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Affordable Care Act in Clallam County

In October, the Board of Directors of the Dungeness Valley Health and Wellness Clinic invited Dr. Tom Locke, Public Health Officer for Clallam and Jefferson County, to address the health care challenges facing our region. Dr. Locke indicated there are an estimated 11,000 individuals currently in Clallam County who do not have health care insurance. Of these, it is estimated that about 6,000 will be eligible for either Medicaid (now called Apple Health in Washington) or insurance through the Washington health care exchange system. However, he pointed out that not all of those eligible will choose to sign up. Thus, it is estimated that the clinic may have between 5,000 and 6,000 people still needing services. He reminded the board that there is no penalty for not obtaining insurance for those who do not file income tax with the IRS.

Dr. Locke indicated that part of the good news about the new health care act is that there will be an increase in funds coming to Clallam County to decrease the large burden of uncompensated care currently in the county. Most

of this will come in the form of the increased number of those who can now qualify for Medicaid. To a lesser extent will be those qualifying for insurance under the Washington Insurance Exchange system.

One of the major concerns voiced by Dr. Locke is that most of the current providers on the Peninsula have their full complement of patients and do not have the capacity to accept new Medicaid or Exchange patients. Thus, we will have a large number of people with insurance, but unable to find a

provider willing to accept them.

Wellness is also a major part of the new Affordable Care Act (ACA). Dr. Locke complimented the clinic for our monthly wellness forums and patient education programs. He suggested that we consider expanding our wellness program and our educational programs for those with chronic illnesses. The board will be exploring this possibility in the coming months. After much discussion, all agreed that transitioning to a new delivery model will be both challenging and interesting.

Impact of the Affordable Care Act (ACA) on OMC and the free clinic

In November the Board of Directors further discussed the impact of the ACA on the Olympic Medical Center and the free clinic. Eric Lewis, CEO of the Olympic Medical Center (OMC) and a member of the clinic board of directors, pointed out that in addition to the increased number of people covered with insurance there are other positive aspects of the new act. Patients

can no longer have their insurance denied for pre-existing conditions and parents can keep their adult children on their plan until the age of 26.

Mr. Lewis indicated that to address the need for more providers, OMC is actively recruiting providers to the area. There are several additional

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providers already scheduled to come and others actively being recruited by the Olympic Medical Center. Challenges of recruiting providers to this rural area are many, especially since there is a high demand throughout the state and a small supply. To better accommodate the demand, OMC has increased the hours of the Walk-In Clinic located in Sequim and is planning a similar clinic in Port Angeles. These clinics may offer a bridge for those with Medicaid (now Apple Health), Medicare and other types of health insurances who cannot find an accepting provider

One of the biggest aspects of the ACA that will negatively impact OMC is the large cuts projected in Medicare reimbursement to the hospital. This will only partially be made up by the decrease in the large amount of uncompensated care currently incurred by OMC. Decisions about Medicare reimbursements are made at the Federal level, not by the state. Those states, such as Washington, that have already reduced their Medicare expense will have the same reductions imposed on them as those states that have high Medicare costs. Both Medicare and Medicaid currently reimburse the hospital well below its cost of providing services.

As for the free clinic, Mr. Lewis complimented the board on its decision to

remain a free clinic and provide health care access to those in need. He pointed out that there are many unknowns in the fallout from the new act. In addition to the cost of insurance, patients may also be experiencing higher co-pays and higher deductibles. There is a possibility that businesses with fewer than 50 employees will no longer offer insurance to their employees, resulting in those individuals having to seek insurance through the Washington Exchange. Mr. Lewis stated that the hospital was also experiencing an increase in the cost of medications over the last few months. Rose Gibbs, Clinic Director, informed the board that many of our patients are experiencing enormous increases in the cost of their medications as well. The clinic continues to support the Prescription Assistance Program to help patients obtain the medications they need to manage their health issues, helping to avoid a crisis and potential hospitalization.

Mr. Lewis expressed great pride in being part of the clinic, whose mission is to provide health access for the underserved. He also complimented the clinic for the Wellness program and indicated how important it is to contribute to the support of a healthier community.

Audrey Gift indicated that as President of the Board, she is very pleased to say that the clinic will remain

a free clinic and be here to address the needs of those who do not have access to healthcare, either because of lack of insurance or because of lack of access to a

provider. DVHWC will continue to be the safety net for those in need as a beacon of health and hope for this wonderful community.

James Castell joins the Board of Directors



It is with much enthusiasm that we announce the addition of James Castell to our Board of Directors. Most of you know him in his role as insurance

producer with the family run business, Castell Insurance here in Sequim. What you may not know is that before coming to the north Olympic Peninsula James worked for six years with Bank of America in Seattle. His management experience as well as his knowledge regarding health insurance will be a great asset to the clinic. James lives with his wife and two month old son. We want you to join us in welcoming him to our board.



In memory of...

Elsie Nienow and Aunt Ella Nienow
By Vernon and Maxine Simmons

Hans Kask, Marian Johnson, Duff Thomas,
Ruth Armstrong's sister, Vernon Simmons,
Carol Coleman, Jerry Nelson, and Deanne
by Myrna and Christopher Juergens

Jim Flanders, by Lucille Caughron

Jim Grau, by Ed and Phyllis Hopfner

Hans Kask, and Vernon Simmons
by Marian Ulseth

Carol Colman and Vernon Simmons
by Harry and Lou Schlaffman

Ron Svardal by Paul and Bertha Cooper

Vernon Simmons by Maxine Simmons

Charles Blake by Leon & Pauline Placzkowski

President's Column October, 2013 Newsletter



Audrey G. Gift

October 2013 marks the 12th anniversary of the clinic. Although there have been many changes, the clinic continues to serve those in need of healthcare in our community. The future holds even more changes than in the past. While the new healthcare laws make insurance available to more of our citizens, it holds many challenges as well. The new system will only cover a segment of our population. Others are not eligible to participate in the new insurances. Even then there is no guarantee that all those with the new insurance will be able to obtain the care they need. Some will not be able to find providers; others will not be able to afford their co-pay or to afford the medications they need. Our community is an underserved community with the need for providers exceeding the availability. In order to have a healthy Community, people need to be able to get in to see

a provider when they first become sick rather than waiting until they require emergency care.

The clinic is able to provide that care only through the help of the volunteers who are the backbone of the clinic.

Every time the clinic is open there are a whole host of volunteers that make it happen. Our providers, nurses, receptionists, assessment staff, data entry and other clinic support volunteers are those who make it possible to provide healthcare to the underserved in our community. There are over 70 volunteers who serve on a rotational basis to make it possible for the clinic to stay open. I want to thank all of them for their continued service.

This month I had the privilege of awarding the Beitzel Award that is given to someone who has had a significant, long-term impact on the clinic in achieving its mission. The person who received the award this year was Dr. Kari Olsen. She was one of those founding members who brought a dream to a reality through hard work and planning of this community clinic.

Although the clinic has only been open for 12 years, she has been contributing to it for over 14 years. She worked with Mary Griffith and John and Amanda Beitzel, among others, to obtain the permits and other paperwork necessary to open the doors. Dr. Olsen helped recruit providers to volunteer their time on a rotational basis and has continued to volunteer her time almost every month since then. She retired from her medical practice in October; however, we are thrilled to learn that she will be continuing to volunteer at the Dungeness Valley Health and Wellness Clinic.



Dr. Kari Olsen

There are two other volunteers who have been with us for many years who are now stepping on to other things. Diane Clementi, RN, and Sandy Goldstien, EMT, have been

consistent volunteers for the clinic. Their contributions were recognized this fall as well.

Behind the scenes are many volunteers who are invaluable to the functioning of the clinic. One of them is Dan Stimbert, our IT Specialist. After a career with the Olympic Medical Center in their IT department he decided to spend time in his retirement making sure our computer systems are up and running when we need them. This year as our patient records increased it became obvious that we needed to make a change in our server. It was Dan who spearheaded the flawless transition to a new server. He is always there when there is a problem with our computers and makes recommendations for future needs of the clinic.

Perhaps you might consider being one of our volunteers. Although we are always in need of health professionals, you do not have to have a background in healthcare to make a valuable contribution. To learn more about the many ways you might contribute as a volunteer contact our Clinic Director, Rose Gibbs at director@dvhwc.org or call her at 360-582-2974.

A word from our Clinic Director, Rose Gibbs, RN, MHA/MPH, CNNA



This year has been busy and similar to the previous few years. However, we have seen an increase of 18% in the number of new client visits. The Clinic definitely provides a community service for Sequim with greater than 80% of our clients coming from within the community. Sixty-two per cent of our clients are 50 years old or less, with 56% being female and about 49% employed, compared to 40% employed in 2012. Recent demand comes from the newly uninsured and those who have relocated without benefited positions. Many lost their medical and prescription coverage and provider access. Others found that their essential prescriptions and their office co-pay had become financially prohibitive.

The Sequim free clinic is celebrating its twelfth year of continued community service. With the establishment of the Chronic Healthcare Clinic in May of 2008 we have been able to

provide a health home for those with chronic conditions. Over the years, some have qualified for other insurance or moved from the area; however, with the influx of new clients the CHC program has remained steady with appointments provided to 12 to 14 people twice each week. Our statistics show that about two thirds of our clients are managed for hypertension, diabetes or high lipids—many with a combination of conditions. The expense of medications to treat these problems can be extremely high, especially for insulin and respiratory medications. The Prescription Assistance Program available through the clinic allows access to these needed medications directly from the manufacturers.

The breadth of services provided by this community clinic is outstanding. The caliber of volunteers supporting our clients is remarkable on all levels—skill, commitment and service.

The big question looming ahead is what will happen with the Affordable Care Act and our clients? Will they qualify? Will they apply?

Can they afford what might be required? And the biggest unknown: will there be providers to accept them as clients? The transition will be interesting, to say the least.

For now, we are committed to continue to support those as needed in this community. I am privileged to be part of this worthy endeavor and believe the community should take pride in its works and accomplishments. For twelve years it has provided a welcoming, helping hand to those in need. Perhaps one day, Sequim will no longer require a free clinic, but now it remains as a beacon of hope for many in our community.

A Bit of Sunshine From the Medical Director Kip Tulin, MD



I learned some interesting things while preparing my Working on Wellness vitamin D talk for the October forum. I thought I would

share a bit of what I learned, especially since the days are getting shorter and the weather is keeping us inside more.

The big surprise for me was that even during the summer most of us do not have high enough vitamin D levels. And they drop further during the winter months. Vitamin D is the true sunshine vitamin and is critical for bone health.

More recent research has shown that it is also important for heart, blood, endocrine and immune systems health as well.

More and more studies have shown a fairly large difference between the *minimal* daily requirement and the *optimal* daily requirement for vitamin D. Some studies from the University of California at San Diego suggest that we should all take daily supplemental vitamin D3 in a dose of about 3,500 international units for every 100 pounds of body weight. This will safely and effectively raise most vitamin D levels. Vitamin D can be toxic at *very* high doses, so if you have any questions, please ask your health care provider.

Exercise, eat a healthy diet, think kind thoughts, and take some extra vitamin D each day. Speaking for all of the dedicated staff at the Sequim Free Clinic, I wish you all good health!



"A Great Big Thank you!"

Thanks to the 279 participants and 80 volunteers who made the 2013 Clinic Fun Walk a great success! Special thanks to our sponsors and to those who donated door prizes.

Together, we raised \$37,000 to help fund medical and dental care for our Sequim-Dungeness Valley neighbors at the Sequim Free Clinic!

*279 participants
and 80 volunteers
helped make this a
record-breaking
\$37,000 at the 2013
Clinic Fun Walk -
all to provide
accessible healthcare
to our uninsured
neighbors.*

Congratulations to Teams!



*Dungeness Valley
Lutheran for Raising
Most Money*



*Jamestown S'Klallam for
Most Walkers*

Sustaining Sponsors, \$5,000+

David & Patsy Mattingley
Gift in Memory of Reva Bates

Presenting Sponsors, \$2,500+

Anonymous Donor
Sherwood Manor
Olympic Ambulance

Platinum Sponsors, \$1,000+

Amanda & John Beitzel
Castell Insurance
Jim & Cheri Pickett
Jerry & Deborah Sinn
Anonymous Donor

Gold Sponsors, \$500+

Olympic Medical Center
Extendicare Health & Rehab Center
Marilyn Osugi in Memory of
George Osugi
7 Cedars Casino
Sequim Tax Service, Inc.
Therapeutic Associates
Avamere Olympic Rehabilitation

Silver Level, \$250 - \$300

Tom Blore, Realtor
Cedar Creek Dental
Greywolf Veterinary Hospital
Karen's Quilt Shop
Sequim Gym

Bronze Level, \$50 - \$150

A-1 Auto Parts
Allform Welding
Ameriprize Financial
Blake Tile & Stone
Carpenter & Redbrook, CPA, PS
Classy Creations
Connie Hyatt
Elna & Ray Kawal
Les Schwab Tires
Team McAleer
Moon Palace Restaurant
Omega Business Center
David Salmon
Sequim Fresh Seafood
George & Jean Stratton
Michael & Julia Swesey

Door Prizes

Baja Cantina
Creative Framing
Dockside Grill
Dominos
Jose's Famous Salsa
Little Blue House Nursery & Gifts
Lucky Star Consignment
Magic Nails
Pane d'Amore Artisan Bakery
The Oak Table
Serenity House
Suzon's Coffee
Treasure Princess Antiques
Sears Sequim Store

Fun Walk Event Contributors

Happy Tymer Clown Alley Laff Pak Clowns
Olympic Medical Center Red Rooster
Grocery
Trinity United Methodist Church
Dr. Kip & Mary Tulin, music
A Catered Affair
Red Rooster Grocery
Sequim Gazette
KSQM Radio 91.5FM
Olympic Springs Water
Sweet Beginnings
Wolf Pup Cheerleaders

Thanks to Fun Walk Committee

Dave Mattingley, Inside and Out
Audrey Gift, Donors, Sponsors
Jean Stratton, Publicity
Susie Herrick, Walker Registration
Sandy Hutter, Volunteers
Margaret Preston, Sponsorships
Kathy Purcell, Matt Wilson, Photographers
Rose Gibbs, Health Fair Coordinator
Myrna Ford, Marshall Course organizer

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Valley Health and
Wellness Clinic

**DVHWC Unique
on the North
Olympic Peninsula**

Did you know that DVHWC is the only free clinic on the North Olympic Peninsula offering health care to people in need of care on the day they first come to the clinic? It is also the only free clinic providing care on a no-appointment basis. Our doors are open Monday and Thursday evenings as first-come, first-served, starting at 4:30PM.



Working on Wellness —

Come to our Monthly Forums

Second Wednesday each month at 2:30 p.m.; held @ The Trinity United Methodist Church, 100 Blake Avenue, Sequim 98362

2013

December 11th
***“Overwhelmed
by the Holidays?”***

Speaker:
Dr. Penny Burdick,
HTPA, Mandala
Healing Touch

2014

January 8th
***“Making Exercising
At Home More Fun”***

Speaker:
Grace Lambert,
NASM CPT/CES,

2014

February 12th
***“Everything is
just fine! -
As long as it Is”***

Speaker:
Mark Harvey