



SMITH COUNTY
MEMORIAL HOSPITAL

Health Beat



SUMMER 2020 MAGAZINE



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WELCOME



Thank you for taking the time to read this edition of the Smith County Memorial Hospital community magazine *Health Beat*. Our focus in this issue is to make sure that the community knows of the array of services we provide. As you all are aware, we have faced extreme challenges this year because of the COVID-19 pandemic. Our staff has worked extremely hard to respond to the pandemic. Although we have not seen a lot of cases locally, there has been a lot of effort put into readiness in the event that we had seen more cases. We saw great disruption of services because of mandated reductions in some services. At the same time, we were able to take advantage of the circumstances to expand services in some areas, particularly in the area of telehealth services. We hope that you will continue to feel that Smith County Memorial Hospital and Smith County Family Practice are the best places to receive your healthcare. If you have questions about our services, please contact us to ask. We're happy to be serving North Central Kansas.

Allen Van Driel,
CEO - Smith County Memorial Hospital

HEALTH BEAT - SUMMER 2020

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Our Mission & Vision

We are committed to setting the standard of excellence in healthcare for North Central Kansas. We strive to do the right thing every day for the health of our patients, the development of our staff, the transparency of leadership, the confidence of our communities and the improvement of systems.

At SCMH we value compassion, quality, access, stewardship, leadership and community engagement.

SMITH COUNTY MEMORIAL HOSPITAL PROVIDERS



Dr. Ferrill Conant



Dr. Hannah Haack



Dr. Justin Overmiller



Dr. Leah Wiehl



Perry Desbien
APRN



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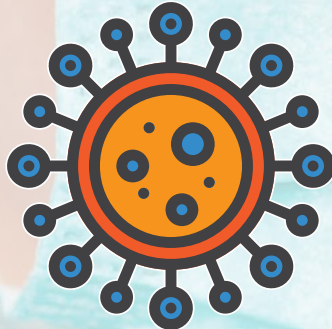
Allen Van Driel, *Chief Executive Officer*
Sarah Ragsdale, *Chief Nursing Officer*
Amanda Mocaby, *Clinic Manager*
Amy Doane, *Director of Communications and Development*

Our Response

TO THE CORONAVIRUS PANDEMIC

Smith County Memorial Hospital has been listening to and learning from experts on coronavirus and COVID-19 for several months. Even after the first cases in Smith County were declared recovered, the medical team continued their efforts to learn about the illness.

Early in the days of the virus, our providers spoke to radio stations about symptoms, prevention and how to get tested. Hospital personnel contributed to various news stories about testing, screening and patient care. SCMH hosted a web page and collaborated with our local



health department to outline new information specific to Smith County residents. Updates were immediately available via the hospital's Facebook page. Allen Van Driel and one or more of the medical team produced social media video reports on Fridays.

Each week our team participated in four or more conference calls or webinars from groups such as the University of Kansas, the Kansas Hospital Association, the Kansas Department of Health and Environment, state and national political leaders and federal agencies. As the state of the virus changed topics ranged from prevention, to treatment to funding to research.

Our team used this information to determine the best way forward for patients and staff.

"The reality is that what Smith County chooses to do will be different than other locations because we are all different and need to react responsibly for our own communities," Van Driel, the hospital CEO said. "Facilities will make recommendations based on how vulnerable their population is, the potential of exposure or current level of infected individuals in the area."

These factors are all relevant and should be taken into account as Smith County and surrounding areas return to "normal."

New information about COVID-19 is available daily and SCMH staff will continue to stay up-to-date. As the illness fades from the news cycle and people go back to routines there will be some permanent changes.



"We hope that the general public places a higher emphasis on good hand hygiene, covering coughs and sneezes, staying home when sick and paying attention to those around them to reduce their own risk of exposure,"

Van Driel said.

"These lessons are important not just for preventing coronavirus, but influenza, the common cold and many other illnesses."



SERVICES AT SCMH

- ◆ Anesthesia
- ◆ Behavioral/Mental Health
- ◆ Cardiology
 - Cardiac Function Testing
 - Cardiac Rehabilitation
- ◆ Chemotherapy
- ◆ Chronic Care Management
- ◆ Emergency
- ◆ Gastroenterology
- ◆ Imaging
 - 3-D Mammography
 - Bone Density
 - CT Scan
 - MRI
 - Ultrasound Diagnostic
 - Ultrasound Echocardiography
 - Nuclear Imaging
 - Radiology
- ◆ Inpatient Nursing
- ◆ Laboratory
- ◆ Nephrology
- ◆ Nutrition Consulting
- ◆ Occupational Therapy
- ◆ Outpatient Treatment, including Infusion Services
- ◆ Patient Advocate
- ◆ Physical Therapy
- ◆ Prenatal and Obstetrics
- ◆ Respiratory Therapy
 - Pulmonary Function Testing
 - Pulmonary Rehabilitation
- ◆ Sleep Studies
- ◆ Surgery
- ◆ Urology
- ◆ Wound Clinic

Population Health: *The Future of Healthcare*



SCMH Chef Stephen Smith presents healthy food options to community members at Old Settlers Day in Smith Center.

Providers in rural areas have long recognized the connection between an individual's health and other non-clinical factors such as housing and access to food. Many hospitals and clinics throughout Kansas and the rest of the country have now started to understand just how significant these connections can be for the health of groups of people.

The strategies that link these connections are referred to as population health. Research shows that when hospitals and clinics engage in community-wide changes, these strategies can make an impact on the health of a whole region.

A provider at Stormont Vail Health in Topeka described the focus on population health this way: "Improving the health of our community is core to our mission. We can't do that by just providing episodic care, treating patients as they hit our doors; we have to reach out to the community and identify what we are missing, who we are missing and how do we help close those gaps."

For example, you will notice that Smith County Memorial Hospital and other health facilities are tobacco free campuses, meaning employees, patients and visitors are not allowed to use tobacco in any form on the premises. This means no smoking, no chewing tobacco and no vaping anywhere on

the property. This strategy is an effort to remind people that tobacco in any form has considerable health implications.

One of the newer strategies employed by SCMH is public access to Hometown Café, the hospital's cafeteria. The administration and medical staff understand the connection between access to nutritious food and overall health of a community. The food service team has made it a priority to create healthier alternatives to regional favorites, provide dietary consults as part of a clinical visits and offer community cooking and nutrition classes for those interested in changing habits at home.

These efforts are all part of a change in focus for the healthcare industry. While it may seem counter intuitive, the goal of the medical team at SCMH is to keep individuals out of the hospital altogether by helping support long-term health and the creation of healthy habits.

As you read through our 2020 services update, we hope you find many ways that our team is connecting with you beyond the traditional clinic visit or hospital stay. We continue to engage with the communities we serve and we look forward to new opportunities to create a healthier North Central Kansas.

FAMILIES DRIVE OUR *Family Practice*

Pregnancy can be exciting, scary, overwhelming and humbling. In nine short months, a new life will join the world.

Jana and Danny Pfannenstiel have been doctoring at Smith County Family Practice since they were married, and see Dr. Justin Overmiller for their family's health needs. They have three girls, two of whom were born at Smith County Memorial Hospital.

"I was born at SCMH, and growing up, that is where I would go anytime I needed to see a doctor," Jana said. "In 2015, I came into Quick Care one morning very sick and found that I had pneumonia. Dr. Overmiller was the doctor that happened to be taking care of me. I remember telling Danny after that visit, 'I want him to deliver our children.'"

The couple began seeing Overmiller even before they were ready to start a family. Overmiller has been there for the Pfannenstiels through highs and lows to provide advice and reassurance.

"When we started this journey of becoming parents, we were struggling to get pregnant, and I made an appointment to see Dr. O," Jana said. "He knew the reason I was there before he came into the room, and I remember him walking in and sitting down, looking me straight in the eyes and simply asking, 'How are you doing?' What he was really asking was, 'How are you handling this difficult season in life?'"

Jana said she broke down into tears, and Overmiller shared in her sorrow. He also helped the couple see past the immediate setbacks and find a way forward.

"We discussed our options and what we needed to investigate to determine what was causing our problem," Jana said. "Fast forward to a year later when we found out we were pregnant with our first child. He was as excited as we were."



Overmiller has been with the Pfannenstiels each step of the way and watched their family grow. Now a mother of three, each of Jana's birth experiences were a little different.

"With our first child, I was past my due date and went in to be induced, I ended up going into labor on my own, and the labor and birthing went very smoothly," Jana said.

Baby number two found a different way into the world.

"After several hours, labor was not progressing, so Dr. O decided to move things along," Jana said. "Nothing changed."

Overmiller noticed some fetal distress and recommended a C-section. The unexpected change in birth plans was not easy for the Pfannenstiels.

"It was kind of scary not having been through a C-section and not considering it as a possible birth plan," Jana said. "Ultimately our only concern was a healthy baby, and we knew this was the best option."

The labor and delivery team did their best to calm and reassure the couple.

"I cried, and Dr. O held me," Jana said. "He prayed with Danny and me. His faith gave us so much peace about the whole situation. Dr. Overmiller's presence during the labor was so encouraging, even though it was a completely new and unknown delivery method to us. The staff that helped with the C-section were so encouraging. They worked hard to make sure my husband and I were both comfortable."

Three months later, Pfannenstiels found out they were expecting a third child much sooner than they had planned. The couple again sought out advice and reassurance from Overmiller.

"I texted him telling him that I had gotten a positive pregnancy test and told him how anxious we were about this and asked

him if my body was ready," Jana said. Overmiller's response was quick.

"God will take care of you," he said. "I am confident of that! This will be a special little gift!"

Danny and Jana scheduled an appointment to answer more of their questions. Overmiller encouraged the couple and assured Jana that her body could handle the pregnancy.

This time, the couple wanted to try again at vaginal birth. SCMh is not equipped to handle VBAC (vaginal birth after Cesarean) procedures, so Overmiller called on a trusted colleague in the hospital's specialty clinic to

discuss options and expectations.

"I mentioned to Dr. Overmiller that I wasn't sure I could do another C-section," Jana said. "He suggested we start talking about a VBAC. He thought I was a good candidate, and at about six months, we saw Dr. Pankratz to discuss the details."

Pfannenstiels got a positive response from Pankratz, and the couple started making a new birth plan. They saw Overmiller through week 37 of Jana's pregnancy and then went to Mary Lanning in Hastings, Neb., to see Pankratz for the final two appointments. Jana was induced at 39 weeks.

"I was incredibly anxious to have the VBAC, and when we got to Mary Lanning, Dr. Pankratz wasn't too encouraging about the possibility of a successful VBAC delivery because the baby was so high in my pelvis," Jana said. "This was discouraging, but we had a wonderful midwife who was so positive, and she continued to reassure me that I was going to have a successful delivery."

Jana did have success with VBAC and welcomed the couple's third daughter, Lilah, later that day.



"His care helped make post-natal life so much easier. Dr. O truly goes above and beyond in all these areas, and we're incredibly blessed to have him as our doctor."

Jana has had three very different pregnancies, and each of her daughters has a different birth story. Regardless of the number of pregnancies or ideal delivery method, the Pfannenstiels have one piece of advice for every mom.

"Find a doctor that you're completely comfortable with," Jana said. "Ultimately, trusting that God and the doctors will do what is best for you and your baby is key!"

CONTINUED: FAMILIES DRIVE OUR FAMILY PRACTICE



“The birth went great!” Jana said.

“The midwife helped me with several positions that she thought would help move the baby down. One worked really well, and the doctor almost didn’t make it in time for the delivery. Without her help and support, I may have ended up having another C-section.”

Based on their experience, Pfannenstiels would recommend other mothers look into the option of VBAC. The couple went into the process informed about the risks and trusted their team of doctors and nurses to help them make the best

decisions when the time came.

“When visiting Dr. Pankratz the first time, we received a sheet to inform us of the risks of VBAC,” Jana said. “It can seem incredibly overwhelming. When you have a VBAC, there is more risk to the baby, and a C-section puts more risk on the mom. I had a great experience, and the recovery is so much better than C-section.”

After the birth of each of her girls, Pfannenstiels say Overmiller has continued to care for their family.

“Anytime I go to an appointment, he always asks how the girls are doing,” Jana said. “If they are with me, he is so good about talking to and playing with them. He lets the girls check out all the equipment and gear and operate the exam chair. He never seems in a rush and makes us feel like we are valuable patients.”

Jana also felt supported as a new mother.

“Especially after my first daughter, each of those appointments, there seemed to be new questions that came up every day,” she said. “He was so willing and ready to give any piece of advice he could.”



NAVIGATING YOUR CARE TOGETHER



Smith County Memorial Hospital's best kept secret is its patient advocate, Lori Dennis. Dennis is a social worker who supports patients and their families as they transition home from an inpatient stay. Her days often consist of talking with patients and families, filling out paperwork, making calls, scheduling follow-up and specialty appointments and mediating patient wishes.

Dennis' role is to work on behalf of patients to make sure they get what they need between their hospital stay and the next step in their care. She enjoys working with patients and families to help them navigate their healthcare.

"Until you go through it either for yourself or with a loved one, you just have no idea how complicated or cumbersome the healthcare world can be," Dennis said. "I enjoy being the person our patients can turn to when they have a question or just need to talk through things."

Just as Dennis appreciates helping patients, they enjoy having her to go to when they need a resource.

"Lori works with every patient to make sure they have everything they need to go home, whether that's helping with an order for a walker or oxygen tank or

working with new parents to sign up for WIC or helping a family choose a nursing home or assisted living community," said Sarah Ragsdale, chief nursing officer at the hospital.

Dennis is also a point of referral for community involvement such as the hospital's Stepping On classes or Meals on Wheels participation.

"It's important to me that when people leave the hospital, they know that we're still invested in their lives," Dennis said. "Just because your time as an inpatient is over, doesn't mean our care ends."

As more and more services that have traditionally required a hospital stay change to outpatient services, patient advocates like Dennis become even more important to continuity of care. Dennis provides a link between 24-hour care and thriving at home.

"People will always do better and heal faster if they know they aren't alone," Dennis said. "My job satisfaction comes when I get to hear how great someone is doing after they've left SCMh."

CARING FOR THE MOST *Vulnerable*



Last fall, Smith County Family Practice began a new service to provide better, more consistent care for patients with chronic conditions between appointments. Alaina Hughes, the clinic's chronic care management nurse, based the program on one started by the Kansas Clinical Improvement Collaborative.

Rural communities have some of the highest mortality rates and highest healthcare costs in the nation—especially when it comes to heart disease or stroke. Hughes' goal is to advocate for patients by collaborating with the providers at Smith County Family Practice for their care. She provides patient education on disease processes and medication management and identifies resources to support overall quality of life. Hughes serves as a patient's liaison with their entire healthcare team including doctors, pharmacies, home health agencies and specialists.

Hughes schedules regular contact with each patient to help stay on top of their goal progress.

"Chronic care management has become especially effective during the COVID-19 pandemic," Hughes said. "Because of their chronic conditions, many patients in this program are vulnerable, however, taking a break from medical appointments can mean critical setbacks in their care."

While medical appointments were exempt from the stay-at-home order, patients often felt more comfortable staying home and waiting for Hughes to connect with them. Even before the pandemic, Hughes has found this program helps to keep people out of the hospital or ER.

"Because of our regular conversations, I have been able to identify and resolve issues before they become a crisis situation," Hughes said. "I've helped patients recognize adverse reactions to medications and was able to speak directly to their doctor to provide a better outcome."

Currently, SCM's program is available to patients on Medicare who have two or more conditions such as high blood pressure, high cholesterol,

diabetes, heart disease or arthritis. Candidates for the program are recommended by a provider and before they join, SCM staff review the patient's insurance to make sure the service is allowed in their benefits package.

SCMH patients will be seeing more of these types of programs as opportunities and resources grow. Chronic care management, sometimes referred to as health coaching, is just one of the preventative services SCM hopes to broaden as more insurance companies recognize its benefit.

"Working with patients early and often can help keep them on track with their healthcare goals and even improve or eliminate health conditions," Hughes said. "It's a no-brainer to recommend this service as often as we can so that our patients stay healthy."



"I work with each patient individually," Hughes said. "We set one or more personal goals together. A patient may have a goal to bring down blood sugars and I can offer strategies to help. Or, maybe they want to remain independent in their own home. I help find resources to accomplish that."

ALAINA HUGHES, CHRONIC CARE MANAGEMENT NURSE | SCM

Welcome Lindsay

The medical team at Smith County Memorial Hospital is growing. Lindsay Rut, a physician assistant from Beloit, Kan., joined the team on June 3, 2020.

“We’re pleased to be adding to our team of professionals and completing our emergency department provider team,” said Allen Van Driel, CEO of the hospital. “Lindsay’s background in ER, family practice and urgent care is exactly the experience we looked for in our final provider.”

Rut’s primary duties will be providing care in the emergency department along with Perry Desbien and Jeffrey Parsons, who started in 2019. The team of three will also work in the clinic during Quick Care hours and take on other duties as needed. Desbien and Parsons have both been working in the hospital’s wound clinic on Wednesdays.

With Rut’s hire, SCM has reached the goal of developing a team of mid-level providers to support emergency medicine at SCM.

“More than a year ago, our medical team started the conversation about changing our ER model,” Van Driel said. “The team was aware that they could provide better care for patients in both the ER and the clinic by hiring a team to focus on emergency needs.”

This model, used in many facilities across the state, makes it easier for patients with urgent needs to be seen quickly. It also means better care for patients in the clinic

because it ensures undivided attention from the providers.

“As with any of our staff, we want to hire the right fit,” Van Driel said. “We have a unique group who work together extremely well. In fact, I have not had the pleasure of working with a medical team that comes together and finds common ground so easily.”

Rut did the majority of her training in an emergency room and specifically focused on trauma. As a skilled decision-maker with ten years of experience, she is well-suited for the role.

“Lindsay is a great fit for our team,” Van Driel said. I’m impressed with her willingness to jump into discussions and hit the ground running.”

Rut earned a bachelor’s degree in life sciences from Kansas State University and her master’s degree in physician assistant studies from Wichita State University. She lives in Beloit with her husband and daughter, and when she finds free time enjoys traveling with family and friends.



“I have heard nothing but wonderful things about the Smith County medical system. I was very impressed with the providers and the teamwork approach they take to patient care, not to mention the beautiful, state-of-the-art new facility.”

- Lindsay Rut, PA-C

SCMH SPECIALTY PROVIDERS



Dr. Mark Banker
General Surgery



Dr. Jeffery Curtis
Cardiology



Dr. Alain Efstratiou
Cardiology



Dr. LaVelle Ellis
Gastroenterology



**Dr. Apostolos "Laki"
Evangelidis - Urology**



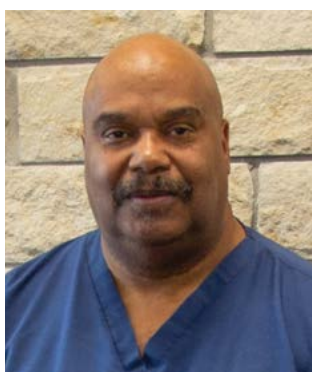
Shari Johnson, RN/MTA
Wound Clinic



Kirby Knuth, APRN
Cardiology



Dr. Todd Pankratz
Obstetrics & Gynecology



Dr. David Prothro
Cardiology



Dr. Abhisekh Sinha Ray
Nephrology



Dr. Matthew Stritt
Pulmonology



Dr. Paul Teget
General Surgery

Smith County Memorial Hospital is proud to host 12 specialty providers to care for our patients' needs. Each of these providers travels from their home facility to treat patients who want or need to stay close to home. A team of staff at SCMHS coordinates and oversees visits to support patient and provider needs through scheduling, registration, medication review, and appointment follow-up instructions. Specialists in the areas of cardiology, gastroenterology, general surgery, nephrology, obstetrics and gynecology, pulmonology, urology and wound care host clinics each month. Visit our website scmhks.org/specialty to learn more about our growing specialty clinic and provider group.

New Specialists

JOIN SCMh CLINIC



The medical staff at Smith County Memorial Hospital welcomed new specialty providers this spring and summer. Two new cardiologists were added to the list of providers visiting from other facilities.

“We’re pleased to be able to add to our provider list,” said Allen Van Driel, CEO of the hospital. “Anytime we can bring in providers that will help our patients in their health journey, we are happy to help make their services available close to home.”



Dr. David Prothro,

Dr. David Prothro comes to SCMh from Platte Valley Medical Group in Kearney, Neb. He has spent his career in electrophysiology and interventional cardiology. Prothro earned his medical degree from the University of Washington in Seattle before going on to residency in San Francisco. He eventually found his way from California to Nevada where he served in a VA hospital and several tribal clinics. Prothro began seeing patients at SCMh in March.



Dr. Jeffery Curtis,

Dr. Jeffery Curtis is a well-known face at SCMh and the staff is pleased to have him return as a visiting cardiologist. Curtis practices at DeBakey Heart Institute and HaysMed in Hays, Kan. He was previously a visiting provider before taking time away to focus on the cardiology team in Hays. Curtis returned to SCMh in April and saw his first patients via telemedicine due to coronavirus travel restrictions.



Both of these providers bring a unique perspective and we’re thrilled to have them on board at SCMh. As outpatient procedures increase, it is our responsibility to offer the best options available to our patients and these practitioners are certainly at the top of their game.

Allen Van Driel, SCMh CEO

SCMH FUNDRAISING PRIORITIES FOCUS ON

Equipment

In early 2020 Smith County Memorial Hospital quietly completed its capital campaign after five years of pledges from staff and community patrons. Before the campaign came to an end, the board of trustees and administration began to talk about the next steps.

“While the construction project has been completed and we certainly celebrate that success, we know there are more needs to come,” said Allen Van Driel, CEO of the hospital. “The most urgent needs will be replacing outdated equipment as manufacturers end service contracts.”

Several pieces of new equipment were purchased for the new facility; however, many departments moved existing equipment from the old building to the new one.

“A good example of this is the equipment we use in the laboratory,” Van Driel said. “We carefully planned for the end of service dates for some of the pieces we moved over and have already replaced pieces with money from New Market Tax Credits.”

Departments such as lab, imaging, surgery, pharmacy, and obstetrics all moved over equipment that will eventually need to be replaced. After a manufacturer ends a service contract, there are very few ways to get a replacement part or an adequate repair.

“Similar to other industries, most of today’s equipment includes a computer,” Van Driel said. “At some point, that computer is outdated, and the manufacturer will no longer stand behind the product. Just like in farming or other industries, that means a complete replacement is necessary.”

Van Driel and the board have no intention of letting equipment getting past the point of service before it is replaced.

“If a major piece of equipment breaks down in an emergency and there is no way to get it fixed, we’ve put ourselves in a position to do damage—not only to the patient but to future patients as we wait for the new equipment.”

Additionally, the administration would like to plan rather than react to broken machines.

“One of the benefits of the move was that we created a list of all our equipment and each piece’s life expectancy,” Van Driel said. “We know what we’ll need to purchase next, and we can plan and save so that we’re spending wisely rather than waiting and incurring more cost or making rush decisions.”

Like other industries, technology in healthcare is changing rapidly. “We want to be forward-thinking



so that we know what we can afford and be aware of new technologies,” Van Driel said.

“A change in equipment also means new training for staff. Because we have an awareness of what we’ll need, staff have

the opportunity to be part of the conversation and help make a choice that fits our future needs as well as a reasonable budget.”

SCMH has set up a fund to be used to purchase new or update existing equipment. Staff

and community members are encouraged to support this fund. The board and administration would like to start with enough money in the account so they can purchase some of the priority items as early as 2021.



Our communities have a long-standing history of incredible support,” Van Driel said. “We hope that they see the benefit to themselves when they give to the hospital fund.



**SMITH COUNTY
MEMORIAL HOSPITAL**

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Please consider a gift to ensure quality healthcare for North Central Kansas.

Use the enclosed envelope to send your tax deductible donation to Smith County Memorial Hospital.

☐

I/we _____ generously give \$_____ to the equipment and maintenance fund at Smith County Memorial Hospital.

Check number: _____ (enclosed)

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Name: _____

Phone: () _____

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Best method of contact:

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