Since its inception in 1994, Kentucky Homeplace has linked thousands of rural Kentuckians with medical, social and environmental services they otherwise might have done without. There was a ceremony in late May to mark the program’s anniversary at the UK Center of Excellence in Rural Health (CEHR) in Hazard.

During the ceremony, Dr. Fran Feltner, director of the UK Center of Excellence in Rural Health and principal investigator for Kentucky Homeplace, and Mace Baker, director of Kentucky Homeplace, were joined in recognizing the program by Dr. Connie White, deputy commissioner of the Kentucky Department for Public Health and Mark Birdwhistell, vice president for health system administration and chief of staff at UK HealthCare. A presentation of awards and a reception were also held.

“Kentucky Homeplace is a nationally recognized community health worker (CHW) initiative in 30 counties in eastern Kentucky, where residents are statistically poorer, less educated and less likely to have medical coverage than those in other parts of Kentucky and the nation.” said. These leaders included the late State Representative Paul Mason from rural Letcher County and State Representative Leonard Gray from Louisville who together introduced Kentucky House Bill 2 to establish Kentucky Homeplace.

The project was funded by the Kentucky legislature to link residents who lived in areas without access to care with available services with the goal of addressing health disparities throughout the more rural parts of Kentucky where cancer, heart disease, hypertension, asthma and diabetes were found at unusually high levels.

Building on Success

Today, Kentucky Homeplace is a nationally recognized community health worker (CHW) initiative in 30 counties in eastern Kentucky, where residents are statistically poorer, less educated and less likely to have medical coverage than those in other parts of Kentucky and the nation.

“Over the years many people have needed help with access to healthcare and many social needs,” Feltner said. “I have seen firsthand how Kentucky Homeplace meets the needs of the people they serve. People who may have gone without lifesaving care. For this reason, I cannot imagine Kentucky without Kentucky Homeplace.”

Continued on page 10
UK Healthcare Hospice Care Center celebrates anniversary

Bluegrass Care Navigators is celebrating the one-year anniversary of the hospice care center at UK HealthCare this month.

Since its opening in spring of 2018, more than 500 patients have benefitted from this dedicated hospital space for hospice care.

The care center provides a comforting place for patients and families to have quality time together while facing the final stages of a serious illness, while also benefitting from the full-time nursing and physician care provided in the hospital setting.

Bluegrass Care Navigators identified a need for a dedicated unit while caring for patients and families throughout the hospital.

Inpatient hospice care involves expert symptom management for hospice patients in a homelike hospital setting, providing round-the-clock medical and nursing care to manage distressing symptoms. Specially trained staff and volunteers carry out a patient-focused plan of care developed by the hospice team in collaboration with the patient, family and attending physician. Patients and families can receive emotional and spiritual support from Bluegrass Care Navigator social workers and chaplains.

Located on the third floor of UK’s Ben F. Roach Building, the hospice care center has 10 private rooms and a common room and kitchen to provide many of the comforts of home for families and patients. Additionally, the center has expanded visitation hours to allow the family more time with their loved one.

The facility is one of only a handful of hospice inpatient care centers in the country located in an academic medical center. This unique collaboration offers opportunities to provide expert care as well as training and education on hospice and palliative medicine.

Bluegrass Care Navigators provides hospice care in 32 counties across central, eastern and northern Kentucky. In addition, the agency supports those facing serious illness or chronic disease with private duty nursing, home primary care, transitional care, adult day healthcare and palliative care services.

US WorldMeds settles whistleblower suit

Louisville-based US WorldMeds will pay $17.5 million, plus interest, to settle allegations that it improperly paid patients and physicians to use the company’s medications.

The settlement resolves an investigation by the department and two whistleblower lawsuits that were filed against the pharmaceutical company in 2013 and in 2016 in U.S. District Court for the District of Connecticut.

The whistleblowers, Brian Bennett and Dr. Robert Chinnapongse, will receive $3.15 million of the settlement for bringing qui tam suits against US WorldMeds.

US WorldMeds denies the allegations raised by the federal government, according to the settlement agreement.

Hosparus Health partners with #StoryCorps

Hosparus Health was one of six organizations partnering on Road to Resilience. StoryCorps trained volunteers, social workers, a chaplain and grief counselors on how to follow the StoryCorps model.

“Sharing our memories is a vital part of the healing process after the death of a loved one, especially for children who are grieving,” said Candice Evans, LCSW, manager of the Hosparus Health Grief Counseling Center. “We are so honored to have been chosen for this compassionate storytelling program, which will help us elevate awareness of the power of stories in our bereavement work, both locally and nationally.”

StoryCorps’ Community Training team offers support and training to partnering organizations, empowering them to facilitate and record meaningful conversations. This year they partnered with the New York Life Foundation to create Road to Resilience: Memories that Move Us Forward, a program to support the stories of children grieving the death of a parent, sibling or important person in their lives.

UK opens pediatric Total Cancer Care Protocol

UK HealthCare opened the Oncology Research Information Exchange Network’s (ORIEN) Total Cancer Care Protocol to pediatric patients, becoming the first cancer program in the country to do so.

ORIEN is an alliance of 19 major cancer centers that shares information to allow its members to push forward evidence-based cancer care to patients. In 2017, the University of Kentucky Markey Cancer Center joined the network; just a year later, Markey hit a milestone of enrolling more than 1,000 patients, placing it in the top third of the consortium in terms of accrual rate.

ORIEN members follow the Total Cancer Care Protocol, operated by M2Gen, a for-profit subsidiary of the Moffitt Cancer Center in Tampa, Florida. Total Cancer Care is a unique approach to studying patients throughout their lifetime and provides a standard system for tracking patients’ molecular, clinical and epidemiological data. This gives clinicians and researchers access to a searchable, growing database of medical information from respected peers that can help them match patients to targeted treatments.
Sullivan University College of Pharmacy scholar recognized as emerging educator

Daniel Malcolm, PharmD, an associate professor and vice chair of Clinical and Administrative Sciences at the Sullivan University College of Pharmacy and Health Sciences, has been named a winner of the American Association of Colleges (AACP) of Pharmacy Council of Facilities Emerging Teaching Scholar Award. The award recognizes excellence of academic pharmacy faculty engaged in and/or supporting scholarly teaching and the scholarship of teaching and learning.

“Daniel is an excellent faculty member who works to fulfill the teaching, service and scholarship missions of the College,” said Cindy Stowe, PharmD, dean of the Sullivan University College of Pharmacy and Health Sciences. “I’m excited that his efforts are being recognized nationally by his peers. We couldn’t be prouder of Daniel.”

A native of Georgia, Malcolm received his undergraduate and PharmD degrees from The University of Georgia and completed two years of post-graduate residency at the University of Tennessee Medical Center in Knoxville, Tennessee. He has been on the Sullivan University faculty since 2010.

Malcolm teaches courses in his specialty area of critical care, including classes on acid-base disorders and fluids and electrolytes.

Lucina Health partners with Trusted Health Plan

Louisville-based Lucina Health, Inc. has signed an agreement with Trusted Health Plan, a managed healthcare organization in Washington, D.C. The partnership is aimed at helping reduce preterm birth and maternal mortality in the District of Columbia.

Preterm birth and maternal mortality are national crises, with rates in the United States higher than any other developed country. Washington, D.C. was given a “D” grade by the March of Dimes on its latest Preterm Birth Report Card, with 10.6 percent of babies delivered prior to 37 weeks gestation. For black women in the District, that percentage is even higher at 12.5 percent.

Legislative efforts throughout the country are also focused on maternal mortality, with the recent passage of laws by Congress to make the birth process safer for women.

Lucina Health uses advanced analytics to identify pregnancies earlier (86 percent in the first and second trimesters) and then risk-stratify mothers so that health plan care managers may engage with them and help them mitigate the risk of early delivery.

Stonecrest of Louisville sells for $26 million

CA Ventures an international real estate investment management company, paid $26 million to acquire Stonecrest of Louisville, an assisted-living and memory-care facility that was built in 2017 in Louisville.

Medical News is a community of people who are experts in the business of healthcare. Our healthcare leaders engage in our community in person, in print and online in order to gain insights and information to build relationships and grow their business.

Our community reflects the broad landscape of the business of healthcare – from traditionally defined healthcare businesses to all the adjacent companies that are part of the fabric that supports the industry.

In the past 25 years, we helped create experiences and share the stories that matter in the business of healthcare in our region.

KMA appreciates Medical News for its relevant and thoughtful content on issues that are important to the medical industry. In April 2018, KMA was excited to be highlighted for its strategic planning work and valued the opportunity to share our successes with the healthcare community. Having such a publication in Kentucky is beneficial for providers and patients alike.”

Patrick Padgett
KMA Executive Vice President
Baptist Health
Laura Grumley was named regional marketing and public relations manager for its west region.

Bluegrass Care Navigators
Veteran Laura Khumb was named vice president for philanthropy.

LifePoint Health Inc.
Sonny Terrill, chief human resources officer, has been named executive vice president of human resources.

Spero Health
Clint Cromwell was appointed chief legal officer.

Baptist Health
Karen Profitt Newman, who has held the roles of chief nursing officer and vice president at Baptist Health Louisville since 1999, will retire.

BrightSpring Health Services
Jon Rousseau was named CEO of the Year at the Business Transformation and Operational Excellence World Summit.

Stites & Harbison
Demetrius Holloway was elected to the American Diabetes Association of Kentucky’s Community Leadership Board.

Bingham Greenebaum Doll
Trisha Dudlo was recently named partner.

CHI Saint Joseph Health
Yousef Darrat, MD, joined CHI Saint Joseph Medical Group – Cardiology in Bardstown.

Mercy Health
Kelley Bright was appointed as the Kentucky office leader, based in Louisville.

Baptist Health Paducah
hospitalist Ben Thompson, MD, was named one of TeamHealth’s Dr. Gar LaSalle Medical Directors of the Year.

GeriMed
Lewis Romero was promoted to vice president of Audit Compliance & Resolution.

MCM CPAs & Advisors
Diane Medley rejoined U of L’s board of trustees.

Kentucky Economic Development Partnership
Terry Gill is stepping down as Kentucky’s economic development secretary.

Mercy Health
Trena Stocker, previously the hospital’s chief nursing executive, has been named president of Mercy Health – Marcum and Wallace Hospital.

Lauren Nichols was recently named partner.

Matthew Johns was promoted to partner.

Terry Gill is stepping down as Kentucky’s economic development secretary.

Diane Medley rejoined U of L’s board of trustees.

Social media cards
KNOW SOMEONE WHO IS ON THE MOVE?
Email sally@igemedia.com
Meet Paul Beatrice, president and CEO of Bluegrass.org

**Medical News:** How did you end up being president and CEO of Bluegrass.org?

**Paul Beatrice:** I grew up in a family where a moral philosophy of helping others was emphasized throughout my childhood. The focus of my professional life mirrors the responsibility I feel personally for the health and well-being of others. I’ve enjoyed a 35-year career in the behavioral health field and for the past five years I’ve called Lexington and Bluegrass.org home.

**MN:** How has it been different than you expected?

**PB:** The shortage of professionals to serve our clients has been one of our biggest challenges. We need to encourage the next generation to enter the human services field. To address this shortage, we incorporated telehealth into our service delivery system and are constantly working to improve access to community mental health and substance use services.

**MN:** What are you most proud of accomplishing during your time at Bluegrass.org?

**PB:** We restructured our outpatient services to provide greater access to services closer to our rural clients. For years, most services were anchored in Lexington which limited access to services for our clients who lived in our most rural areas. We created four anchor centers in Danville, Georgetown, Richmond and Lexington with each offering a full array of services. In addition, we’ve expanded our work with intellectual and developmental disability clients to include the management of Hazelwood and Bingham Gardens, intermediate care facilities, in Louisville, in addition to Oakwood located in Somerset.

**MN:** Tell us about the culture you are trying to foster at Bluegrass.org.

**PB:** Open, cooperative, team-oriented and collaborative are key to our culture. We cannot create new programs, serve our clients better and retain top talent if we are not working collaboratively to achieve these results. We strive to foster a learning environment that builds personal growth for staff and consequently growth for the entire organization.

**MN:** Bluegrass.org is rebranding to New Vista. Share the factors that led to that decision.

**PB:** In behavioral health, we typically haven’t focused on our brand. That is changing. Consumers want to interact with brands in healthcare like they do with retail brand such as Netflix or Amazon. We’ve spent two years, working through the process of rebranding our organization to better communicate what it is we do. New Vista is a name that says we see the good ahead for our clients. Our mission is to help children, adults and families live their best lives and New Vista is a name that projects hope and recovery. New Vista is our people. New Vista is our commitment to the communities we serve.
National Hospital Price Transparency Results

**Time:** 8 to 10:30 am  
**Location:** UofL Shelby Campus,  
Founders Union Building,  
450 N. Whittington Pkwy., Louisville, Ky. 40222  
**Info:** Sharing the results of the first national hospital price transparency study in the U.S. that publicly notes commercial inpatient and outpatient hospital prices by hospital name. For more information, visit khcollaborative.org.

Health for a Change Workshop: Building Healthier Communities with CANE, Inc.

**Time:** 11:30 am networking and lunch; noon to 1:30 pm community health forum; 1:30 to 4:30 pm workshop  
**Location:** CANE: Community Agricultural and Nutritional Enterprises, Inc.,  
38 College Dr., Whitesburg, Ky. 41858  
**Info:** For more information, visit healthy-ky.org.

Spring Conference: Kentucky Society for Healthcare Public Relations & Marketing

**Time:** 10 am to 3 pm  
**Location:** The Wash House at Shaker Village,  
3501 Lexington Rd., Harrodsburg, Ky. 40330  
**Info:** Register at kshprm.net/newsandevents.

Optimal Aging Conference

**Location:** The Brown Hotel,  
335 W. Broadway, Louisville, Ky. 40202  
**Info:** Aging Inspired – discussing the importance of an interdisciplinary effort to integrate the aging experience. For more information, visit Tragerinstitute.org/OAC2019.

Healthcare Transformation Survival Seminar Series

**Time:** 9 am to 3:10 pm  
**Location:** June 13 at the Lexington Center Heritage Ballroom;  
June 20 at the Knicey Center in Bowling Green;  
June 21 at the Baptist Health Heart Center in Paducah  
**Info:** Exploring quality improvement techniques and the Quality Payment Program to ensure that clinicians, hospital administrators and clinic staff in Kentucky are well-prepared. For more information visit kentuckyrec.com.

EnterpriseCorp’s Evening of Entrepreneurship

**Time:** 5:30 to 7:30 pm  
**Location:** Actor’s Theatre of Louisville,  
316 W. Main St., Louisville, Ky. 40202  
**Info:** For more information visit greaterlouisville.com.

HPV Vaccination Roundtable

**Time:** 7:45 to 8:45 am breakfast and registration; 8:45 am to 12:30 pm program  
**Location:** Norton Healthcare Learning Center,  
9500 Ormsby Station Rd., Suite 200, Louisville, Ky. 40223  
**Info:** A meeting to discuss strategies to collectively increase HPV vaccination rates in the Louisville area. Register at https://bit.ly/2LHbwp.

Kentucky Chamber Golf Invitational

**Location:** Valhalla Golf Club  
15503 Shelbyville Rd, Louisville, Ky. 40245  
**Info:** Contact Lori Jo Goff at lgoff@kychamber.com for more information.

Trauma-Informed Care Training

**Time:** 8 am to noon  
**Location:** James S. Judy Training Center, 9403 Mill Brook Rd., Louisville, Ky. 40223  
**Info:** For more information visit kahcf.org.

Centerstone Heals Luncheon

**Time:** Noon to 1 pm  
**Location:** The Henry Clay,  
604 S. 3rd St., Louisville, Ky. 40202  
**Info:** Bringing awareness to suicide prevention. Eddie George, a Heisman-winning running back and NFL player, will be the featured speaker and will share his own personal struggles with mental illness. For more information email maryclare.coffey@centerstone.org.
Healthcare startup wins Venture Sharks competition

Prodigy Biosciences took first place at a pitch event based on the viability of its idea, the ability of the competition’s prize to positively affect the business and the quality of their presentation.

The Louisville startup, founded by Amanda Cannady, is developing a rapid tablesiding testing device that will detect traces of peanuts in food samples.

Prodigy Biosciences is developing two devices for consumers to test their food. One is a single-use cartridge and the other is a reusable tablesiding sensor, which would sell for $260 at market with an estimated cost of $73 to create.

Prodigy Biosciences won the contest over three other finalists. Venture

Select Medical, Norton Healthcare sign agreement

Select Medical and Norton Healthcare announced a joint venture to integrate outpatient rehabilitation services in the Louisville metro and southern Indiana regions.

Under the agreement, Select Medical contributed 29 of its Kentucky Orthopedic Rehab Team (KORT) centers and Norton Healthcare contributed three centers to the venture.

KORT, a wholly owned subsidiary of Select Medical, specializes in outpatient physical therapy, hand therapy, sports medicine and work health, has 63 locations throughout Kentucky and southern Indiana.

Highland District Hospital construction continues

A lengthy expansion project continues at Highland District Hospital, which began in August of 2018.

The project, planned in three phases, is expected to be complete in the summer of 2020 and includes the addition of all private inpatient rooms equipped with the newest technology, a separate orthopedic and sports medicine outpatient clinic, on-site and expanded outpatient rehabilitation, additional patient registration access points, a new cancer care unit, an expanded and remodeled surgery unit and a more easily accessible patient entrance with improved traffic access, including a parking lot expansion.

The project will be completed in partnership with Pepper Construction of Ohio, design firm TEG Architects and in collaboration with Megen Construction.

State awarded school mental health grant

The Kentucky Department of Education and the Kentucky Cabinet for Health and Family Services received a $9 million federal grant to increase awareness of mental health issues among Kentucky students across the state and in three pilot school districts.

KDE and the Department for Behavioral Health, Developmental and Intellectual Disabilities have received the Advancing Wellness and Resilience in Education (AWARE) grant.

The grant will provide resources for three Kentucky school districts for the implementation of district-wide mental health policies and processes in

Essential Nurse Compact legislation signed into law in Indiana

After months of coordinated advocacy efforts, Indiana’s Gov. Holcomb signed the nurse license sure compact into law on May 1. House Bill 1344, authored by New Albany Rep. Ed Clere, adds Indiana to a list of 31 states participating in the interstate compact, which allows nurses to cross state lines without duplicative licenses.

Hosparus Health earns Hospice Honors award

Hosparus Health has been named a 2019 Hospice Honors recipient by HEALTHCAREfirst, a provider of billing and coding services, Consumer Assessment of Healthcare Providers and Systems (CAHPS) surveys and advanced analytics. This annual award recognizes the top hospices in the country that continuously provide the highest level of quality as measured from the caregiver’s point of view.

Awards were based on Hospice CAHPS survey results during the period of October 2017 through September 2018. To be eligible for the award, hospices must be current partners with HEALTHCAREfirst and have at least one complete survey returned in each quarter of the evaluation period.

Award recipients were evaluated on a set of 24 quality indicator measures. Individual scores were aggregated from all surveys and compared with a national performance score calculated from all partnering hospices in the HEALTHCAREfirst Hospice CAHPS database. Hospice Honors recipients are those that scored above the HEALTHCAREfirst national performance score on 20 of the questions.
Barnstable Brown gala raises $16 million for diabetes

Each year, sisters Patricia Barnstable Brown and Priscilla Barnstable host a party at their Louisville home to support the Barnstable Brown Diabetes Center in memory of Patricia’s husband who passed away from diabetes complications.

In 12 years, they’ve raised about $16 million. Since its inception in 2008, the UK Barnstable Brown Diabetes Center has been a leader in diabetes prevention, education, research and comprehensive care. The center assists more than 7,500 adult patients and 2,500 pediatric patients each year in the management and treatment of diabetes and related diseases, working closely with the patient’s primary care physician.

UofL hires entrepreneurs to guide inventions to market

The University of Louisville has hired entrepreneurs-in-residence (EIRs) to help guide research-backed inventions to market.

The EIRs, under the UofL Office of the Executive Vice President for Research and Innovation (EVPRI), will provide guidance on product development, business planning and other activities to accelerate the commercialization of university inventions.

UofL ranks as one of only 120 U.S. “Research 1” universities with “very high research activity,” according to the Carnegie Classification of Institutions of Higher Education. The EIRs will amplify UofL’s existing efforts aimed at getting technologies born from that research to market, which include a superfecta of translational research programs.

Funding for the EIRs comes from the Louisville Entrepreneurship Acceleration Partnership (LEAP), a public-private partnership led by UofL and backed by the Kentucky Cabinet for Economic Development, to grow Louisville’s entrepreneurship ecosystem.
Markey announces first cohort of students for ACTION program

Through a multimillion-dollar grant from the National Cancer Institute, the University of Kentucky Markey Cancer Center recently expanded its successful Appalachian Career Training in Oncology (ACTION) Program to include high school students from Appalachian Kentucky counties.

The ACTION Program offers Appalachian Kentucky high school students the opportunity to gain cancer research, clinical, outreach and educational experiences that will enrich their interest in pursuing a future cancer-focused career.

After reviewing more than 90 applications for the program, a Markey committee selected 20 high school students to enroll in the program for the 2019 class. These students will participate in the program for a total of two years beginning with a five-week summer residential program on UK’s campus starting in early June.

Appalachian Regional Healthcare rolls out tele-ICU

Lexington, Kentucky-based Appalachian Regional Healthcare is deploying new tele-ICU capabilities across 12 hospitals in Kentucky and West Virginia.

Working in partnership with vendor Advanced ICU Care, which provides telemedicine technology and services, the health system kicked off the implementation at Hazard ARH Regional Medical Center in Kentucky, with 11 more locations set to go live by July.

Like most of Advanced ICU clients, Appalachian Regional serves its patients in a sprawling network of hospitals spread across multiple states. It hopes to benefit from a standardized, enterprise-wide deployment of high-acuity remote monitoring services using the vendors’ platform.

The company’s intensivists, advanced practice providers, and nurses will connect with ARH clinicians to leverage real-time clinical data and two-way audio-visual capabilities to coordinate care remotely for ICU patients among multidisciplinary teams.

Grant supports free dental screening in eastern Ky.

The University of Kentucky College of Dentistry (UKCD) provided over 300 oral health screenings during the annual Hillbilly Days event in Pikeville. These screening were part of the college’s Eradicate Oral Cancer in Eastern Kentucky project, made possible by a $1 million grant from the United Health Foundation (UHF).

Appalachian Regional Healthcare System

The three-year Eradicate Oral Cancer in Eastern Kentucky project seeks to raise public awareness of the symptoms of oral cancer and its links to heavy alcohol and tobacco use, providing approximately 1,000 oral cancer screenings in partnership with local health departments and help connect patients needing additional care to cancer specialists in Lexington.

Study to explore reasons rural communities are less healthy

A new study hopes to help researchers understand what causes high rates of heart, lung, blood and sleep disorders (HLBS) in rural Kentucky, Alabama, Mississippi and Louisiana.

Dubbed the Risk Underlying Rural Areas Longitudinal (RURAL) study, Stephanie Boone, PhD, assistant professor, University of Louisville School of Public Health and Information Sciences, will lead the research in Kentucky.

The overall study is coordinated by Boston University School of Medicine and funded by the National Heart, Lung, and Blood Institute, part of the National Institutes of Health. The six-year, $21.4 million multi-site prospective epidemiology cohort study includes 50 investigators from 15 other institutions.

Kentucky Rural Health Association call for poster presentations

Kentucky Rural Health Association (KRHA) is now accepting poster proposals for the 2019 conference on November 14th and 15th in Bowling Green, Ky. Submitted poster proposals are required to have a policy focus related to the health of rural Kentuckians. Abstract submissions are due by July 15th.

The submissions will be reviewed by a panel of rural researchers and only 20 posters will be accepted for the conference. Posters will be presented at a scheduled presentation time on November 14th; judges will select the top five posters to do quick Ted talk style presentation on stage to all attendees.

Rural clinics reach out to treat hepatitis C

To combat the hepatitis C virus, healthcare providers are reaching into some of the hardest hit areas, which are rural areas with limited access to healthcare. In Williamsburg, Bryant Family Medicine has become the local hub for hepatitis C treatment, as part of the KHAMP (Kentucky Hepatitis Academic Mentorship Program) through the University of Louisville.

KHAMP is a training platform designed using a telementoring-based training program for primary care providers throughout communities in the Commonwealth. KHAMP’s goal is to improve the health of individuals in underserved communities throughout the Appalachian region by building a primary care workforce trained by experts to screen, diagnose, treat and follow persons infected with hepatitis C infection.
Kentucky Homeplace celebrates 25 years

Adding It Up
Since July 2001, Kentucky Homeplace has provided more than 4.9 million services to 161,968 clients. Services include health education programming and helping to alleviate some of the barriers of the social determinates of health such as economic instability, health literacy, lack of insurance, transportation, access to healthy food, housing, lack of knowledge about services and inadequate knowledge about a client's own health conditions.

Kentucky Homeplace CHWs possess an enormous wealth of knowledge which enables them to fulfill their role, said Mace Baker, Kentucky Homeplace director. “Each day they encounter new and unique barriers that their clients face, and they use a combination of years of knowledge of available resources and of building connections within their communities to meet these needs,” he said. “They also have the unique ability to draw upon the collective knowledge of all Kentucky Homeplace CHWs to assist clients with a multitude of services.”

Linking Clients to Services
Initially, the CERH recruited 36 family healthcare advisers—now called community health workers—to serve as the link between clients and services. They were lay health workers who were trusted members of the communities they served who received training to promote and carry out healthcare services. In their role, they visit clients in their homes, complete assessments and direct those clients to agencies where their needs can be met.

The workers originally operated in the west end of Louisville and 13 counties — Bell, Clay, Floyd, Knott, Letcher, McCreary, Owsley, Perry and Whitley counties in eastern Kentucky as well as Allen, Butler, Monroe and Wayne counties in south central Kentucky. All services were offered to clients free of charge.

Although at one point the program’s service area grew to 58 counties — covering nearly half of the commonwealth — state budget cuts over the years has led to Homeplace offices being shut down and the service area decreased in size.

Today, 22 CHWs continue to provide services to residents across 30 counties in eastern Kentucky with services that have grown to include:
- Assisting in accessing crucial resources like eyeglasses, dentures, home heating assistance, food, diabetic supplies and free medical care and prescriptions.
- Facilitating communication between clients and their physicians.
- Helping clients to effectively comply with their medical care instructions.
- Helping clients to improve their health behaviors through educational programs targeting nutrition, physical activity, weight management, smoking cessation and diabetes self-management.

“The people who receive services through Kentucky Homeplace have come to trust and know that they matter and that the community health workers are there to advocate for them,” Feltner said.
Meeting behavioral health needs in rural Kentucky

By Natalie Pope

Rural areas in the United States face a shortage of behavioral health practitioners. As CNN recently reported, a new study in the American Journal of Preventive Medicine found that 47 percent of non-metropolitan counties don’t have access to a psychologist. The shortage extends to psychiatrists, nurse practitioners and a cadre of behavioral health resources including shelters, hospitals and community support groups.

“Older adults are particularly affected by the lack of behavioral health practitioners. Isolation and depression are common issues for older adults, with 20 percent of rural older adults diagnosed with depression.”

— Anna Faul, PhD, executive director, Trager Institute

Kentucky ranks 40th in the nation for primary care physicians, rural communities represent 42 percent of Kentucky’s population, and yet 17 percent of the state’s primary care physicians work in rural areas. On top of this, Kentucky only has 15 geriatric medicine specialists to serve the entire population.

Kentucky also has a shortage of mental health professionals with only half of adults with mental health conditions receiving the care they need. Limited resources as expected to be strained even more in coming years as the older adult population in rural communities is expected to increase more than in urban areas.

This is troubling because poor access to mental healthcare, according to experts, is a serious issue that overlaps with other public health crises like drug abuse and suicide.

FlourishCare

The University of Louisville Trager Institute is working to meet this need in rural Kentucky through its federally funded FlourishCare program.

Beginning in 2018, the UofL Trager Institute places around 38 students each year who specialize in behavioral health into over a dozen rural healthcare sites across 10 rural and underserved communities. In this program, students provide direct behavioral health interventions at primary care practices as well as in patient homes.

“Older adults are particularly affected by the lack of behavioral health practitioners,” said Anna Faul, PhD, the Trager Institute’s executive director. “Isolation and depression are common issues for older adults, with 20 percent of rural older adults diagnosed with depression. Not having access to behavioral healthcare can severely worsen conditions and lead to physical decline. Furthermore, mobility limitations can make it difficult for older adults to drive long distances to get the care they need.”

In addition to behavioral health services, older adults participating in the FlourishCare program receive comprehensive care coordination and chronic disease management services.

“In our first year of this program, we provided behavioral health services to over 150 of older adult patients in rural Kentucky. We look forward to continuing this service this coming year with our new cohort of students,” said Faul. Locations where the students will be placed for fall 2019 include:

- T.J. Sampson Family Medicine Center (covering Barren, Hart, and Metcalfe Counties)
- Exceptional Senior Living (Oldham County)
- Multi-purpose Community Action Agency (Bullitt and Shelby Counties)
- Presbyterian Homes and Services of Kentucky (Jefferson County)
- University of Louisville Family and Geriatric Practice (Jefferson County)
- University of Louisville PNES Clinic (Jefferson County)
- Tri-County Community Action Agency (Oldham and Trimble Counties)
- University of Louisville AIM Clinic (Jefferson County)
- University of Louisville Family & Geriatric Practice (Jefferson County)
- Presbyterian Homes and Services of Kentucky (Jefferson County)
- Presbyterian Homes and Services of Kentucky (Jefferson County)
- University of Louisville AIM Clinic (Jefferson County)
- Tri-County Community Action Agency (Oldham and Trimble Counties)
- University of Louisville Family & Geriatric Practice (Jefferson County)
- University of Louisville PNES Clinic (Jefferson County)
- Presbyterian Homes and Services of Kentucky (Jefferson County)

“Kentucky also has a shortage of mental health professionals with only half of adults with mental health conditions receiving the care they need.”

The UofL Trager Institute is currently looking to expand the number of student placement locations.

In addition to provide much needed behavioral health and care coordination services to older adults, the FlourishCare program also work to increase the geriatrics behavioral health workforce in rural communities. Both undergraduate and graduate students across multiple disciplines are involved in this program. Many of the masters and doctoral-level students are participating in the Institute’s Flourish Behavioral Health Graduate Internship. As part of this internship, students receive professional skills training, job placement services and a Professional Certificate in Integrated Primary Care and Behavioral Health.

— Natalie Pope is with the University of Louisville Trager Institute, formerly the Institute for Sustainable Health & Optimal Aging.

In 2015, an estimated 43.4 million adults in the U.S, nearly one fifth (17.9 percent) of those aged 18 and older, suffered from a behavioral health issue—mental illness, substance abuse, or other psychiatric condition. Almost one quarter of these (4.0 percent) suffered from a serious mental illness, defined as any mental disorder that substantially interfered with or limited one or more major life activities.

— Centers for Disease Control and Prevention
Barriers to good health

Programs to expand mental, oral health services for eastern Kentucky residents.

By Tiffany Murray

Kentucky has historically ranked in the lowest 10 percent of the United Health Foundation’s America’s Health Rankings. The Foundation has tracked the many barriers to good health confronting Kentuckians, along with residents of other states, for nearly 30 years.

From the Foundation’s perspective, perhaps the brightest ray of light comes from the many Kentucky organizations striving to create a healthier Kentucky. United Health Foundation has joined forces with many of them – providing grants and support for initiatives that address some of Kentucky’s most pressing health needs.

Pathways Partnership

In November 2018, the United Health Foundation provided a $930,000, three-year grant to Pathways, Inc., to improve access to mental healthcare for children and adolescents and address serious mental health challenges, including a 25 percent increase in the commonwealth’s teen suicides since 2016, as reported through America’s Health Rankings, as well as the emotional repercussions from Kentucky’s high rate of drug deaths. Pathways will expand mental health services for children in eastern Kentucky using telehealth technology.

“The three-year project addresses the high prevalence of oral cancer in eastern Kentucky, as well as the lack of access to local healthcare providers specializing in oral cancer treatment.”

Oral Health Focus

United Health Foundation also joined in efforts to reduce oral cancer rates and improve oral health in Kentucky. The Foundation provided a $1 million grant to the University of Kentucky College of Dentistry (UKCD) to launch its “Eradicate Oral Cancer in Eastern Kentucky” project.

The three-year project addresses the high prevalence of oral cancer in eastern Kentucky, as well as the lack of access to local healthcare providers specializing in oral cancer treatment. The project raises awareness of oral cancer symptoms and its links to heavy alcohol and tobacco use and is on-track to provide over 1,000 oral cancer screenings in partnership with local health departments. The project also helps connect patients who need additional care to cancer specialists in Lexington.

America’s Health Rankings indicates Kentucky has a growing
problem with access to dental care and oral health services, as the number of dentists per capita has declined for three straight years.

Kentucky has one of the nation’s highest incidences of oral cancer. And, oral cancer has a high mortality rate – with only about 57 percent of those diagnosed surviving five years beyond the diagnosis, due in large part to late discovery. The prevalence of oral cancer in the counties targeted by the United Health Foundation grant is as much as 54 percent higher than the state average.

“There are some outstanding organizations striving to do great things to help improve the health of Kentuckians,” said Tom Wiffler, CEO, UnitedHealthcare Specialty Benefits. “University of Kentucky College of Dentistry and Pathways are two examples. We’re grateful for the opportunity to help them make a difference.”

A Model For Others

The UK College of Dentistry’s efforts to eradicate oral cancer in eastern Kentucky reflects its overall mission – advancing oral and general health in Kentucky and beyond. And, indeed, this project may become a model for other organizations.

The college will share its project findings and results with state and national organizations and will provide guidance on how the program might be replicated or adapted in other communities.

The barriers and solutions to improve mental and oral health in eastern Kentucky are complex. But with the expertise and integrated approach set forth by Pathways Inc. and the University of Kentucky College of Dentistry, along with the commitment and support provided by United Health Foundation, the ambitious goals of the projects are achievable.

— Tiffany Murray is with Guthrie/Mayes Public Relations.

Pathways has installed the telehealth technology at its outpatient offices and specialty residential units in the region and has begun connecting patients to child and adolescent psychiatrists, eliminating the need for families to drive two hours to access a child mental health specialist.”
Meeting the needs of newly adopted children

The roughly 120,000 children adopted in the United States every year have high risk for physical, developmental and mental health issues, conditions that may have been unknown before joining their new families.

A clinical report published by the American Academy of Pediatrics offers guidance for pediatricians on the initial comprehensive medical evaluation of newly adopted children. The evaluation helps parents fully address their child’s physical and mental health and developmental needs.

Children awaiting adoption are at high risk of having been exposed prenatally to illegal drugs and/or alcohol as well as physical, emotional and sexual abuse, according to the report. Other early childhood factors that impact the health of adopted children include poverty and inadequate developmental stimulation. Common health issues these children face include growth failure, asthma, obesity, vision impairment, hearing loss, neurologic problems and sexually transmitted infections.

Soon after a child’s adoption, a pediatrician should conduct a comprehensive medical evaluation to confirm and clarify existing medical diagnoses, assess for previously unknown issues, discuss developmental, mental and behavioral concerns with parents and make referrals. The evaluation should include a thorough review of the child’s medical history, a complete physical examination and necessary diagnostic testing, according to the report.

The roughly 120,000 children adopted in the United States every year have high risk for physical, developmental and mental health issues, conditions that may have been unknown before joining their new families.

A clinical report published by the American Academy of Pediatrics offers guidance for pediatricians on the initial comprehensive medical evaluation of newly adopted children. The evaluation helps parents fully address their child’s physical and mental health and developmental needs.

Children awaiting adoption are at high risk of having been exposed prenatally to illegal drugs and/or alcohol as well as physical, emotional and sexual abuse, according to the report. Other early childhood factors that impact the health of adopted children include poverty and inadequate developmental stimulation. Common health issues these children face include growth failure, asthma, obesity, vision impairment, hearing loss, neurologic problems and sexually transmitted infections.

Soon after a child’s adoption, a pediatrician should conduct a comprehensive medical evaluation to confirm and clarify existing medical diagnoses, assess for previously unknown issues, discuss developmental, mental and behavioral concerns with parents and make referrals. The evaluation should include a thorough review of the child’s medical history, a complete physical examination and necessary diagnostic testing, according to the report.

The 2018-2019 LGBT Health Certificate program concluded last month with a celebratory reception. This year, UofL had 93 certificate recipients who completed the series, making it the most successful academic year of the program to date.

The celebration was attended by certificate recipients, in addition to Dean Craig Blakely (School of Public Health and Information Sciences), Dean Toni Ganzel (School of Medicine), Dean Sonya Hardin (School of Nursing), and Associate Dean Dr. Margaret Hill (School of Dentistry).

In order to receive the LGBT Health Certificate, all 93 certificate awardees were required to participate in at least four content modules, available in-person and online, which covered a broad range of topics related to LGBTQ+ health. Additionally, participants were also required to attend a patient simulation session in which LGBTQ+ community members acted out patient encounters with participants based on real-life scenarios and offer feedback.

The 2018-2019 LGBT Health Certificate program concluded last month with a celebratory reception. This year, UofL had 93 certificate recipients who completed the series, making it the most successful academic year of the program to date. The celebration was attended by certificate recipients, in addition to Dean Craig Blakely (School of Public Health and Information Sciences), Dean Toni Ganzel (School of Medicine), Dean Sonya Hardin (School of Nursing), and Associate Dean Dr. Margaret Hill (School of Dentistry).

In order to receive the LGBT Health Certificate, all 93 certificate awardees were required to participate in at least four content modules, available in-person and online, which covered a broad range of topics related to LGBTQ+ health. Additionally, participants were also required to attend a patient simulation session in which LGBTQ+ community members acted out patient encounters with participants based on real-life scenarios and offer feedback.
Symposium focuses on alternative pain management

A symposium hosted by the University of Louisville Trager Institute offered insight into the dangers of medication misuse and addiction for older adults, alternative solutions to chronic pain management and advocacy for making alternative pain strategies accessible for older adults.

This symposium was part of a broader effort led by the UofL Trager Institute to address opioid misuse among older adults, especially for those living in rural communities. Of the 173 patients who have received services through the UofL Trager Institute’s FlourishCare program, medication management issues related to opioid prescriptions and interactions with other medications were a factor for nearly 50 percent of patients. Medication safety also proved to be a problem, with family members or caregivers taking opioids from patients in at least 10 percent of cases.

Thanks to recently awarded supplemental funding with the UofL Trager Institute’s Geriatrics Workforce Enhancement Program, the Institute has expanded its efforts in addressing older adult pain management. Expanded activities include increased screenings, student and professional trainings and community education.

KHA and CHFS form opioids coalition

The National Institute on Drug Abuse ranks Kentucky among the top 10 states with the highest opioid-related overdose deaths, and Kentucky's hospitals are on the frontline in the fight to help the state recover. To assist the state's hospitals in this battle, the Kentucky Hospital Association (KHA) is partnering with the Cabinet for Health and Family Services as part of the Kentucky Opioid Response Effort (KORE) to launch the Kentucky Statewide Opioid Stewardship (KY SOS) program.

Phillip Chang, MD, chief medical officer at UK HealthCare, will chair an advisory committee to develop standards for the program. The committee is comprised of clinical experts in emergency medicine, addictions treatment, pharmacy and nursing, along with hospital administration and a former patient. These experts, along with KHA staff, will assist the state's hospitals with implementation and will gather data to track their progress.

Additionally, this initiative will provide a voluntary certification opportunity for Kentucky hospitals to demonstrate their actions and commitments to their patients and communities in combating the state's opioid epidemic.

Opioid stewardship involves a coordinated effort to reduce opioid-related harm by developing alternative means to manage pain and, when opioids are used, assuring that opioid prescribing and patient monitoring aligns with evidence-based guidelines. KY SOS will focus on reducing opioid overprescribing and improving safe opioid use by providing hospitals and health systems with education and resources on how to attain the highest level of performance on opioid stewardship.

Among the 62 hospitals that have made a commitment to the program is St. Elizabeth Healthcare.

Lexington Clinic partners with Berea College

Berea College has signed a multi-year, exclusive population health and premier provider network agreement with Lexington Clinic.

With this agreement, approximately 1,200 to 1,300 members will become covered and gain affordable access to all Lexington Clinic offices and associate practices under Lexington Clinic’s population health program. In addition, Lexington Clinic will also provide on-site services, specifically designed to care for the needs of that population.

Lexington Clinic in partnership with BIM Group offers customized, premier network options for progressive employers in the commonwealth, and can address both preventive care and chronic health conditions of employee populations.

Trager Institute launches caregiver support

The University of Louisville Trager Institute has launched OACS – a new support group for those who care for older adults. The Older Adult Caregiver Support, or OACS, group is open to UofL employees and retirees, along with UofL Hospital and UofL Physicians employees.

OACS is an extension of the expanding services for older adults and caregivers offered by the UofL Trager Institute.

Giving your patients more days, weeks, even months.

To make a hospice or palliative referral, call our 24/7 support line:
800-264-0521
PMC purchases Prestonsburg property

Pikeville Medical Center (PMC) recently purchased property in Prestonsburg with the intent to build a medical outpatient facility for the area. The next phase of this project is a demolition plan and the hospital will soon be collaborating with a national architectural firm experienced in developing urgent care and community clinics.

PMC has recently made significant investments and opened new clinics in Whitesburg and Martin, Ky. In July, the newest clinic will open in South Williamson.

Kindred Healthcare acquires Promise Hospital

Kindred has acquired Promise Hospital of east Los Angeles from Promise Healthcare Group. In February, Kindred was selected as the winning bidder for the hospital, which has been renamed Kindred Hospital Paramount.

Kindred Hospital Paramount is a 177-bed hospital specializing in long-term acute care services. In addition to traditional LTAC services such as respiratory care, advanced wound care and rehabilitation therapies, the hospital provides full in-house radiology and interventional radiology services and broad-based surgical procedures.

Madisonville opens employee healthcare facility

The city of Madisonville plans to open a medical office on recently acquired property along Center Street as a benefit to serve city workers and their families. The new program allows for employees and their immediate family members to utilize a nurse practitioner for full-service medical options at no additional cost to the employee or their family members.

Created in conjunction with BluMine, a medical organization based out of Louisville, the program is modeled after several site visits to neighboring cities where businesses had already added a nurse practitioner onsite for their employees to utilize.

Ohio Valley Physicians becomes OVP Health

Ohio Valley Physicians has recently rebranded itself and changed its name to OVP Health. Ohio Valley Physicians, founded in 1999 as an emergency department staffing company, has changed its corporate identity in response to the company’s growth and expanded geographic reach over the past two decades.

The company opened a new clinic in Ashland, Ky. in the spring. It was the first location to be branded with the new OVP Health identity.

OVP Health provides a range of emergency department and hospital services for hospitals; operates primary and urgent care facilities; and offers an accredited medication-assisted treatment and counseling program for people suffering from opioid addiction in a growing number of communities across West Virginia, Kentucky, Ohio and South Carolina.

The company’s first South Carolina location was opened in Myrtle Beach in 2017. Recently, OVP Health was awarded a nearly $4 million grant to establish more outpatient addiction treatment facilities across the state.

Norton Healthcare buys former Walmart

Norton Healthcare bought the vacant former Walmart Neighborhood Market store on Poplar Level Road in Louisville, Ky. for about $4 million.

The nonprofit healthcare system hasn’t disclosed its plan for the property, which is directly across Audubon Plaza Drive from Norton Audubon Hospital.

At Family Health Centers, we are dedicated to a common goal — providing the highest quality care to our patients. Family Health Centers employees enjoy a flexible, family-friendly work environment, and generous benefits package.

recruitment@fhclouisville.org | 502-772-8574
www.fhclouisville.org/about/careers  

News in Brief continued on page 17
**Lunsford Capital invests in NICU technology**

Astarte Medical, a Yardley, Pennsylvania digital health startup focusing on infant microbiome health, has raised a $5 million Series A from a group of investors including Louisville, Ky.-based Lunsford Capital, Viking Global Investors, OCA Ventures, Keiretsu Forum MidAtlantic, Keiretsu Capital Fund, Ben Franklin Technology Partners, Wing VC and Next Act Fund.

This is the company’s first institutional round, but it has participated in at least three accelerators — Louisville, Ky.-based XLerate Health, MassChallenge HealthTech and Illumina Accelerator — and pitched at HIMSS and SXSW.

Astarte is building tools for the neonatal intensive care unit (NICU) called NICUtrition. The software will be built on a proprietary database of feeding protocols, microbial profiles and clinical information which will power predictive analytics that can advise care teams on protocols and treatment plans.

**Baptist Health partners with PatientPing**

PatientPing, a care coordination platform, will partner with the Baptist Health Accountable Care Organization (ACO), Baptist Health Care’s ACO located in Louisville, Kentucky, which participates in the Medicare Shared Savings Program (MSSP). The partnership, which marks PatientPing’s entry into Kentucky and southern Indiana, will allow providers within Baptist Health’s network of hospitals, care centers, physician offices and health facilities, to monitor patient care events in real time to enhance patient outcomes and care coordination across the state.

Through the partnership, Baptist Health will have access to real-time notifications (Pings) from healthcare organizations within PatientPing’s national network, when patients receive care, and will also aim to provide critical patient context at the point of care to help inform care decisions.

**Nearly one in five older Kentuckians food insecure**

A new study finds Kentucky has the highest rate of older adult food insecurity in the nation.

The report, Hunger Among Adults, shows Kentucky’s food insecurity rate among adults age 50-59 was 18.6 percent while the national rate was 11.3 percent. The data are from 2017, the most recent year for which data are available.

Another report shows Kentucky’s 8.4 percent food insecurity rate for seniors age 60 or older was also higher than the national average of 7.7 percent in 2017, the most recent year for which data are available.

For the third consecutive year, the State of Senior Hunger in America was produced by Feeding America, the nation’s largest hunger-relief charity with a nationwide network of 200 food banks. This is the first year Feeding America has produced the Hunger Among Older Adults report. The studies were conducted by researchers Dr. James Ziliak from the University of Kentucky and Dr. Craig Gundersen.

---

**“Meaningful services for your meaningful use”**

**IT Services**
- Hosted EMR, email, web sites, productivity tools
- Servers, phones, and desktops
- EMR Vendor neutral
- Onsite, hosted, or both
- Disaster Recovery Services

**Benefits**
- Fast track implementation
- No upfront costs
- No long term commitment
- Local references and support
- Fixed monthly fee

Tom Haselden
tom@ezoutlook.com
www.ezoutlook.com
800-219-1721 ext. 103

We are
Kentucky’s largest and most experienced healthcare consulting team.

Medical Billing and Credentialing
Revenue Cycle Assessment & Management
Medical/Physician Coding and Chart Audits
Compliance Programs and Risk Assessments
Reimbursement Optimization
HIPAA IT Security Risk Assessments

To learn more:
Adam Shewmaker
ashewmaker@addfhealthcare.com
502 566 1064
A physician’s guide to employment contracts

When considering employment physicians should be mindful of various provisions.

By Christopher Shaughnessy

As hospitals and health systems continue moves toward clinical integration, more physicians are being employed by hospitals and health systems rather than practicing medicine in their own private practices.

The trend toward direct hospital employment of physicians accelerated after 2012 and it appears that the trend will continue as both hospitals and physicians navigate regulatory, reimbursement and operational challenges in the future.

When considering employment by a hospital or health system, physicians should be mindful of various provisions that are often contained in physician employment agreements and how these provisions may impact the physician’s professional practice and personal life.

Annual Salary / Compensation: Physicians should review salary information by specialty and region to determine if it is customary and within the range of fair market value and commercial reasonableness based on the physician’s duties and responsibilities under the employment agreement.

The Medical Group Management Association (MGMA) publishes annual salary survey information by region and specialty and is one of the primary sources that hospitals and health systems rely upon in setting an employed physician’s annual compensation. Other organizations also publish annual compensation data and should be consulted to determine if the level of compensation is competitive, fair and reasonable.

Call Coverage Requirements: It’s important to consider whether the physician will be required to provide hospital call coverage and, if so, how many days or hours of call coverage will be required per month. Consideration should also be given as to whether weekend or holiday call coverage will be required.

Professional Liability Insurance Coverage and Tail Coverage: Hospitals and health systems routinely provide medical practice insurance coverage to their employed physicians during the term of the employment relationship. If the coverage was provided on a claims-made basis, when the employment relationship is terminated it will be necessary to purchase prior acts coverage (or tail coverage) to address any acts of medical malpractice that occurred during the employment relationship.

These policies are designed to cover any claims filed after the employment relationship has ended. Tail coverage can be quite expensive, depending upon physician specialty. Employed physicians should ensure that the employment agreement with the hospital or health system requires the hospital or health system to purchase or otherwise provide tail coverage upon termination of the employment relationship.

Non-Compete Clauses: Most, if not all, employment agreements between a hospital or health system and physicians contain a non-compete clause in some form or fashion. A non-compete clause is designed to prevent a physician from practicing in competition with the hospital or health system in a specified geographic area for a specified period following the termination of the employment relationship.

In Kentucky, non-compete clauses are generally deemed enforceable if they are reasonable as to the amount of time and the geographic area specified in the non-compete clause. In evaluating a proposed employment agreement, physicians should carefully review the non-compete clause and negotiate its terms so that there are exceptions to its applicability in certain situations, such as where the hospital or health system terminates the employment relationship without cause under the terms of the employment agreement.

— Christopher Shaughnessy is a member at McBryar in Lexington, Ky.

Decreasing pre-op confusion

An innovative approach to delivering consistent, customizable instructions.

By Aaron Tomes

Colorectal cancer is the second most common cause of cancer related death for both men and women in the United States, therefore, early detection is key. According to recent studies, there are more than 550,000 annual deaths worldwide of colon cancer. That is too many deaths, especially when tools are becoming available to help reduce those numbers.

“Although physician offices, clinics and outpatient healthcare facilities do their best with pre-op instructions; the complexity of the instructions can be extremely confusing, frustrating and intimidating for patients.”

Healthcare professionals often pursue their career because of a personal experience that has motivated them to prevent, save and heal people from becoming another statistic.

Working sixteen years in endoscopy as a registered nurse with highly respected gastroenterologist, surgeons and anesthesiologists, the number one priority is sending a patient home healthier than when they came to see us. After many conversations, the one common frustration between disciplines is the inconsistencies that obstructed them from delivering the best care possible for their patient.

Pre-Op Confusion

MedaPrep is a product of a personal journey observing thousands of patients, physicians and family members frustrated with the single most important part of outpatient procedures; the pre-op instructions. Although physician offices, clinics and outpatient healthcare facilities do their best with pre-op instructions; the complexity of the instructions can be extremely confusing, frustrating and intimidating for patients.

Without over-simplifying the solution, pre-op instructions need to be direct, concise and easy to understand. After multiple re-writes to paper instructions, discussions moved toward a program that could deliver pre-op instructions through smart phone technology.

MedaPrep is a computer program, not an app, that is customized at the physician’s office to deliver timed reminders and detailed instructions to the patient. This philosophy was tried at University of Louisville with Kristine Krueger, MD.

Cancellation Rate

The facilities cancellation rate for endoscopic procedures was approximately 13 percent and they were able to reduce this percentage rate to eight percent after the implementation of MedaPrep. This was a 39 percent reduction in cancellations, that helped the endoscopy navigators and schedulers increase patient engagement, efficiency and increased the number of completed colonoscopies.

Clearly, the number one priority for all healthcare providers is patient safety and quality assurance. Multiple studies and research data conclude that cancerous polyps may be found in both the proximal and distal colon. Colonoscopies allow visualization of the entire colon which confirms this procedure is the gold standard in the detection of small and large polyps regardless of location.

The trend is also changing, according to a recent article about improving quality in colonoscopies, which urged physicians to resist the temptation to pursue more frequent surveillance colonoscopies, and rather focus on improving the quality of their colonoscopy procedures, for example, through increased withdrawal times and higher completion rates.

When a patient is prepped appropriately, they will have a better anesthetic experience, the physician performing the procedure will be successful and it will decrease recovery time significantly. In order to achieve higher completion rates and improve the quality of colonoscopy procedures, the patient must arrive prepared and have a clean colon.

— Aaron Tomes is founder and CEO of MedaPrep.
Bluegrass Care Navigators complies with applicable Federal civil rights laws and does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, age, disability, or sex.

It’s something everyone deserves. And with Bluegrass Care Navigators as your partner, you can be assured of providing the right care at the right time. We now provide a growing continuum of evidence-based care to help patients with most progressing, serious illnesses.

Our range of services include:

- Extra Care
- Home Primary Care
- Adult Day Health Care
- Transitional Care
- Palliative Care
- Hospice Care
- Grief Care

To refer a patient or learn more, call: 855.492.0812
CONQUERING CANCER IN KENTUCKY

MARKEY CAN.

What does it take to conquer cancer in Kentucky, where cancer rates are some of the highest in the nation? It takes a team of world-class doctors and first-rate researchers, committed to our goal of significantly reducing cancer incidence and mortality in Appalachia by 2020. And as the #1 cancer program in Kentucky, with the highest possible 30-day survival rate, innovative clinical trials, and a growing network of affiliates across the state, Markey Can.

See how at ukhealthcare.com/markeycan