Improved Transitions in Care Reduce Readmission Rates at Mercy-Clinton

Leaders at Mercy-Clinton, formed a multidisciplinary Transitions of Care Steering Committee to analyze readmission causes across the continuum, put strategies in place to reduce readmissions and test the effectiveness of these strategies. The steering committee had three work teams: Acute Care Team, Emergency Department Team and Outpatient Team. The steering committee also engaged the Patient Advisory Committee. The following tactics were put in place using lean tools and methodologies:

- **Initiated interprofessional rounds using the boost tool.** Rounding discussions were standardized to include the patient’s plan of care, personal goals, discharge plan and social determinants. Rounding times and rounding locations were changed to promote the attendance of the primary nurse.

- **Started a new discharge education process and unique discharge tool kit.** The kit has tabs with information about medications, diagnosis and treatment education, follow-up appointments plus financial and billing information. Nurses were educated on conversations to have at discharge around each element. The outside of the folder reminds nurses to review the information at discharge. The patient is encouraged to bring the tool kit to all follow-up appointments. Follow-up phone calls to patients revealed 100 percent of patients surveyed had their discharge tool kits accessible at home. Before this implementation, none of the patients queried had the information accessible at home.

- **Created a resource book** for emergency department staff and physicians which outlines the care and treatment that outpatient facilities can provide.

- **Implemented Meds to Beds.** Pharmacy began providing a 30-day supply of discharge medications delivered to the bedside before discharge.

- **Began partnerships with geriatric nurse practitioners** to complete evaluations, assessments, and medication reconciliation on every new admission, while also responding to urgent issues in our three owned or affiliated long-term and skilled-care facilities.

The results are positive! The 30-day composite readmission rate for the nine months during and after the intervention period decreased from 16.1 percent to 13.6 percent. For more information contact Amy Berentes, Vice President Patient Care, at berentea@mercyhealth.com.

Q & A with Bob Ritz

Q. How does Catholic Health Initiatives (CHI) combination with Dignity Health impact Mercy Health Network (MHN)?

A: CHI’s combination with Dignity Health will open new doors for Mercy Health Network. Catholic Health Initiatives and the new combined company remain committed to Mercy Health Network’s success. The proposed combination with Dignity Health does not change CHI’s relationship with MHN. The combined CHI and Dignity Health organization will form the largest Catholic health care system in the country. MHN will be able to leverage expertise from the combined company and will continue to leverage expertise from Trinity Health. Capital commitments made to MHN facilities in Des Moines will continue as planned.

Have questions for Bob?

Email MHNinfo@mercydesmoines.org.
Covenant Clinics Earn National Recognition for Patient-Centered Care

Two Covenant Clinics, Arrowhead Medical Center in Cedar Falls and Covenant Clinic Pediatrics in Waterloo, each earned Level 3 recognition as a Patient-Centered Medical Home. Level 3 is the highest recognition offered by the National Committee for Quality Assurance (NCQA).

The NCQA Patient-Centered Medical Home is a model of primary care which combines teamwork and information technology to improve care, improve patient experience and reduce costs. Medical homes foster ongoing partnerships between patients and their personal clinicians, instead of approaching care as the sum of episodic office visits. Clinician-led care teams coordinate treatment across the health care system and oversee patient care. Research shows medical homes can lead to higher quality and lower costs, and can improve patient and provider experiences of care.

Mercy-North Iowa Sleep Lab Earns Accreditation

The Accreditation Commission for Health Care (ACHC) has accredited Mercy-North Iowa and Mercy-New Hampton sleep labs. The sleep labs meet standards of care including infection control, patient satisfaction, billing, sleep lab policies and procedures, HIPAA and compliance standards.

ACHC offers a patient-focused approach to Sleep Accreditation. Industry professionals provided input to ensure accreditation principles were developed that ensure relevant and realistic standards.

ACHC is an independent, not-for-profit organization that has been providing health care accreditations since 1986.

New Partnership Will Improve Continuity of Care in Siouxland

Dakota Dunes, a joint venture with Mercy-Sioux City, announced a partnership with Siouxland Urology Center. Siouxland Urology Center will now be an outpatient department of the Dunes Surgical Hospital. The two entities will have integrated services and campuses, which will allow for better continuity of care for patients. “With this partnership, we will be sharing best practices and using the latest technology to advance the care experience for our patients,” said Greg Miner, CEO of Dunes Surgical Hospital.

Wheaton Iowa Featured in Mental Health Television Special

Mental health is a very important topic in the state of Iowa. That is why the Cedar Valley Mental Health Coalition and United Way teamed up with KWWL-TV to bring the issue to the forefront in a special edition of “The Steele Report,” a panel discussion moderated by veteran KWWL news anchor Ron Steele.

Wheaton Iowa Director of Behavioral Health and Emergency Services Chris Latta took part in the hour-long discussion. Covenant Medical Center invited KWWL crews into the emergency department for a tour led by Dr. James Ellis, Covenant’s emergency department medical director. Dr. Ellis explained what happens when a mental health patient enters the behavioral health system when they visit the emergency department.

Watch "Digging Deeper: Iowa's Mental Health". Click here for the first half hour and here for the second half hour.
Mercy Health Network Supports Colleagues in Their Quest to Provide the Best Patient Care

You make the difference for patients. Last month we brought you information about scholarship and tuition reimbursement programs available across our market ministries to support colleagues who want to earn their first degree or advanced degree. Here you will find information about nurse residency and preceptor training opportunities.

Nurse residency programs are offered across Mercy Health Network ministries for new nurses. These programs support the transition from student to professional nurse and member of the health care team. Nurses who take part in these programs have greater self-confidence, increased competence and an increased quality of patient care.

Formal preceptor training is available across Mercy Health Network. Preceptors are not only integral to new nurse on-boarding and retention, but also help preceptors develop leadership skills. This training offers a great way for nurses and other associates to develop and take part in building their teams. Preceptors learn strategies to give feedback effectively, facilitate learning, evaluate skills and grow as a role model.

To discover more about nurse residency or preceptor opportunities in your market ministry, contact your representative listed below.

Clinton
Laura Gassman, gassmanl@mercyhealth.com

Des Moines
Rita Stackhouse, rstackhouse@mercydesmoines.org

Dubuque
Christina Schauer, christina.schauer@mercyhealth.com

Iowa City
April Roe, april.roe@mercyic.org

Mason City
Julie Lundberg, julie.lundberg@mercyhealth.com

Sioux City
Nurse Residency: Monica Blackley, blackelm@mercyhealth.com

Preceptor Training: Teresa Muckey, muckeyt@mercyhealth.com

Waterloo
Jennifer Bigler, jennifer.bigler@mercyhealth.com

Leadership Positions across the Network

Des Moines
- Chief Nursing Officer
- Director of Pediatric Nursing
- Physician Recruitment and Engagement Leader (Central Iowa)
- Vice President, Chief Medical Officer

Dubuque
- Director of Clinical and Professional Development
- Director of Home Care

Waterloo
- Vice President of Medical Affairs

Iowa City
- Director of Human Resources
- Director of Radiology

Nominate a nurse today!
Do you know an amazing nurse who has made significant contributions to the nursing profession?

The 100 Great Iowa Nurses Award recognizes nurses who have made meaningful, lasting contributions to their patients, colleagues and the nursing profession. They are mentors to other nursing professionals. If you would like to recognize a nurse for his or her courage, competence and commitment, complete the nomination form by December 31, 2017.

Visit www.greatnurses.org to complete an online nomination.

Just released!
Watch Bob Ritz’s newest video which celebrates our colleagues across the state and previews the bright future for Mercy Health Network.
Expanding Access to Care

**Mercy-North Iowa Helps Local Business Offer an On-site Clinic to Employees**

A registered nurse and nurse practitioner from Mercy-North Iowa will staff a new on-site health clinic for all employees at Sukup Manufacturing Co. headquartered in Sheffield, Iowa. Sukup is the world’s largest family-owned and operated grain storage, drying and handling equipment manufacturer and employs more than 600 people.

The new clinic will include five exam rooms, two offices and one lab. Sukup employees will have access to a variety of health services including biometric screening, health coaching, weight loss coaching, smoking cessation, tele counseling and other routine clinical tests (i.e. strep throat).

"We are very excited to support Sukup Manufacturing Co. in improving the health of its employees," said Dan Varnum, President and CEO of Mercy-North Iowa. "Mercy is committed to making this a successful partnership, and we see this as a positive step forward in the focus on overall community wellness."

“Research shows on-site clinics can add significant value to the workplace,” said Sukup Manufacturing Co. human resources representative Samantha Petersburg. “Some benefits the company hopes to realize are earlier detection and treatment of illness, fewer emergency department visits and reinforcing a culture of wellness at Sukup.”

Employees may make appointments at the clinic beginning in January 2018. The company plans to make some clinic services available to employees’ family members in the future.

**New Nutrition and Wellness Clinics Open at Mercy Iowa City**

Nutrition and Wellness Drop-In Clinics are now open at Mercy Iowa City. Registered dietitians provide help with glucose meters, answer questions, provide support and information about educational opportunities. The clinics are currently open Tuesdays 4 p.m. to 5 p.m. and Wednesdays 11 a.m. to noon.

**Mercy-Sioux City Opens Express Care in Partnership with Hy-Vee**

Mercy’s new Express Care Clinic will be located inside the Hy-Vee store on Hamilton Boulevard. Providers at this convenient location can diagnosis and treat illnesses such as influenza, strep/sore throat, sinus infection, bronchitis, urinary tract infection and skin infections/rashes. Basic health screenings for diabetes, blood pressure and tuberculosis will also be available.

“With today’s busy lifestyles, access to convenient and affordable health care services is more important now than ever before,” said Erin Bailey, Hy-Vee’s Assistant Vice President of Health and Wellness Development. “Hy-Vee is pleased to be working with Mercy-Sioux City to offer people an easy way to seek treatment or learn more about prevention so they can lead healthy lives.”

**Awards and Accolades**

**Dr. Teresa Mock selected for Carol Emmott Fellowship**

Teresa Mock, MD, Senior Vice President, Mercy-North Iowa, was selected as one of only 18 women from across the country to take part in the Carol Emmott Fellowship.

Fellows compete for acceptance into the program with a proposed impact project. The project must advance an area of health and transcend a fellow’s current role. Fellows continue to work for their organizations during the program, which provides daily opportunities to apply the leadership skills they learn.

"Health care faces daunting challenges and the Carol Emmott Fellowship provides opportunities for talented leaders to advance medicine and health care delivery," said Mary Pittman, DrPH.

The purpose of the fellowship is to develop a cohort of women leaders who are networked and ready to move into senior leadership positions in all sectors of health. Apply for next year’s program [here](#).
Chad McCambridge, MD, Named IAFP Medical Educator of the Year

Chad McCambridge, MD, Program Director at Mercy-North Iowa’s Family Medicine Residency, was named the 2017 Iowa Medical Educator of the Year. The Iowa Academy of Family Physicians (IAFP) presented the award to McCambridge at its annual awards banquet. The Medical Educator of the Year Award recognizes a physician who provides outstanding quality in family medicine education. Students, practicing physicians and educators submit nominees.

A former resident had this to say, “Dr. McCambridge is a brilliant teacher and a great example of a full scope family medicine physician. His knowledge base is remarkable. He is up-to-date on all the latest practice guidelines and is able to incorporate them in a practical manner in his residents’ clinical practice. He never misses an opportunity to use a clinical situation as a teaching moment. His obstetric knowledge is truly impressive and truly inspirational. My time as both a medical student and as a resident under the supervision of Dr. McCambridge influenced much of my current clinical practice. He always encouraged me to be better and to learn more. His example played a big part in my selection of a career in family medicine and making Mercy-North Iowa Family Medicine Program my first choice in the match.”

Mercy-North Iowa is proud to deliver a high level of care to patients while serving as an academic medical institution. As a teaching hospital, Mercy is responsible for training new generations of medical providers through its residency and fellowship programs. Medical graduates are prepared for practice in Mercy-North Iowa’s Internal Medicine and Family Medicine Residency programs. In addition, Mercy-North Iowa offers Cardiology, Hospice and Palliative Medicine Fellowship programs.

Two Central Iowa Physician Assistants Receive Statewide Honors

The Iowa Physician Assistant Society (IPAS) honored Dallas Sanders, PA-C, and John Olson, PA-C both with Mercy Clinics, at its annual meeting. Sanders was named the 2017 Physician Assistant (PA) of the Year. Olson received the Lifetime Achievement Award.

Sanders has worked at Mercy Clinics in Des Moines since 2011. Requirements for consideration of the Physician Assistant of the Year award include promoting the physician association, volunteering or mission work and involvement in the community.

Sanders shares his knowledge and experience as a PA preceptor with the Des Moines University PA program. He is also an active diabetes educator. His colleagues see him as a hard-working professional with a positive outlook on every patient and scenario, and his patients love him and trust his judgment.

Olson received the Lifetime Achievement Award for his outstanding service to his patients and the PA profession. Requirements for consideration of this award include promoting the physician association, volunteering or mission work and leaving a lasting impression on the PA community.

Olson has had an accomplished 44-year career in the PA profession and retired in July of this year. He still works PRN at Mercy Clinics Family Medicine and Urgent Care North in Ankeny. As an IPAS member for the past 40 years, he has advocated for and helped to promote the profession, and was instrumental in lobbying for-and obtaining-prescription privileges for PAs. For six years, he volunteered on the PA Board and served as IPAS President in 2000.

Olson has not only given back to the PA profession in an official capacity but has also focused on patient care. He served the medically underserved at the Primary Health Care Clinic in Marshalltown and in Appalachia for the National Health Service Corps.
Since 1992, Dubuque has been home to a significant number of Marshallese people, estimated at about 600 individuals. The Marshallese have been, and continue to be, at higher-than-normal risks for a variety of serious health issues, including obesity, diabetes and cancer. Experts argue their health issues may have resulted from the excessive nuclear testing done in the Marshall Islands by the United States from 1946–1958. The Atomic Energy Association lists the Marshall Islands as one of the most contaminated places in the world. Under a 1986 Compact of Free Association (COFA) agreement with the Republic of the Marshall Islands, the Marshallese can come and work in the U.S. They are not U.S. citizens but were initially eligible for some federal aid and safety net programs such as Medicaid. However, non-citizens became excluded from such benefits with welfare reform in 1996.

"Many Marshallese are coming here for health care, economic opportunities and education, but they face many barriers, especially with accessing health care," said Jennifer Cavanagh, director of case management and social services at Mercy-Dubuque. "We want to help eliminate those barriers and ensure they receive the health services they need."

Mercy-Dubuque helped launch the Dubuque Marshall Islands Health Project in 2015 to help Marshallese residents in Dubuque overcome financial, lingual and cultural barriers in obtaining much needed health care. The project is a collaboration that includes Mercy, Crescent Community Health Center, Visiting Nurses Association, the city and county health departments, the city's human rights department, University of Dubuque Nursing Department, and others, including leaders in the Dubuque Marshallese community.

The program addresses the immediate health concerns and the long-range health outlook for the Marshallese in Dubuque.

Through the program, a community health nurse was hired to provide more access to preventative care, as well as a community health worker (a Marshallese person) to accompany Marshallese persons to medical and pharmacy appointments. This community health worker assists with language and communication difficulties and helps build trust between the patient and health care provider.

Much work is still needed. Long-term goals of the Dubuque Marshall Islands Health Project include advocating for the restoration of Medicaid benefits in Iowa and across the U.S., fairer Iowa driver’s license applications and a fair reaffirmation of the Compact of Free Association (COFA) agreement.

"We're seeing positive changes among the Marshallese community with regard to accessing health care," Cavanagh said. "Many are now able to schedule medical appointments or refill prescriptions. They are becoming more comfortable reaching out for assistance from the community health worker when they encounter a barrier. These might seem like small successes, but they're significant steps for preventive health care."

Senior Health Insurance Information Program Volunteers Honored with Governor’s Volunteer Award

Mercy Iowa City Senior Health Insurance Information Program (SHIIP) volunteers were honored with a Governor’s Volunteer Award at a ceremony in October. Theresa Mapel and Sheila Gerot have assisted hundreds with their Medicare questions over years of service.

Mercy Iowa City is a founding member of the SHIIP program. It has had a dedicated office and volunteers for the past 27 years. SHIIP volunteers in Iowa saved individuals on Medicare more than $21 million in the past year.
The Call to Serve (continued)

Award-winning Mercy Iowa City Chef Recognized for Feeding the Hungry
Ron Hall, Executive Chef for Mercy Iowa City, has three “Chef of the Year” awards and is a master of fancy desserts, exquisite French sauces, exotic Asian entrees and ice sculpture.

He was recently featured in an Iowa City Press-Citizen story for his lifelong work to feed those who are hungry.

He started Thanksgiving in July in 1999. The program has collected tons of food for food pantries from Rock Island to Des Moines. In the beginning, they collected six tons of food. This year they collected 146 tons of food and supported 47 food pantries. Hall is also a founding member of Table to Table.

Read the full story here and learn about:
- Thanksgiving in July’s amazing impact
- Hall’s work with Table to Table, March of Dimes and more
- The origin of Hall’s passion for feeding those who are hungry
- How he got started as a chef and Mercy’s role in him earning his executive chef certification

Award-winning Mercy Iowa City Chef Recognized for Feeding the Hungry

Mercy-Sioux City Partners with the American Heart Association to Keep Kids Active
Mercy-Sioux City and the American Heart Association teamed up to present Irving Elementary School students with Recess Reboot, a joint community venture to positively impact the health and wellness of students. More than 750 students were given jump ropes, water bottles and a certificate to purchase needed exercise equipment.

Today, about two thirds of kids and half of adults still don’t get enough physical activity. To further complicate matters, school budgets are shrinking and many schools in Siouxland are unable to provide the necessary recess and PE equipment to support the American Heart Association’s recommendation of 60 minutes of daily physical activity.

"Some schools don't have the budgets to be able to continue to keep up with restoring dilapidated equipment, so this is a part of being able to do that to ensure that the kids are getting more exercise," says Jerry Hernandez with Mercy-Sioux City.

Mercy Health Network Core Values
- Reverence
- Integrity
- Commitment to the Poor
- Compassion
- Excellence
- Justice
- Stewardship

Jerry Hernandez (right) is shown with Chris Shives (left) American Heart Association and Maria Ruelas (center), Principal, of Irving Elementary School.

Ron Hall (left) and fellow Mercy Iowa City colleague Terry Miller load a pickup with food donated to the Thanksgiving in July collection effort for area food pantries. (Photo: Press-Citizen)
The Call to Serve (continued)

Ugly Sweater Sale Launches Fund to Support Home Care Patients

Mercy Home Care in Sioux City hosted an ugly sweater sale to help buy medical equipment to keep patients safe. "We often have patients who need safety devices/equipment but have no way of paying for them. Sometimes patients have minimal income," said event organizer Wendy Beavers. "If there is no family or insurance coverage, patients go without much-needed equipment. Mercy Home Care does not want these barriers to prevent our patients from remaining safe in their home environment."

Bath benches, grab bars, hand railings and other safety equipment can often make the difference in allowing people to stay in their home safely and independently. Mercy Home Care always strives to give patients the best chance at success and will now have a fund to help its patients get what they need.

There has been much community support for the effort from Mercy-Sioux City colleagues and volunteers. The following organizations designed and donated more than 170 sweaters: the Siouxland Crafters Club; the Siouxland Center for Active Generations; Struck, Layman, Rose Group; Suzi Tucker; Floyd Place Assisted Living; Sioux City Fence; Casey Greer and many more individuals in the community.

New Providers across the Network

Cardiovascular

Abbey Modlin, ARNP
Des Moines

Katharine Rucinski, ARNP
Des Moines

Emergency Medicine

Anna Floryanovich, MD
Iowa City

Stefani Hagglund, PA-C
Iowa City

Naomi Whalen, MD
Iowa City

Revathi Truong (left) and Wendy Beavers (right) show some of the sweaters which were available for sale to benefit Mercy Home Care patients unable to afford much-needed medical equipment.
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<th>New Providers across the Network</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Family Medicine</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Baylee Davidson, ARNP</td>
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<td>Des Moines</td>
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<tr>
<td>Daniel Leisinger, DO</td>
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<td>Waterloo</td>
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<tr>
<td>Rosie Morrey, ARNP</td>
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<tr>
<td>Shell Rock</td>
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<td>Amy Schrader, ARNP</td>
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<td>Waterloo</td>
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<td>Jennifer Vought, ARNP</td>
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<td>Fort Dodge</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Gastroenterology</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Yonas Getachew, MD</td>
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<tr>
<td>Iowa City</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Palliative Medicine</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Dawn Theilen, ARNP</td>
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<td>Mason City</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Psychiatry</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Hilary Snyder, LMHC</td>
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<td>Waverly</td>
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<td><strong>General Surgery</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Ricky Maddox, MD</td>
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<tr>
<td>Clinton</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Hospitalist</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Kyle Reynolds, DO</td>
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<tr>
<td>Waterloo</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Medical Oncology</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Rachel Hupke, PA-C</td>
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<td>Mascon City</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Midwifery</strong></td>
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<td>Kristi Allison, ARNP</td>
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<td>Waterloo</td>
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