

The Health News

Keeping you informed as to the latest developments, advancements, and events at BIRHC

Number 10

www.biruralhealth.org

Fall 2015

What Is a Rural Health Center?

Beaver Island Rural Health Center - that's a mouthful, especially for our staff members who answer our telephones all day!

What is a Rural Health Center? We learned from our community survey last summer that we can do a better job of explaining who we are and what we provide here on the Island. Inside this issue you will find articles that explain the name and our history.

Information about free blood pressure checks and this year's Garden Tour are also inside. Check the back page for a list of visiting professionals who see patients here.

We Have New Signage!

We want everyone to know that the BIRHC always has a provider available to speak with patients. Many rural areas in this country have "dial a nurse" services available for after-hours calls, which may connect to a call center miles away. On Beaver Island, our on-call provider will speak to you and then, if necessary, meet you at the Health Center, day or night.



Meet Carolyn Space, Our New Nurse Practitioner

We are pleased to introduce the newest member of our health care team, Family Nurse Practitioner Carolyn Space.

Many of you may already have met her. Carolyn joined us just as the busy summer season began and has quickly learned the ropes here at the Health Center.

Carolyn is a Certified FNP, receiving her certification from the University of Toledo College of Nursing. She came to the BIRHC from her position as Emergency Nurse Practitioner at Wood County Hospital in Bowling Green, Ohio.

"I have been so impressed by how friendly and welcoming everyone has been, both to me and to my family," Carolyn says. "People have been so willing to go out their way to help me learn my way around."

Carolyn has experience in a wide range of clinical settings including medical and trauma situations, across all ages from pediatrics to geriatrics. She has even been a dispatcher for a medical transport helicopter! She is also a veteran of the United States Air Force.

Some of the skills she brings with her include wound treatment, lesion

removal, suturing and splinting. In a previous position as Adult Hospitalist at Blanchard Valley Hospital in Findlay, Ohio, she provided health care management for patients with chronic

obstructive pulmonary disease, renal disease and diabetes.

Carolyn joins Family Nurse Practitioner Sue Solle at the Health Center. Sue joined the staff in 2003, receiving her degree from the University of Utah. She has worked in a wide variety of settings and specialties from a small rural clinic to a large inner-city hospital, in obstetrics, pediatrics, cardiac care, operating room and emergency departments.

You can reach one of providers at any time of day or night. All you have to do is remember one telephone number: 231-448-2275. During regular business hours, your call will be answered by our staff and you will be advised on how to proceed.

Outside of business hours, a message will tell you which health care provider is on call and how to reach her. She can then advise you and meet you at the BIRHC if necessary.

There is also a telephone available in the vestibule of the BIRHC which you can use to call the provider.

If your situation is life-threatening, please call 911.



Carolyn Space
FNP-C

Did You Know?

Did you know that unneeded prescription and over-the-counter medications should never be discarded by flushing them down the sink or toilet? The ingredients in them can contaminate water supplies, which is especially worrisome on Beaver Island where we depend on well water.

The BIRHC participates in the Yellow Jug Old Drugs program in partnership with Central Drug Store in Charlevoix. You can bring in your old medications and we will make sure that they are safely disposed of.

There is also a POD (Prescription and Over-the-Counter Drug) drop-off box available 24 hours a day at the St. James Township Governmental Building, 37830 Kings Highway. The box is in the Charlevoix County Sheriff's lobby.

By the Numbers

17 - the number of days that visiting professionals saw patients at the BIRHC during the month of June. You can see a list of them on the back cover.

41 - the number of patients who had digital x-rays taken at the Health Center in June, July and August. X-rays are viewed here and then "over-read" at Charlevoix Area Hospital.

199 - the number of patients seen for laboratory tests during June, July and August. Lab specimens are flown to be analyzed at the Charlevoix Area Hospital.

For more information on any of the stories in this newsletter, please call us at 231-448-2275 during business hours.

Wish List

Your donation to BIRHC can be designated to purchase specific equipment or supplies. Other items on our current Wish List can be viewed on our website: www.biruralhealth.org

Click on the "About Us" tab and select Wish List.

Autoclave for sterilizing instruments - \$2700

Hand-held otoscope - \$200

Spirometer for measuring patient lung function - \$3000

Nebulizers for patient use - \$400

Oxygen concentrator for portable oxygen therapy - \$1700

Pillows - \$100

Projector - \$500

Ultrasound machine - matching grant monies available

White sheets - \$200

Some ABCs of RHCs

What does it mean to be a Medicare-certified Rural Health Center? The designation was established by Congress in 1977 to support and encourage access to primary health care services for rural residents. Physicians serving rural areas were retiring and were not being replaced by younger doctors. Plus, the cost of providing health care in rural areas was higher than in urban areas.

At the same time, new primary care providers were growing in numbers and in recognition - Nurse Practitioners (NP) and the Physician Assistants (PA).

The basic requirements are that the RHC be in a non-urban area that is designated as a health professional shortage area or a medically-underserved area and that it employs an NP or a PA at least half of the time that care is provided.

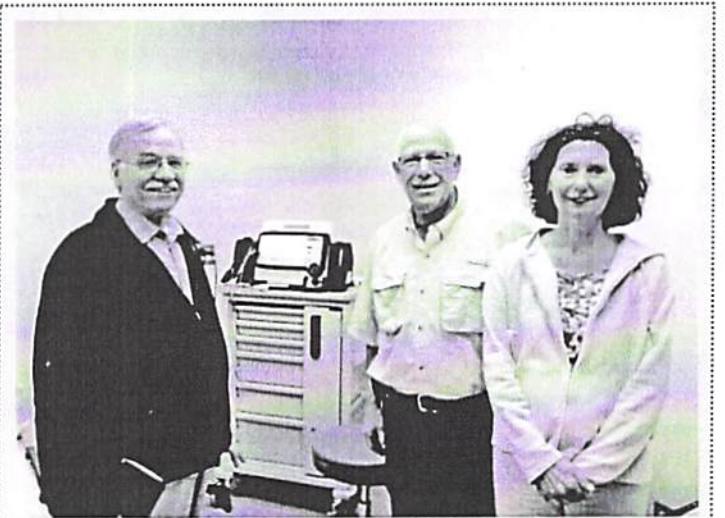
Beaver Island was fortunate to have physicians on the Island for many years, but maintaining this became increasingly difficult over the years. Dr. Philip Lange, who served as the Island's doctor from 1991-1992, worked hard to have Beaver Island's Medical Center certified as an RHC.

Since 1985, primary care here has been delivered by mid level practitioners working with a collaborative physician in Charlevoix.

BIRHC is one of over 150 RHCs in Michigan. When a patient visits the Center, he or she is seen by one of our providers who is highly trained in primary health care. A list of our services is on the back cover of this newsletter, from immunizations and physicals to x-rays, casting and suturing.

Many lab screenings are available to patients, with

specimens for many tests being flown daily to Charlevoix Area Hospital for analysis. Please call 448-2275 if you have questions about our services.



State Senator Jim Marleau, center, recently toured the Health Center with Board Vice President Denny Cook and Managing Director Donna Kubic. As chair of the Health and Human Services Committee, he visited facilities here and on Mackinac and Drummond Islands.

Come in for a Free Blood Pressure Check

Did you know that you can get your blood pressure checked free of charge at the BIRHC?

Your blood pressure can be an indicator of your general state of health. The Mayo Clinic advises that blood pressure checks be done at a minimum of every two years beginning at age 18.

There are two main types of high blood pressure: primary (or essential) hypertension develops gradually over the years. Secondary hypertension has an underlying cause such as an existing medical condition, such as kidney problems or sleep apnea. Medications can also contribute to secondary hypertension.

Many factors that contribute to high blood pressure are not in one's control, such as age and family history. But diet and stress can also affect your blood pressure. Tobacco use and excess alcohol intake also have detrimental effects. Maintaining a healthy weight and watching your diet are important. Check your foods to look for sodium content that may cause you to retain fluid, increasing your blood pressure.

Knowing what your blood pressure is provides a "baseline" number against which you and your health care provider can note changes in your health at regular check-ups. No one likes to think about the "what ifs" but regular blood pressure checks can give you peace of mind. Uncontrolled high blood pressure can lead to heart attacks or stroke. Just call the BIRHC at 448-2275 to schedule a free blood pressure check. It only takes a few minutes.

News and Notes

Fundraising Thanks

Walk-Ins?

We are often asked if we see walk-in patients.

We ask patients to make appointments to be seen, but we will do our best to accommodate walk-in patients with immediate needs – a small child with a fever or a biker with a lacerated leg, for example. Walk-ins will be seen as quickly as possible, based on the situation, but a call ahead is always appreciated.

One of our providers will evaluate walk-ins to assess how quickly they should be seen.

If your situation is life-threatening, you should call 911 and Beaver Island EMS will respond as quickly as possible. Don't delay!

We would like to thank all who support our fundraising efforts during the year - requests in the Spring and Fall Newsletters, the Annual Appeal and the Car Raffle. We also appreciate those who donate in memory of loved ones or in added thanks for the services we have provided.

We thank all who have supported us now and in the past. Every gift, large or small, is appreciated and helps fund the services in this newsletter.

We include a remittance envelope for your convenience. Please call us at 448-2275 if you have any questions. Managing Director Donna Kubic and Service Coordinator Betty Hudgins can provide you with more information.

Garden Tour Thanks

The Wellness Garden Benefit Tour was another huge success this summer. So many people contribute to this event! Garden hosts included: Bob and Sue Welke, Laurel Vietzen and Robert Warski, Doug Edgar and Sharolyn Hunter, Ray Matela, Ed and Willy Welter and Veterans Park host Bob Tidmore. Heidi Vigil and Barb Rahn provided expert advice along the way. Dana and Eric Hodgson hosted the luncheon at the Beaver Island Lodge and Bruce Struik baked cheesecakes to end the tour at Lois Stipp's Beaver Island Gallery. Drivers from Central Michigan University provided transportation - John Gordon, Beth Uzarski, Vickie Newman and Christa Hegenauer.

Wellness Garden

We cannot thank enough the wonderful volunteers who tend the beautiful gardens around the Health Center.

We wish to recognize their efforts and encourage you to volunteer also! Dana D'Andraia, Jan Paul and Leonor Jacobson are the Garden Tour organizers. Gardeners Connie Wojan, Judy Jones, Alana Anderson, Sandy Howell, Sally Stebbins, Leonor Jacobson, Jan Paul and Jan Freeman sold out the tickets for this year's tour in just five days, so watch for next year's announcement! Thanks also to Cheryl Podgorski for sprucing up the Fairy Garden.



The Wellness Gardens
at the BIRHC
are bursting with color this summer.
Drop by to see the results!

Important Dates

National Rural Health Day
Thursday, Nov. 19, 2015

Annual Meeting - Board of Directors
Saturday, Dec. 12, 2015