September is Women’s Health Month at CommunityHealth, and the Lederman Family Health Center in West Town was once again the host site for the annual Women’s Health Day event on September 7th. This year, 31 women participated, making it one of the biggest turnouts to date. Participants engaged in no-cost educational activities and health screenings, facilitated by 16 dedicated volunteers, including doctors, nurses, educators, and translators.

The goal of this annual event is to provide women with tools and resources to live healthier lifestyles. It promotes exercise and healthy diet as a way for women to help themselves, and their families, live healthfully. Women’s Health Day also allows these patients to become more aware of woman-specific medical issues, such as breast and ovarian cancer.

Women were split into groups and then attended four sessions throughout the day. These sessions included: zumba lessons, healthy cooking and eating classes, a nutrition class from a volunteer registered dietician, and an informational session on women’s health issues. During the women’s health session, free PAP smears and breast exams were provided by CommunityHealth volunteer providers. Optional free Sexually Transmitted Infection (STI) testing was also made available for women.

Adelle White, the health education coordinator who planned the event, said that Women’s Health Day gives our female patients time to learn about taking care of their own health. “It’s so important for them to have their own day when they can celebrate being a woman and learn about how to feel their best. That is why we were happy to be able to offer Women’s Health Day to our patients.” The participants said they also enjoyed a day dedicated to their health and appreciated the opportunity to have annual PAP and breast exams completed without the usual waiting period.

Thanks to your very generous support, the Women’s Health Day event is made possible for these patients.
Diabetes Management Initiative Helps Patients Cope with Diabetes

Many of CommunityHealth’s more than 11,000 patients are dealing with chronic conditions that require ongoing (and often costly) care; diabetes is one of the most common conditions seen among our patients. Keeping up with the necessary care would be a near impossibility for many of our low-income patients without access to our services to help them control symptoms and prevent further illness. To help reduce the burden of this disease on our patients, CommunityHealth volunteers and staff have created a new initiative, the Diabetes Care Team, which will help patients better manage their disease and achieve more positive health outcomes.

The Diabetes Care Team has developed a plan that will enable patients to learn how to manage their diabetes long-term. Starting with a small sample of patients whose diabetes is labeled as ‘uncontrolled,’ the team’s primary objective is to measurably improve the health of these patients who are struggling with their diabetes.

Keeping with the holistic approach that we use here at CommunityHealth, each patient is assigned a team of providers who give the patient both medical and social support. Patients enrolled in this initiative attend bimonthly appointments with their care teams over a three-month period. After the first three months, the patients will continue to attend check-up appointments every three months to ensure they are maintaining their new regimens.

The intense schedule of appointments and holistic team approach will help patients establish a routine for testing blood sugar levels and taking prescribed medications. The ultimate goal is for patients to be able to maintain the routine long-term on their own.

At present, this is a small initiative at the West Town clinic, and the Diabetes Care Team is still in its development phase. If this initial trial goes well, CommunityHealth will expand the program at the West Town clinic and eventually implement this program at the Englewood clinic, as well.

In preparation for the landmark rollout of the Affordable Care Act, CommunityHealth estimates that more than half of our current patients will either be newly eligible for Medicaid or be required to purchase insurance through the Illinois Health Insurance Marketplace. Because history reminds us that the rollout of sweeping new programs (e.g., Medicaid, Medicare Part D) can be fraught with challenges, we recognize that CommunityHealth’s role as the “safety net under the safety net” requires us to step up in new ways to both educate and support our patients.

As CommunityHealth defines its future in 2014 and beyond, we not only have an obligation to maintain the scope of our services for those who will not benefit from the ACA, but also to help those who will transition out of our patient base. To assist this second group, we are working to create a “Culture of Coverage” that promotes patient awareness/education around ACA guidelines and enrollment procedures, provides assistance in applying for Medicaid or other insurance options through the Marketplace, and serves as a guide in finding a new medical home for newly enrolled patients leaving CommunityHealth.

The Illinois Department of Public Health recently selected CommunityHealth’s Englewood clinic as one of 44 sites to receive an In-Person Counselor grant for 2014. As a result of this grant, CommunityHealth has created a new In-Person Counselor position at the Englewood clinic and welcomed new staff member Sharell Collins in this role on October 8. Ms. Collins is currently undergoing IPC certification, and her time at the Englewood clinic will be devoted to educating and enrolling qualifying individuals in the health insurance system.

Another way that CommunityHealth is helping patients understand how the impact of ACA is by posting information on the CommunityHealth website. Patients can now visit communityhealth.org to read about the expansion of Medicaid and the Health Insurance Marketplace, where they can buy affordable health insurance plans. Our website also explains that despite the implementation of ACA, CommunityHealth will continue to be a viable option for people who are still uninsured and falling through the cracks. CommunityHealth hopes that this informational effort, combined with the In-Person Counselor, will offer a path for more Illinois residents – including our patients – to have secure, stable, and affordable health coverage.

**BOARD OF DIRECTORS**

Joseph B. O’Malley, President
Valerie E. Gallagher, President-Elect
James M. Durkin, Vice President
Rebekah Kohmescher, Treasurer
Andrew Palumbo, Secretary
Sally Benjamin Young, Assistant Secretary
Jillian R. Fournet, Assistant Secretary
Babs Waldman, M.D., Medical Director

Rebecca S. Busch
David C. Cousins
Michael A. Dunlap, D.D.S
Sandra F. Durley, PharmD
Joseph M. Harrington
William J. Hinde
John J. Koenigslineh, Esq.
Cheryl Lulias
Bradley R. Manteil
Karen Nichols, D.O.
David J. Rice, Esq.
H. Scott Sarran, M.D.
Richard H. Sewell
Thad E. Smith
Patrick Spain
Thomas M. Suffredin
Daniel Vicencio, M.D.

**EMERITUS DIRECTORS**

Seraphino Garella, M.D., Founder
John F. Benjamin
Robert K. Mendonsa
Arnold L. Widen, M.D., Immediate Past President

**EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR**

Judith Haasis

**Nurse Practitioner Program Supported by Grant Awarded to Rush**

In the summer of 2012, Rush University Medical Center (RUMC) was one of five hospitals in the nation to be awarded a Graduate Nurse Education (GNE) Demonstration in order to fund the graduate education of advanced practice nurses.

This summer, RUMC partnered with CommunityHealth as one location where advance practice nursing students are funded by the GNE Demonstration. This partnership benefits both the nurse practitioner students and the patients at our locations. The nurses build their clinical skills during their advanced education here at the clinic, and our patients reap the benefits of these advance practice nursing students providing quality health care.

Through the ‘Cornerstone in Care’ Nursing Program, nurses are the anchors of the CommunityHealth health care team. They work in conjunction with volunteer physicians and other key staff to carry out a variety of medical services at both the Lederman Family Health Center at West Town and our satellite location in Englewood. Our nursing team is also highly involved in developing and carrying out quality improvement projects to enhance the efficacy and efficiency of the health care we provide.

The GNE Demonstration program distributes $200 million over four years to the five awardees. This federal grant allows more students in the nurse practitioner program at RUMC to be supported throughout their clinical training at community-based health care settings.

The other four hospitals awarded the GNE Demonstration are: the Hospital of the University of Pennsylvania, Duke University Hospital, the Scottsdale Healthcare Medical Center, and Memorial Hermann-Texas Medical Center. This funding was made possible through the Affordable Care Act.

**CommunityHealth Recipient of Illinois Department of Public Health Grant**

In preparation for the landmark rollout of the Affordable Care Act, CommunityHealth estimates that more than half of our current patients will either be newly eligible for Medicaid or be required to purchase insurance through the Illinois Health Insurance Marketplace. Because history reminds us that the roll out of sweeping new programs (e.g., Medicaid, Medicare Part D) can be fraught with challenges, we recognize that CommunityHealth’s role as the “safety net under the safety net” requires us to step up in new ways to both educate and support our patients.

As CommunityHealth defines its future in 2014 and beyond, we not only have an obligation to maintain the scope of our services for those who will not benefit from the ACA, but also to help those who will transition out of our patient base. To assist this second group, we are working to create a “Culture of Coverage” that promotes patient awareness/education around ACA guidelines and enrollment procedures, provides assistance in applying for Medicaid or other insurance options through the Marketplace, and serves as a guide in finding a new medical home for newly enrolled patients leaving CommunityHealth.

The Illinois Department of Public Health recently selected CommunityHealth’s Englewood clinic as one of 44 sites to receive an In-Person Counselor grant for 2014. As a result of this grant, CommunityHealth has created a new In-Person Counselor position at the Englewood clinic and welcomed new staff member Sharell Collins in this role on October 8. Ms. Collins is currently undergoing IPC certification, and her time at the Englewood clinic will be devoted to educating and enrolling qualifying individuals in the health insurance system.

Another way that CommunityHealth is helping patients understand how the impact of ACA is by posting information on the CommunityHealth website. Patients can now visit communityhealth.org to read about the expansion of Medicaid and the Health Insurance Marketplace, where they can buy affordable health insurance plans. Our website also explains that despite the implementation of ACA, CommunityHealth will continue to be a viable option for people who are still uninsured and falling through the cracks. CommunityHealth hopes that this informational effort, combined with the In-Person Counselor, will offer a path for more Illinois residents – including our patients – to have secure, stable, and affordable health coverage.