

THE pulse

 **syracuse**
AREA HEALTH

FALL/WINTER 2021
INSIDE THIS ISSUE:



2021 CARING KIND
AWARD WINNER



SAH DIABETES EDUCATION
PROGRAM **SUCCESS**



NEW LOCATION,
SAME GREAT CARE

LETTER FROM THE CEO



Dear Friend,

It's that time again! A new issue of The Pulse is here, and I'm so happy to share the latest and greatest Syracuse Area Health updates with you.

In this issue, we're celebrating the launch of a brand-new patient portal, which will make it quicker and easier for you to access pertinent health information, contact your provider and more.

In addition, you'll get a glimpse at our annual financial report, which shows key insights into how Syracuse Area Health grew this year.

We're also sharing an update about our new on-site MRI services set to start in January—a game changer for convenience in patient care.

Next up, you'll find an article highlighting this year's Caring Kind Award Winner, Dr. James Steckelberg. His compassionate care is a true reflection of the Syracuse Area Health mission.

Then you'll see what may be the most inspiring story of the year: With the help of our caring team, one patient is taking hold of his health to get his diabetes in check. We couldn't be prouder of all he's accomplished.

After that, we dive into the grand opening of our new Syracuse Area Health Clinic & Pharmacy – North Campus. This new location for our Weeping Water clinic is more centrally located and positioned to provide an enhanced patient experience.

We wrap up our publication with a tasty (and healthy) seasonal recipe – it's one you won't want to miss. Plus, we share some great tips for staying healthy this winter. Thank you so much for reading The Pulse and being a part of the Syracuse Area Health family.

Sincerely yours,
Michael Harvey, President & CEO

An Exciting Upgrade: New Patient Portal is Up and Running Please allow for extra time at your next visit!

As of October 4th, patients could begin accessing their new **Healthlife Patient Portal**. In conjunction with Syracuse Area Health's upgrade to Cerner, the latest in medical record technology, the new patient portal offers enhanced security and more services to make accessing and managing medical information easier. With the new portal you can:

- Send secure messages to your care team
- Request medication refills and renewals
- View lab results and other relevant health documents
- Request appointments
- View clinical notes
- Manage care of family members (with proper consent)

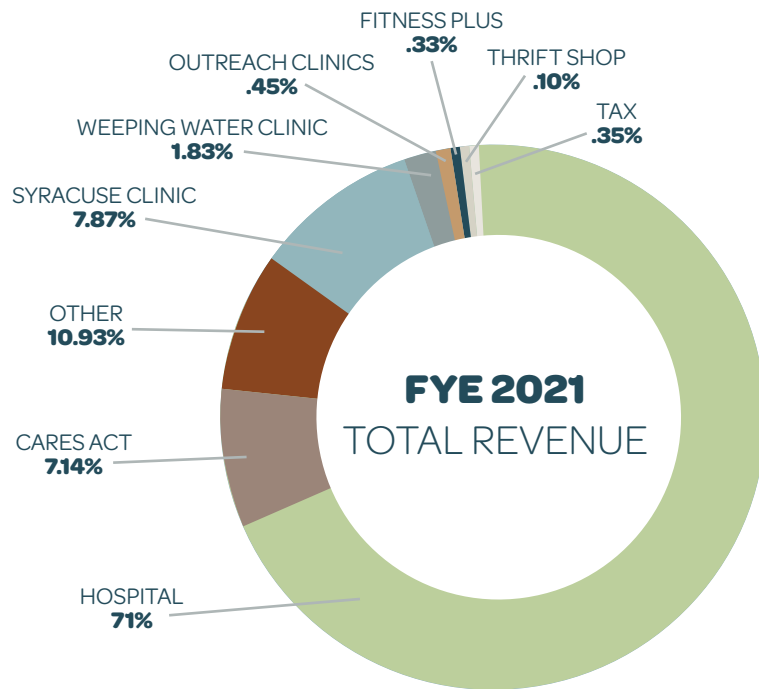
This robust system helps improve communication flow between patients and providers, optimizing the patient experience. Medical care received prior to October 4th will not be visible in the new portal, but can be obtained by contacting SAH.

To ensure a smooth transition at your next appointment please plan to:

- ☒ Bring your health insurance card to verify insurance information
- ☒ Verify your medical history and medication
- ☒ Provide or update your email information



Annual Report



Gross Revenue:
\$33,897,450

**Health Insurance
Write-offs:**
\$4,320,755

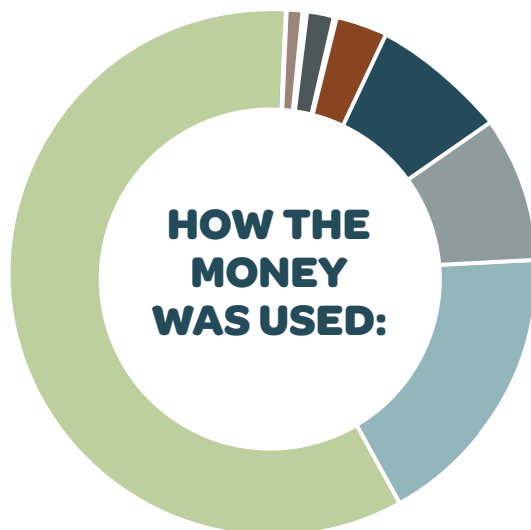
Charity Care:
\$94,407

**Uncollectible Patient
Balances:**
\$531,546

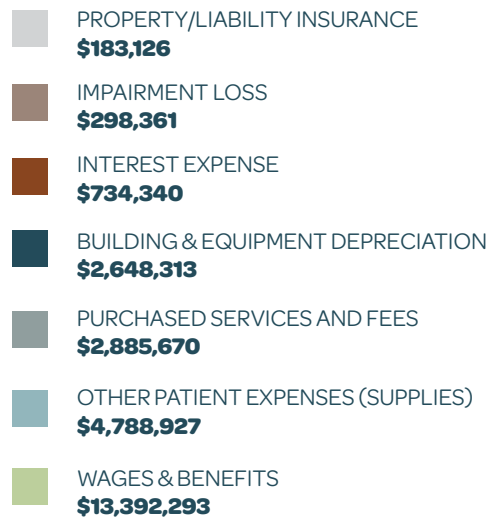
Net Revenue:
\$28,950,722

Expenses:
\$24,931,030

**Funds left over for
future needs:**
\$4,019,692



Wages paid to employees:
\$11,103,339



Numbers are based on draft audited financials

by the numbers

2021 FINANCIAL INFORMATION

Fiscal Year Ending June 30, 2021 STATISTICS

	FY 2020	FY 2021
Admissions	14,640	18,981
Cardiac Rehab Visits	603	848
Cafeteria Meals	24,412	24,300
ER Visits	1,562	1,408
Laboratory Tests	26,292	26,394
CT Scans	965	1,040
MRI Scans	115	173
Outreach Clinics	0	546
Specialty Clinic Visits	2,964	3,306
Physical Therapy Sessions	10,795	11,092
Occupational Therapy Sessions	3,025	4,858
Syracuse Clinic Visits	10,802	9,862
Weeping Water Clinic Visits	2,901	2,920
Inpatient/Swing Bed Days	518	482
Surgical Procedures (includes GI)	477	501



More Flexibility, Better Access:

On-site MRI Services Coming to Syracuse Area Health

As part of our dedication to provide the highest level of care to Syracuse and surrounding communities, Syracuse Area Health is proud to announce the addition of a permanent on-site MRI system that will be ready for patients in early 2022.

"Syracuse Area Health is growing: The expansion of campuses and the number of new providers and patients has significantly increased the need of radiology services," Stacey Siefken, director of radiology, shared. "As we saw the need to increase the availability of MRI scans to meet the needs of our patients and their families, we began to research the feasibility of our own scanner at Syracuse."

Previously, MRIs were available to patients through a mobile MRI service once or twice a week. But as the need increased, it became apparent that the expansion of this service is necessary to provide patients with the most timely and convenient care.

In addition to the new on-site MRI machine, Syracuse Area Health also welcomed an MRI technician to their staff in August: Jill Janssen. She is excited to join the team ahead of this important update, and with 12 years of experience, she will be a knowledgeable and comforting presence for patients.

"I'm very excited to join the team at Syracuse," Jill said. "I live very close and had previously been commuting to Lincoln for work. To be able to work close to home and for my local hospital is amazing."

Jill is also happy for the community and how they will benefit from expanded access to MRIs.

"This upgrade is very timely," Jill said. "We will be able to serve anyone at nearly anytime—a major upgrade from the mobile service. People will be able to get them scheduled sooner without needing to travel outside the community."

Along with simply having access to on-site MRIs, the machine being installed will be the latest in MRI technology, which will provide an enhanced patient experience.

"The new MRI scanner will offer the latest technology and improve the patient experience with faster and quieter scans," Stacey said. "The scanner will have a greater weight limit and will be a wide bore, or larger opening, accommodating larger patients or those with claustrophobia."

As the new year approaches, Syracuse Area health is looking forward to providing this expanded service and having patients receive compassionate care from Jill.



"I believe that our job as radiology technicians is to put people at ease as much as possible and offer them knowledge to make healthcare decisions. And on-site MRIs will help us do just that."

-Jill Janssen

Congratulations to **James Steckelberg, MD**

2021 Caring Kind Award Winner



Syracuse Area Health is thrilled to announce their 2021 Caring Kind award winner: Dr. James Steckelberg!

The Caring Kind award is given annually to a Syracuse Area Health employee that exemplifies the teamwork, dedication, and spirit needed to create a positive work environment. Dr. Steckelberg's passion for patient care makes him a wonderful member of the Syracuse team—and a truly deserving Caring Kind recipient.

Dr. Steckelberg has been a Syracuse Area Health family practice provider for 16 years and has been integral to providing our community with the highest standard of care. He was extremely appreciative of the acknowledgment of his hard work that this award represents.

"The best word I can use to describe how I was feeling when I received the award is humbled. I knew I was nominated and potentially could win the award but certainly was not expecting to," Dr. Steckelberg shared. "When I found out I had been chosen, I was overcome with emotion, which is something that I did not expect to feel. This was replaced with a sense of genuine and sincere gratitude for all of the amazing and hard-working individuals who make it such an honor to work at the organization."

The Caring Kind award recognizes the most caring and dedicated healthcare workers, a fitting tribute for Dr. Steckelberg, who acknowledged that while healthcare is his passion, it is not always easy.

"This award certainly does mean a lot. I think we all want to feel valued and like an important member of any organization," he said. "The last few years have been difficult in healthcare, and I think most healthcare providers have felt overwhelmed during this time. This is true not only in our organization, but across the country. For me personally, this award validates all the hard work that I have put in."

Dr. Steckelberg has been ultra-focused on his patients to ensure that even in unusual circumstances, they continue to feel like his number one priority. He says that as a healthcare provider in a small community, being able to provide first rate care is a true privilege.

"I would just like to say thank you to the community in general for all the support of not only myself, but the organization as a whole," he said. "Syracuse Area Health strives to provide high-quality healthcare not only to the community but the surrounding regions as well. As healthcare continues to change, my colleagues and I will continue to strive to provide the most comprehensive and up-to-date care possible."

From everyone at Syracuse Area Health, congratulations, Dr. Steckelberg! You truly earned this award and are a great asset to our community.

One Man's Success is a **Community's Inspiration**



To sign up for Syracuse Area Health's diabetes education classes, contact your family practice provider or the diabetes education team at **402-269-7615**.

When Molly Skomer, APRN, told Keith Badberg that his A1C levels had risen to 9% and he needed to manage his diabetes with insulin or face worsening health consequences, he knew he needed a change.

"I laid it all out," Molly said. "We looked at his health data and discussed what could happen if the trends we saw in his blood sugar levels and weight continued. It's not an easy conversation—but so necessary."

When not managed properly, diabetes can lead to:

- Increased risk of heart disease and stroke
- Kidney problems
- Nerve damage
- Vision loss and blindness

Molly's honest explanation resonated with Keith.

"Molly really listened; I could tell she cared," Keith explained. "She put it in a way I could understand. Talking with her helped me realize what could happen if I didn't do the right things for my health."

Determined to not let diabetes further control his life, Keith enrolled in SAH's Diabetes Education Program. He started in May 2021 and has made amazing progress—a testament to his dedication and the support of caring providers.

Diabetic educator Tammie Heller knew from their first meeting that Keith was ready to make a change.

"He came motivated and wanted to learn everything," she shared.

Over the 3-session course, Keith learned manageable, effective ways to incorporate healthier diet and exercise habits into his lifestyle.

"I learned how to read food labels and portion my food—that was a big part of it," Keith explained. "Plus, how to cut back on things like soda. I used to have three to four a day and now drink that in a week. I took everything I learned and did it all at once. It was the easiest way for me to get started and not forget anything."

Armed with newfound knowledge and the unwavering support of Molly and Tammie, Keith started to improve his health and get his diabetes under control.



"Molly and Tammie are my biggest cheerleaders. I've lost 37 pounds so far. It's given me more energy to get out and do things and has even made it a bit easier for me at work."

"I'm done meeting with Tammie now, but I've got follow-up appointments with Molly every three months. When we do my lab work and I see my A1C number, I almost start jumping—it makes me so proud."

As for Molly? Rumor has it she does a happy dance every time she sees Keith's progress. "I couldn't be prouder," she shared.

Even with all of the progress, Keith has no intentions of slowing down.

"I've got so many goals," he shared. "I've got a weight goal set—but my biggest goal is to ride my bike all the way from Syracuse to Lincoln. I've been walking a ton and just started riding my bike again, so I know I'll do it."



L-R: Molly Skomer, APRN, Keith Badberg, and Tammie Heller, RN, BSN, CCRP

By utilizing the right resources, Keith is meeting his goals and changing his health—and life.

"Keith's A1C is now below 6%," Molly shared. "I'm so grateful for Tammie and our Diabetes Education Program. It's truly an amazing service for our patients."

"It's hard to make good choices that require sustained change, but it can be done," Tammie said. "Like Keith, if you put in the time, you can get results. He's certainly an inspiration with everything he's accomplished so far."

Keith wants to share his story and will continue to live life to the fullest. "I'm going to keep going until I hit my goals," he shared. "And then I'm going to keep going after that."

It's Finally Here!

Grand Opening of the North Campus Clinic & Pharmacy

Syracuse Area Health is thrilled to announce the opening of the new North Campus Clinic and Pharmacy on December 6. The North Campus will replace the previous Weeping Water Clinic with an updated, more centrally located facility that will be easier for members of the community to access.

"Our mission is Compassionate Care, Healthy Communities. The expansion and relocation of the Weeping Water Clinic allows us to better serve Weeping Water and the surrounding communities with an improved level of care," Mike Harvey, Syracuse Area Health CEO, said.

Syracuse Area Health knows that as the community grows and changes, so do healthcare needs. And the North Campus facility allows healthcare to grow along with them.



Open House!
December 1, 2021

4:00 – 7:00 p.m.
7512 Highway 50
Weeping Water

While there are many exciting benefits for patients at the new clinic, the most notable are:



On-site
X-ray Services



On-site
Retail Pharmacy



More
Exam Rooms

X-ray services will make it easier and safer to get timely answers to health questions. And an on-site pharmacy allows people to get their medication in the same place as their medical appointments, streamlining their care and treatment. Less travel and faster care is a win-win.

“We look forward to better serving Southeast Nebraska with expanded medical services and accessibility,” Mike shared.

The North Campus will have a compassionate and dedicated team, including primary care providers Kayla Heidinger, MD, and Lindsey Eggers, APRN. Stephanie Blair, PharmD, RP, will lead the pharmacy team. Patients simply need to call the clinic to schedule their primary care appointments or can submit an appointment request through their patient portal.



The clinic and pharmacy are available at the following times:

Medical Clinic: Monday – Friday, 8:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m.

Pharmacy: Monday – Friday, 9:00 a.m. – 6:00 p.m.
Saturday, 9 a.m. – 1 p.m.

What the North Campus Clinic and Pharmacy will ultimately provide to the community is simple: Improved outcomes for rural patients through immediate support from providers close to home.



Consider Donating to the North Campus Capital Campaign

Because Syracuse Area Health is a not-for-profit healthcare system, donations from the community help make projects large and small possible.

Your donation to this project is a tangible sign of your commitment to and your belief in the importance of quality, rural healthcare, and it will also benefit your family, friends, neighbors, and clients whose health depends upon these services. **Donations of \$1,000 or more will be recognized at the North Campus on our donor wall.**

If you have any questions, need additional information, or would like to discuss a potential gift, please feel free to contact us:

- The Syracuse Area Health Foundation: **402-269-7658**
- Jill Ford: **jford@syracuseareahealth.com**

Thank you for considering a gift to your community.

Donations can be made:

- Online: **www.SyracuseAreaHealth.com/Foundation**
- Mailed to: Syracuse Area Health Foundation

Attn: Jill Ford
P.O. Box N
2731 Healthcare Drive
Syracuse, NE 68446

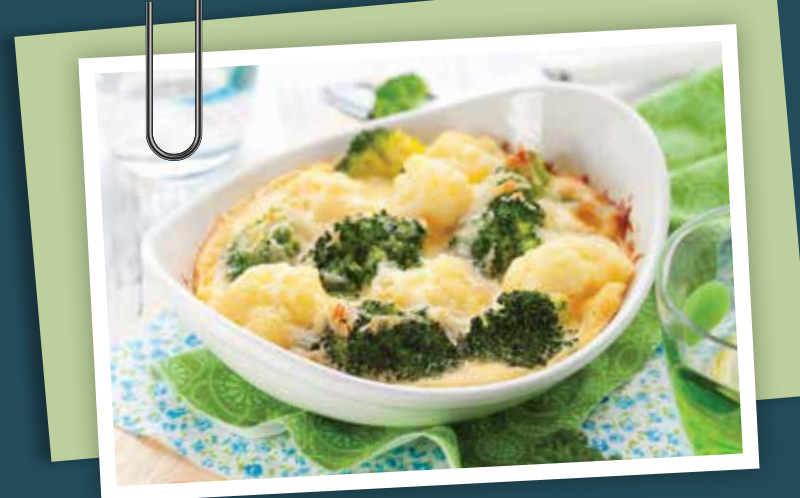
Thank you to our generous donors!

Your contributions make the North Campus Clinic & Pharmacy possible.

Many aspects of the North Campus are only made possible by the dedicated work of the Syracuse Area Health Auxiliary and the generous donations to the North Campus Capital Campaign.

The North Campus Capital Campaign has raised \$73,032 thus far from the generous donors below. Please consider a donation supporting this important project.

Bronze Level Donors		
• Kelli Brewer • Lisa Cast • Deb & Charley McWilliams	• Karen Schweitzer • Diane Hawkins • Irene Wilhelm	• Shared Services • Legato Healthcare Marketing
Silver Level Donors		
• American Exchange Bank • Leo A. Daly • Cindy & Kirby Drake • Cindy Draeger • Lisa Voorhees	• Jill Ford • Dixie Dobbs • Brian Gross State Farm • Sampson Construction • Steve Urbauer	• Corn Growers State Bank • Nancy Brack
Gold Level Donors		
• Michael Harvey		
Platinum Level Donors		
• Syracuse Area Health Auxiliary		



Broccoli & Cauliflower Gratin: A Warm & Comforting Holiday Veggie Dish

Ingredients

- 4 tbsp. (½ stick) unsalted butter, plus more for pan
- 1 medium head cauliflower (about 2 lbs), cored and sliced ¼-in. thick
- 1 large head broccoli (about 1 ½ lbs), trimmed and sliced ¼-in. thick
- 6 tbsp. all-purpose flour
- 3 c. whole milk
- ¼ tsp. freshly grated nutmeg
- 8 oz. Gruyère cheese, grated (about 2 cups)
- Kosher salt and freshly ground black pepper

Directions

1. Preheat oven to 375°F. Butter a shallow 3-quart baking dish. Arrange cauliflower and broccoli in the prepared dish.
2. Melt butter in a medium saucepan over medium heat. Add flour and cook, stirring, 2 minutes (do not let it darken). Slowly whisk in milk. Simmer, whisking occasionally, until slightly thickened, 3 to 4 minutes. Remove from heat and stir in nutmeg and 1 ¼ cups cheese. Season with salt and pepper. Pour over vegetables. Sprinkle with remaining ¾ cup cheese.
3. Cover loosely with aluminum foil and bake for 15 minutes. Remove foil; bake until vegetables are tender and the top is golden brown, approximately 20 to 25 minutes longer. Let stand 10 minutes before serving.

8 Simple Tips to Stay Healthier & Boost Your Immune System This Winter

Winter is just around the corner, so now is the time to stay on top of healthy habits to help keep colds, the flu and other illnesses at bay. These tips are simple to incorporate into your everyday routine, and can go a long way toward making this winter a healthy one.



❶ **Eat a well-balanced diet:**

While the Christmas cookies and holiday spreads may be tempting, now's not the time to throw nutrition out the window. Incorporate plenty of vegetables, fruits, lean protein, and fiber into your meals so that you feel satisfied and have energy to get through even the longest winter days.

❷ **Stay hydrated:**

While nothing hits the spot like cold water on a hot day, it's essential to make sure you drink enough water even when the weather is at its chilliest. A good hydration goal is eight 8-ounce glasses of water a day.

❸ **Keep it active:**

Whether you join a gym, find a fitness instructor you love on YouTube, take up snowshoeing, or simply chase your kids through the snow, winter is a great time to find a new way to stay active. Not only is moving your body good for you physically, but it's also good for you mentally. 30 minutes a day of activity is ideal.

❹ **Don't skimp on sleep:**

Take advantage of the earlier sunset and make sure you're getting to bed at a reasonable hour. The average adult needs 7-8 hours of sleep a night to be fully rested— which is key to maintaining overall health.

❺ **Get your flu shot:**

Over in less than 30 seconds, the flu shot helps boost your immune system against the most prevalent strains of flu and can be the difference between a miserable and merry winter season.

❻ **Practice good hand hygiene:**

Making sure you're washing your hands well and often is one of the easiest and most effective ways to help avoid the spread of illnesses like COVID-19.

❼ **Take extra precautions:**

Continue to social distance where possible and wear a mask—particularly in crowded indoor spaces. Not only does this offer additional protection against COVID-19, it also helps protect you from other airborne illnesses like the cold and flu. While we're slowly getting back to "normal," these small actions can make a big difference for your health.

❽ **Schedule your wellness visit:**

If it's been a year or more since you've seen your provider, come in for a wellness visit. Preventive care is key to knowing your health baseline and catching any potential health issues early.



2731 Healthcare Drive
Syracuse, NE 68446

Syracuse Area Health **Auxiliary**

This year, the Auxiliary voted to fund:

\$46,032	North Campus Location (Landscaping, Flag, and Flag Pole)
\$3,500	Acute-Emergency Room, Emergency Blood Warming Device
\$15,000	Acute-Emergency Room, EKG Machine
\$7,198	Family Practice Clinic, Clarius Portable Handheld Ultrasound Scanner
\$881	Rehab, Three Mobile Laptop Workstations
\$524	Specialty Clinic, Dermal Curettes
\$78	Fitness Plus, Storage Baskets

The Auxiliary has donated \$854,147 to Syracuse Area Health since the Thrift Shop opened in December of 2007.