keep a battery-operated portable radio on hand to tune in to the news.
• Stock food items that don’t require cooking.
• Have your furnace checked yearly.
• Clear snow from the driveway and walkways to prevent ice build-up.

When traveling:

• Carry extra blankets.
• Pack food, such as nuts and protein bars.
• Tell a friend or family member your planned route and anticipated time of arrival.
• Carry a fully charged cell phone.

For more information, visit www.co.stearns.mn.us/lawpublicsafety.