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UnityPoint Health

Community Newsletter / Spring 2024

5th Anniversa. to the Family Medicine Clinic!



GROWTH CONTINUES AT RURAL HEALTH CLINIC SINCE 2019 TRANSITION

Please join us in celebrating the anniversary and phenomenal expansion of care at the Family Medicine Clinic.

After a five year relationship that began in 2014, leadership teams from Greene County Medical Center and the UnityPoint Clinic led a transition that brought the Jefferson clinic under the ownership and operation of the medical center. The new Family Medicine Clinic officially opened its doors on April 1, 2019.

This change was initiated when Gov. Kim Reynolds announced that Greene County was eligible for rural health clinic status in 2017. Both leadership teams agreed the next best step for their patients was to coordinate this changeover while Greene County Medical Center remained an affiliate hospital of UnityPoint Health.

Current providers who were part of the April 1, 2019 transition include Dr. Thomas Fagg, Sara Fleecs, ARNP and Diana Smith, DNP. Dr. Laurie Connolly accepted a position with the Family Medicine Clinic with a starting date of May 1, 2019.

The positive impact this has made on patient-centered care is evidenced through the growth seen over the course of the past five years. Services and conveniences for patients continue to be enhanced, such as the Walk-In Clinic and On My Way scheduling options. Dr. Fagg, Fleecs and Smith have been joined by Julie Nielsen, ARNP; Mary Pedersen, ARNP; and Kaitlyn Bravek, PA-C as primary care providers in the Family Medicine Clinic. Behavioral Health services were added under the rural health clinic umbrella and those patients are being served by providers Heather Wilson, DNP, PMHNP-BC; Bonnie Riphagen, LMSW; and Mary Jo Koch, MS, LMHC, NCC, CCTP. Dr. Connolly now serves as the Chief Medical Officer for Greene County Medical Center and the Family Medicine Clinic.

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A MESSAGE FROM OUR CEO

Chad Butterfield

Greene County Medical Center
Chief Executive Officer

Going Beyond Healthcare in the Support of Our Communities

It is natural for healthcare services to be the first thing that comes to mind when discussing how hospitals and medical clinics support their communities. However, there are different sides to the benefits these organizations are able to provide.

A recent study by the Iowa Hospital Association (IHA) reveals that hospitals within the state generate more than 145,000 jobs and pay over \$9.3 billion in wages, making them some of the largest employers in their regions. The impact, however, doesn't stop there. Iowa hospitals support thousands of other jobs outside their walls, paying almost \$21.5 billion in labor expenses.

Even as a not-for-profit entity, Greene County Medical Center shores up the economic vitality of our region. We pay nearly \$17.5 million in payroll and benefits for the over 290 full- and part-time employees. Our total reach includes more than 550 individual jobs, representing 17% of all wages in Greene County.

Medical Center expenses account for 11.7% of Greene County's gross domestic product, and in the course of a year our expenses provide an impact of over \$61.8 million to the state's economy.

These numbers are impressive and we are proud to have such a significant impact on our local and state economy; but even more impressive are the people that have generated them. Greene County Medical Center has a cohesive Team of patient-facing and behind-the-scene employees who are exceptional at what they do. We have found the best people to provide the best care to you, your family and your friends. And when we focus on quality and patient-centered care, those numbers just naturally take



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Happy Providers' Day



to all of our providers at Greene County Medical Center!



Dr. Laurie Connolly
CHIEF MEDICAL OFFICER



Dr. Thomas Fagg FAMILY MEDICINE



Diana Smith, DNP FAMILY MEDICINE



Sara Fleecs, ARNP FAMILY MEDICINE



Julie Nielsen, ARNP FAMILY MEDICINE



Mary Pedersen, ARNP FAMILY MEDICINE



Kaitlyn Bravek, PA-C
FAMILY MEDICINE



Heather Wilson, DNP, PMHNP-BC BEHAVIORAL HEALTH



Bonnie Riphagen, LMSW



Mary Jo Koch, LMHC BEHAVIORAL HEALTH



Dr. Jeffrey Wahl
ORTHOPEDICS



Dr. Kelsey Sukovaty



Dr. Josh Smith



Dr. Courtney Thayer



Dr. Craig Stark



Savannah Lanpher, ARNP DERMATOLOGY



Dr. Todd Troll LECTRODIAGNOSTIC MEDICINE



Dr. Amol Agarwal
GASTROENTEROLOGY



Dr. Thomas Martin
GASTROENTEROLOGY



Dr. Michael O'Brien
GASTROENTEROLOGY



Dr. Keith Barnhill
PAIN CLINIC



Dr. Rich Jacobson



Dr. Trevor Wild



Dr. Nick Southard VASCULAR SURGERY



Philip Barns, MD EMERGENCY DEPT.



Mark Buettner, MD EMERGENCY DEPT.



Brian Mehlhaus, MD EMERGENCY DEPT.



Edward Touney, DO EMERGENCY DEPT.



Benjamin Blaylock, CRNA SURGERY



Seth Meyers, DNP SURGERY



Melissa Snyder, CRNA SURGERY



Samantha Specht, CRNA SURGERY



Danielle Weller, DNP SURGERY

ABOUT PROVIDERS' DAY

National Doctors Day is observed on March 30th each year to honor the contributions of physicians across America. The chosen date celebrates the first use of general anesthesia in surgery in 1842. At Greene County Medical Center, we have opted to change the name to Providers' Day to recognize all of our primary care and other designated healthcare providers.

Visit GCMCHealth.com for a full listing of services.

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Greene County Medical Center Welcomes Two New Providers

Kaitlyn Bravek, PA-C

With a focus on patient-centered care and a mission to enrich our community by providing quality, compassionate care to every patient and contributing to the well-being of every family, Greene County Medical Center added two new providers in recent months. Kaitlyn Bravek, PA-C began seeing patients at the Family Medicine Clinic in late November and Koch added her counseling expertise to Behavioral Health services at the end of January.

Bravek is a Brookings, South Dakota native and received her bachelor of science in biology degree from Simpson College. Wanting to remain in Iowa, she elected to attend Northwestern College, where she received her master's degree in physician assistant studies.

Her training, Bravek explained, is centered on evidence-based medicine. "That means all the care I will be providing has evidence and research behind it that supports it as the appropriate treatment or 'tried-and-true' treatment for certain conditions," she said.

"However, every patient is different and what works for every person is going to be a little bit different."

She is excited to meet the people of our communities and to forge long-term relationships. "I really



can't wait to get to know the patients at Greene County Medical Center and the Family Medicine Clinic and learn what their health objectives are and reach those with them," Bravek said. "That's my biggest goal is to get to know the patient and work through every challenge individually to try to reach their overall goal of being healthy."

To make an appointment with Bravek, call the Family Medicine Clinic at 515-386-0500.

Mary Jo Koch, LMHC

Greene County Medical Center is committed to the health of the whole person and is proud to expand on the services available in Behavioral Health with the addition of licensed mental health counselor, Mary Jo Koch.

Koch has made her home in Greene County for nearly her entire life, leaving only briefly for her post-secondary education. She received an associate degree from lowa Central Community College, a bachelor's degree in psychology, human services and sociology

from Buena Vista University and a master's degree in clinical mental health counseling from Walden University. She holds a variety of different certifications, and in addition to being licensed to practice in lowa, she holds a Florida license as well. "This means that anybody who would like to begin therapy here in lowa and travels to Florida can continue to see me via telehealth," Koch explained.

With more than 10 years of experience working in the mental health field, Koch would like

all of her patients to know that she is dedicated to creating a comfortable, open and judgementfree environment of care that exceeds all expectations of medical confidentiality.

Common reasons to see a behavioral health provider include attention-deficit/hyperactivity disorder (ADHD), stress, anxiety, depression, bipolar disorder, grief, family or relationship problems, substance abuse and more.

To schedule an appointment with Koch, call 515-386-2488.

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More than 100 Greene County Medical Center Team Members work in the background in support of your medical care

What immediately comes to mind for most when someone opens a discussion on a career in medicine is a path to becoming a doctor, nurse, anesthesiologist or other type of patient-facing provider or caregiver. The reality is, there are hundreds of medical careers that support those positions.

From administration to transporting, there is something to fit nearly every interest and education level within the hospital and medical clinic environment. Greene County Medical Center and the Family Medicine Clinic employ more than 290 full- and part-time individuals, generating wages and benefits of over \$17.5 million in the past year. This money goes back out into the communities in which our Team Members live, and supports the tax base of this and several surrounding counties.

All of us at Greene County Medical Center are grateful for the hard work and dedication of all of our Team Members and the positivity they bring to their roles. The medical center and clinics simply could not function if any one of these positions goes unfilled. Each and every person is critical to successful outcomes for our patients and in supporting our vision of being *Always Here, Always Caring* for generations to come.

THANK YOU

to all of those Team Members starring in supporting roles within the following departments:

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Treatments at the Greene County Medical Center Pain Clinic have brought back quality to Carolyn Spaulding's life

Carolyn Spaulding spent more than 13 years in extreme pain, until she underwent radiofrequency ablation (RFA) treatments with the Pain Clinic at Greene County Medical Center. "In 2009, I had a herniated disc in my lower back that put pressure on my sciatic nerve," Spaulding explained. Surgery to remove the disc alleviated that pain, but over time she had discs collapse and developed arthritis in her spine. Her high pain levels led to a referral to a West Des Moines pain clinic.

"The doctor down there was great, but West Des Moines is a long drive when your back is killing you," said Spaulding. "And, you have to find somebody to take you and that is asking a lot." When she learned of the Pain Clinic opening in Jefferson and that they were doing RFA treatments, she jumped at the chance to have her procedures at home. "Today, it takes five minutes for someone to get me to the Pain Clinic here in Jefferson. My procedure takes around an hour and then I am home again within another five minutes or less."

Spaulding met with Dr. Keith Barnhill at her first visit and was immediately impressed. "I knew I was in the right place and in the right hands," she said. "He really listened to me, he took what I was telling him seriously and he explained everything. If I had any concerns, he addressed them. I have been very impressed with him and all of the staff from the beginning."

Just two days after her RFA treatment, Spaulding said there was a very big change in her pain levels. "It was like a miracle. It had decreased the need for pain medications and my husband even noticed that I am moving better and not quite as grouchy," said Spaulding.

Spaulding wants all area residents to know they don't have to live with pain. "This community needs the hospital and the services they provide," she added. "I moved to lowa from Massachusetts and then to Jefferson about 23 years ago because I wanted to raise my son in this small town atmosphere. I have never regretted that choice," she said.

"I love Jefferson, I love the people and I love how everyone helps each other. I have been blessed to work with great people, and to have found caring wonderful providers at Greene County Medical Center."

Spaulding credits the Pain Clinic for a vast improvement in her quality of life. "My four grandchildren now have a grandmother who is able to give them happy memories of love, play and laughter today and for long after I am gone," she explained. "I can return to doing the things I took for granted before the pain hit, like taking my dog for a walk or exercising to help reduce my weight."

A tough lesson Spaulding was amazed to learn early on in her healthcare journey is that pain in one part of your body impacts your entire life. "But it also amazes me to know that people right here in Jefferson, at the Greene County Medical Center Pain Clinic, are ready to do all they can to bring quality back into our lives."

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Relief for Chronic Migraines

at Greene County Medical Center Pain Clinic

Botox treatments now available for cervical dystonia as well as chronic migraines

Patients suffering from chronic migraines, those lasting 4 hours or more and occurring at minimum 15 days a month, as well as patients with cervical dystonia can now find relief at the Greene County Medical Center's Pain Clinic.

Dr. Keith Barnhill, PhD, CRNA, ARNP, a provider with the Pain Clinic, said the use of Botox is already aiding as many as five patients a month with chronic migraine pain. The Botox is injected into specific muscles to alleviate the pain associated with these types of headaches as well as cervical dystonia.

"Injections of Botox work to release muscle tension and this can be beneficial in relaxing those muscles and their associated nerves to reduce migraine pain," explained Dr. Barnhill. "We are able to offer relief for up to three to four months."



Cervical dystonia is a condition in which neck muscles contract involuntarily. The contractions pull or twist the head to either side, forward or backward. This creates neck pain for the patient that often causes headaches and radiating shoulder pain. Since there is no cure, patients are treated for the signs and symptoms with Botox injected into the neck muscles.

A referral from the patient's primary care provider is required to be seen at the Greene County Medical Center Pain Clinic. Chronic migraine patients must also have tried preventive treatments before they will be considered for Botox injections.

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Margaret Martens says every staff member lives up to the vision of being Always Here, Always Caring

Margaret Martens and her husband, Pastor Dennis Martens of Trinity Lutheran Church, have only lived in Jefferson for about six years, but Margaret has had numerous experiences at Greene County Medical Center. She said no matter the department or her perspective, quality and caring shined through.

"Everybody's so friendly walking through the hallways. I thought about your slogan, Always Here, Always Caring, and that's been my experience. You're available 24 hours a day and we can come here and know we will be cared for. Quite frankly, you're good at what you do," Margaret added.

"The quality of care is what prompted me to speak up. I've been impressed by every single person, from walking in the door and the person that greets you to even those who are not interacting with you on the medical level."

After only being in Jefferson a couple of weeks, Dennis wasn't feeling well on a Sunday. After his sermon, he contacted his sister, a nurse. She told him it sounded like his appendix and Margaret got him to the Greene County Medical Center emergency room right away. He had an appendectomy that afternoon. Dennis has also had a knee replacement done right here in Jefferson. Margaret is thankful for all that was done for both of them. "I thought the care he received was just great, and everyone treated me so kindly," she said. "It was also convenient to be able to stop in the room on my way to and from work and stay with him. His physical therapy was right here too, and I love that."

Margaret has seen the quality of care first-hand as a patient as well. In October of 2020, she began

Jefferson Woman is

IMPRESSED WITH AND THANKFUL

that Greene County Medical Center is a Part of Our Community

vomiting—a lot. She made an urgent care appointment in another town, but Dennis knew she needed to be seen locally, telling her she would not make it there as frequently as she was vomiting. "He said he was taking me to the ER. It was so wonderful to get into a room right away and the nurses were so prepared for whatever was needed. The doctor gave me a COVID test, even though these were unusual symptoms, and it was tracked back to that. Overall, I just felt so cared for there."

A consistent experience is what Margaret has had, from routine testing to the Walk-In Clinic. During a colonoscopy, she shared with her care team she didn't handle needles well. "I got very light headed and the nurse was just wonderful. She was so caring and knew what to do to get me to stay conscious until I was intentionally unconscious."

And for Margaret, the convenience of the Walk-In Clinic is all in the name as she, literally, walks by on her way to and from work. "One morning recently, I had developed a rash on my face and it was getting worse. It was growing and it had actually gone into my earlobe, it was terribly itchy and it burned, it was just the worst thing, so I was concerned," she said. "I said I am just going to stop in, and it was fortunate I did." Margaret had developed cellulitis of the face and was told it could have spread to her eye and potentially reached her brain. "It was very important that I had stopped in and I was so glad to get instantaneous relief that day."

Martens said the options available at Greene County Medical Center, the Family Medicine Clinic and the Specialty Clinics are invaluable to our local communities. It's nice to not have to travel somewhere else for these services, Margaret said, and the quality of what they do comes alive in that vision of being *Always Here, Always Caring*.

LOOK AND FEEL YOUR BEST THIS SPRING AND SUMMER

It is not at all unusual for people to begin preparing for the spring and summer seasons by working out, getting a new hairstyle or updating their wardrobe. All of this helps bring a sense of excitement and anticipation for all the fun activities we enjoy during the warmer months of the year.

If you have been considering non-surgical cosmetic procedures, now is the perfect time to add them into your seasonal preparations.

Greene County Medical Center Cosmetic Clinic Provider, Diana Smith, DNP, holds a doctorate in



nursing and advanced certifications in Botox and Juvederm administration. Smith draws on her 10 years of experience to partner with you in developing an individualized plan that will help you look and feel your best, through the spring and summer and well beyond.

Smith is happy to consult with patients to discuss their options and costs prior to scheduling treatments.

For more information or to make an appointment for the Cosmetic Clinic, call 515-386-2488.

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FRIDAY, JUNE 7TH, 2024

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www.GCMCHealth.com/Foundation

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Consider becoming a volunteer with the Greene County Medical Center Auxiliary. Adults of any age can work as many hours as they wish in the Gift Garden gift shop, at blood drives, fundraising events, assisting seniors in the Extended Care program and more.

Details and applications are available by logging on to gcmchealth.com/volunteer-opportunities or calling 515-386-0108.



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