

October 2017

Healthy Times

A successful team
beats with one heart

*Advanced Practice Providers are a vital
link in your health care chain*



 **Tri-County
Health Care**
TCHC.org



Message from our President & CEO, Joel Beiswenger



Happy Fall!



In this edition of Healthy Times, we have some exciting stories and information about happenings at Tri-County Health Care.

Our cover story highlights the roles of our advanced practice providers, or APPs. This title describes the highly qualified and dedicated individuals who serve as either a primary provider or specialty provider. Their credentials include nurse practitioner, physician assistant, certified nurse midwife or certified registered nurse anesthetist.

APPs are instrumental in enabling direct patient care through a team approach with our physicians. We have experienced great success in our satellite clinics in recent years where nurse practitioners and physician assistants serve as primary providers.

Additionally, APPs hold supportive roles with specialists in areas such as surgery, obstetrics/gynecology and behavioral health at the Wadena Clinic.

This issue of Healthy Times also introduces you to Tri-County Health Care's new provider recruiter, Susan Marco, and new Foundation executive director, Ryan Damlo. Ryan accomplished amazing work when he was with Friendly Rider, and Susan comes to us with a background in senior care and a passion for people. We're thrilled to have them on our team.

And finally, mark your calendars for Live Pink, formerly Women's Day Out. We're making significant changes to the format to infuse more fun and energy. Women will be treated to great entertainment, health education and wonderful prizes. Kathy Burgau will be the featured speaker at Live Pink, and you'll have a chance to read about her later in this newsletter. She was diagnosed with breast cancer at age 26 and now raises awareness about breast cancer in young women.

As you prepare for the fall, I hope you enjoy this edition of Healthy Times and that you and your family enjoy great health, good fellowship and a wonderful year!

Thanks for all the support you provide for Tri-County Health Care through your patronage.

Acute Stroke Ready Hospital

A few months ago, Tri-County Health Care was re-designated as an Acute Stroke Ready Hospital through the Minnesota Department of Health's Minnesota Stroke System. The designation means Tri-County is up to date and top of the line in terms of stroke technology and care, according to Deb Zacharias, emergency department supervisor.

Criteria includes:

- 24-hour access to brain imaging and an acute stroke team
- Emergency medical services trained to recognize strokes
- Transfer protocols and agreements

"Stroke care is a collaboration," Zacharias said. "It can't be done by just one department."

In the three years since its first designation, Tri-County has come a long way in improving care, especially in its specialized stroke team. Members of the team attend education sessions and ensure they consistently achieve the best outcomes for stroke patients.

The implementation of the Telestroke program last September also improved Tri-County's stroke response. Within minutes of a patient arriving at the emergency department, the attending physician can connect to a stroke intervention specialist at St. Cloud Hospital Stroke Center.

"Together, our physician and the specialist determine how to give the patient the best care possible, whether the patient stays at TCHC or goes to a higher level of care with a specialist," said Dr. Ben Hess, chief medical officer.

If a patient stays at Tri-County, physicians update the specialist daily. If transported, the patient can return to Tri-County for follow-up care and connect to the specialist via telecommunications.

So far, Telestroke has served 58 patients.

YOUR FEEDBACK MATTERS!

As a resident in the tri-county area, your input is important to us. So here's your chance to tell us what you think of Healthy Times. Fill out a brief survey, and we'll enter your name into a drawing for a chance to win a \$25 Visa gift card.

Take the survey now at: www.surveymonkey.com/r/HealthyTimes2017





Making tomorrow's health care possible today

The Tri-County Health Care Foundation is rolling out a new mission with a new executive director leading the way.

In July, Tri-County hired its first Foundation executive director, Ryan Damlo. Since its creation in 1994, the Foundation has never had a full-time staff member dedicated to growing the fundraising efforts at Tri-County, and Ryan will do just that.

"I am excited for the opportunity to bring out the best in the people of our communities," Ryan said. "We have so many great donors in our area that are willing to give. I am here to help show how that donation can make the greatest impact."

A starting donation of \$50,000 in 1994 helped the Foundation get up and running, and it became the charitable arm of Tri-County Health Care, accepting gifts to help fulfill Tri-County's mission: "Improving the health of the communities we serve." Over the past 23 years, the Foundation has received additional gifts ranging from \$50 to \$450,000 to help focus on that mission.

Since that time, a majority of the Foundation's fundraising has focused on grants and scholarships. It awards grants to local organizations to help with equipment, education or transportation. Additionally, it gives out \$23,500 in scholarships annually to local students seeking careers in health care.

The Foundation also uses funds to invest in Tri-County's facilities and technology to provide state-of-the-art services so its patients will receive the best care possible.

Grants and scholarships will continue to be a large part of the Foundation, but Ryan is working to incorporate funds for other programs, such as chemotherapy, sports medicine, behavioral health and emergency care.

"The energy of the Foundation is to build relationships and partnerships that inspire charitable giving," Ryan said. "When we work hard at creating lasting relationships between our patients, staff and communities, we build a bond that supports our mission."



Ryan Damlo, Tri-County Health Care Foundation Executive Director

Whether the Foundation's funds are used to buy life-saving technology, help a local student attend medical school or invest in a new program, one thing will remain consistent: The benefits of local donations will stay local.

"No matter the amount, from \$50 to \$50,000, all donations matter and make a difference in the communities we serve. My vision for the TCHC Foundation is to inspire generous donors to make tomorrow's health care possible today."

Ryan Damlo, Executive Director



Ryan invites everyone to consider the Foundation as an opportunity for them to contribute to the health and success of the community. To see how donations can impact lives locally today, call Ryan at 218-632-8148 or email ryan.damlo@tchc.org

Visit TCHC.org/foundation



Ryan Damlo recently presented Wadena Police Chief Naomi Plautz and Officer Nick Grabe a Foundation donation of \$4,500 for the purchase of three AEDs for the city squad cars.



Alison Meyer, APRN, CNP

Health Care Highlight...

Advanced Practice Providers

Advanced practice provider, or APP, is a comprehensive term for physician assistants, nurse practitioners, certified nurse midwives and certified nurse anesthetists.

Physician assistants function in many capacities, whether as a family practice provider, specialist or assisting physicians.

Nurse practitioners have roles similar to physician assistants. The main difference is in education and training. Nurse practitioners typically have a nursing background, while physician assistants have other medical training.

An anesthetist's primary function is to provide anesthesia in a surgical setting, while midwives offer services in obstetrics.

"In the system, APPs are a critical part of providing access to health care," said Laurie Bach, interim vice president of patient care. "We're very fortunate to have the number of APPs that we do."

Wearing different hats

At Tri-County's rural clinics, an APP's main role is to provide primary care from birth to death, from acute to chronic illnesses.

"It's very similar to what physicians do," said Alison Meyer, certified nurse practitioner at Bertha Clinic. "Our main focus is doing what's best for the patient and figuring out how to optimize their quality of life."

In contrast, the Wadena Clinic APPs aren't primary providers but rather contribute to a health care team called a pod.

These pods include physicians and an APP. If patients are unable to schedule an appointment with their doctor, they can opt to see the APP in that pod.

"I help to maintain a continuity of care," said Physician Assistant Jill Wilkens, who works in a pod with three doctors. "The patients know and accept me as one of their providers, and if they can't see their doctor, they want to see me."

APPs also see walk-in patients in ReadyCare, as well as concentrate on a variety of specialties.

"We're fortunate that our APPs come from various areas of focus," said Judy White, vice president of patient care. "They have backgrounds in neurology, pain management, wound care, cardiology, behavioral health, surgery, obstetrics and more."

A patient's point of view

Menahga resident Norman Hillukka first encountered his APP when he planned to make an appointment with his physician, Heidi Olson, and found that her schedule was full.

Hillukka wasn't even sure what an APP was when he made the appointment.

"I was a little apprehensive, but to my surprise, I was truly satisfied. I got everything I needed. I enjoy that if I have a specific problem, I get lots of time and attention from my physician assistant."

Norman Hillukka, TCHC Patient



Norman Hillukka



Tina Hulse, PA-C, with Melissa Morrow

"It's good to know that there are those medical professionals out there that can do just as much for you as an actual doctor or a specialist."

Melissa Morrow, TCHC Patient



Brandon Adams with Jill Wilkens, PA-C

Melissa Morrow of Wadena stresses that it was because of Tina Hulse, certified physician assistant, that she's here today.

Afflicted by Ehler's Danlos, a disease that affects connective tissue, Morrow suffered extreme pain following a hysterectomy on June 20.

Morrow rushed to the hospital, where Hulse discovered that Morrow's bladder had stopped working, urine was building up and her kidneys were shutting down. Hulse removed 2.5 liters of urine from Morrow's body. Her kidney function returned to normal in less than 24 hours.

"She saved my life," Morrow said. "She's amazing."

Morrow, who has also received care from other APPs at Tri-County, feels strongly that their role is essential.

"They're a vital necessity to the medical care that we have nowadays because of the fact that doctors are so hard to get into," she said.

Find out more information on Tri-County Health Care's advanced practice providers by visiting TCHC.org/APPfaq.

Advanced Practice Providers *See our complete provider directory at: TCHC.org/find-a-provider*



Jessica Anderson, PA-C



John Chase, APRN, FNP



Andrea Craig, PMHNP



Robert Davis, PA-C



Wendy Gravelle, CRNA



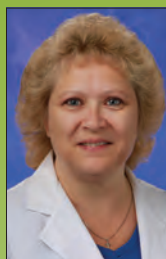
Barb Heier, PA-C



Tina Hulse, PA-C



Joe Kreklau, CRNA



Rose Lorentz, A-GNP, CWON



Alison Meyer, APRN, CNP



Keith Nelson, CRNA



Rhoda Rees, APRN, FNP



Amy Severson, APRN, CNP



Rachael Spear, CRNA



Jamie Udy, APRN, FNP



Adam Weichelt, PA-C



Tom Weston, PA-C



Jill Wilkens, PA-C



Linda Van Roekel-Kuismi, APRN, CNP

"I think people like to know who they're seeing and have a connection with them, and we certainly do. We're very qualified, and we love taking care of you."

Jill Wilkens, TCHC
Advanced Practice Provider

Surviving Breast Cancer

Kathy Burgau grew up in small-town Blue Grass and attended Sebekah High School. She had a nice upbringing on a picturesque farm. But on her 26th birthday, she received news that changed her life.

Burgau found a lump on her breast that stayed the same size and was stationary for two months. When she visited her doctor, he told her to come back in six months and said, "You're too young to have breast cancer."

"My brother's wife had breast cancer at a young age, so I knew that young women could get breast cancer," Burgau recalled. Intuition told her not to leave until the doctor checked the lump. After finding no fluid in the lump, he recommended an immediate biopsy. Two days later, Burgau returned for a mammogram.

She sat with her husband as they told her she had an aggressive form of breast cancer.

Burgau underwent a mastectomy, as well as brain, bone and CT scans. Doctors found a spot on her liver and performed a biopsy. On Thanksgiving Day, she got the good news that it wasn't cancer.

A couple years later, Burgau competed in the Mrs. Minnesota International pageant and was named first runner-up. She competed to raise awareness about young women getting diagnosed with breast cancer.

"I was never told that young women could get breast cancer, so I wanted to make sure to speak up about it now," she said.

"I want to save lives by teaching women to find the cancer early so they can beat it, just like I did."

Kathy Burgau, Breast Cancer Survivor

People tried to convince her to run again, but she wanted to focus on becoming a mother. Because of having breast cancer and intensive chemotherapy, she didn't know if she would be able to have children. But by the grace of God, she had twin boys and a girl 20 months apart, she said.

This year marks Burgau's 20th anniversary of being cancer free. She is a devoted mother, wife, daughter and breast cancer survivor. Since she knows that a self-breast exam is what saved her life, she's passionate about telling others the importance of starting early.

Her advice to other women?
"You have to be your own advocate. You may be young, but trust your intuition."

Her message of empowerment and hope has taken her to Washington, D.C., several times to advocate on behalf of the Breast Cancer Coalition.

She recounts a story from one of her first advocacy trips when she walked into then U.S. Senator Mark Dayton's office. "I was 26 when I was diagnosed with breast cancer," she told him. "I didn't have a family history of breast cancer and I got it."



Bewildered, he sat down in his chair and said, "What?"

Burgau told him her story and realized she had a powerful message to tell elected officials.

Getting more women to do breast self-exams drives her mission. "I want to save lives by teaching women to find the cancer early so they can beat, just like I did."

***Kathy Burgau will be the keynote speaker for Tri-County's *Live Pink* event at WDC Elementary School on Monday, Oct. 9, from 5:30 – 8:30 p.m.**



TRI-COUNTY HEALTH CARE ONCOLOGY CARE TEAM

- Medical Oncologist – Wade Swenson, M.D.
- Nurse Practitioner – Alyssa Manning
- Oncology Outreach Nurse – Kathy Lorentz, RN
- Infusion Center Supervisor – Tammy Nevala, RN
- Infusion Nursing Staff

TEAM APPROACH – EDUCATION PRIOR TO RECEIVING CHEMOTHERAPY WITH:

- Pharmacist
- Medical Social Services
- Nutrition Services
- Nursing Education

Kathy and her family



Caring Heart Boutique



A hidden gem for all ages and occasions

Tri-County Health Care's Caring Heart Boutique is a whimsical specialty shop with something for everyone right in the heart of Wadena. On top of that, its proceeds for 2017 will go toward the purchase of cribs for pediatric patients. With a colorful and constantly changing inventory, Caring Heart provides purses, jewelry, chocolate, ornaments, lotion, clothing, cards, home décor and more. Whether treating yourself or buying a gift, your money stays local. It helps the hospital purchase life-saving technology and funds programs that keep you and your family healthy.

GRAB A FRIEND AND COME PERUSE THE SELECTION

Caring Heart Boutique is located in the Wadena Clinic lobby and is open Monday – Friday from 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.

» **From now through Friday, Oct. 20, mention this article to the Caring Heart cashier to receive a free gift with a purchase of at least \$25.**

SAVE THE DATE FOR PRE-CHRISTMAS KICK OFF!

Don't miss Caring Heart's annual Christmas sale on Thursday, Oct. 12, and Friday, Oct. 13. Stop by to receive a 10% discount on any Christmas item. And if you want to throw in a tasty snack with your shopping, check out the Tri-County Hospital Auxiliary bake sale on Thursday, Oct. 12, in the hospital courtyard from 8 a.m. until the goods are gone.



Susan Marco

Building relationships

Tri-County Health Care believes in bringing together caring, professional providers to treat its patients, which continues to be a challenge due to a shortage of providers in the country. In May, Tri-County dedicated a full-time employee to its provider recruitment efforts by hiring Susan Marco.

"It's touring the schools, talking with realtors, identifying recreation, and sharing what's available for grocery stores, dentists, insurance agents, day care and jobs for the spouse," Susan said. "When you recruit providers, you recruit their whole family, and my job is to help that family find success."

Recruiting doesn't just begin after medical school graduation. Rather, Susan might start her search as early as high school by promoting the hospital's internship program.

"We're finding out more and more that if we interact with students at a young age, they might be more interested in coming back into rural medicine," she said.

Though the United States has experienced a provider shortage in the last several years, Susan believes in not just finding a body to fill an empty slot, but instead finding the right person for the right job who will provide the right care to Tri-County's patients.

With Susan's spunky personality and background in senior care, the position was a perfect fit.

"It's wild and very busy, but it's fun," she said with a laugh. "I am a people person, so I like people. I have some hard and fast rules. You need to be kind to people, you need to be nice, and you need to demonstrate integrity."

As a recruiter, Susan spends a majority of her time vetting applicants, scheduling start dates and, most importantly, building relationships with providers.

Once Susan finds providers who are interested in a position, she kicks into marketing mode to present the benefits that Tri-County offers compared to corporate health care systems, as well as all that the area has to offer.

This involves setting up an in-depth tour of not just the hospital, but the entire area.



Physician Referral Bonus Program

If any member of the community makes a referral to Tri-County for a physician that is eventually hired and begins work at one of our facilities, that individual will receive a \$5,000 bonus. If you have a family member, or know a family practice physician who may be interested in relocating to the TCHC region, please call 631-7462 to offer us your referral.

Please refer to our website, TCHC.org, for more details on this exciting new program.



Tri-County Health Care

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Joint Commission-accredited,
award-winning hospital



*Our patients are our priority
and award-winning quality health
care is what they deserve.*

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In accordance with Federal law and U.S. Department of Agriculture policy, Tri-County Health Care is prohibited from discriminating on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, age or disability. This institution is an equal opportunity provider and employer.



Pink Live
formerly WOMEN'S DAY OUT
Monday October 9, 2017
FREE EVENT! 5:30 — 8:30 p.m.
Wadena-Deer Creek Elementary School



DUELLY NOTED

A female dueling piano act with both sass and class – crowd-pleasing fun!



LIQUIDMOTION

Flair bartenders who flip, mix and entertain while serving you a delicious "mocktail"!

SPEAKER

Kathy Burgau, cancer survivor and thriver!



Don't miss out! Visit TCHC.org for details and to register to attend!