

THE pulse

 **syracuse**
AREA HEALTH



SUMMER 2024
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LETTER FROM THE CEO



Dear reader,

As we enjoy summer, the season of pool time, barbecues, and family vacations, it is also a great time to learn about the stories, advancements, and compassionate care that defines Syracuse Area Health (SAH).

In this issue of The Pulse, we introduce Dr. Brett Copley, a new Family Practitioner based at our North Clinic, located on Highway 50 between Louisville and Weeping Water, Neb. He has deep roots in this area and brings a heartfelt commitment to excellent care – we're glad to welcome him to SAH! We also spotlight some familiar faces, our team of established Family Practice Providers working within our two outstanding clinics.

We are excited to feature our exceptional Emergency Department (ED), which operates 24/7 throughout the year and contains state-of-the-art medical equipment. This piece shares the story of a young athlete's experience in our ED after suffering a broken arm. Our short wait times in the ED allow us to provide efficient, quality care at a moment's notice.

Be sure to note our article on the importance of breast MRIs and how SAH can assist patients who need MRIs for high-risk screenings, implant evaluation, pre-operative planning, diagnosis, and much more.

We also highlight the comprehensive Chronic Care Management (CCM) program SAH offers to help patients who have two or more chronic conditions. This program helps streamline their care, with Care Coordinators serving as advocates, liaisons, and partners on their healthcare journeys.

Additionally, we have added nephrology coverage through telehealth for both inpatients and skilled rehab patients. These nephrologists are physicians who specialize in kidney diseases and conditions. Fortunately, this new coverage means admitted patients who need this type of specialty care can now receive it.

SAH has received quite a few awards in recent years, and as the leader of this organization, I am proud of the outstanding team we have assembled to serve Southeast Nebraska. The awards listed on the back cover demonstrate that both patient satisfaction and employee satisfaction are prioritized in our daily work. As SAH continues finding new ways to innovate and provide exceptional care, I want to thank you for your continued support. It is a privilege to serve you.

Best wishes for the year ahead,
Michael Harvey, President & CEO



FOR THREE YEARS IN A ROW



TOP 20 CRITICAL ACCESS HOSPITAL 2022, 2023, 2024

Best Practice in Patient Satisfaction



From Hometown to Healing



Our North Clinic Welcomes Dr. Brett Copley as New Family Practitioner

Syracuse Area Health (SAH) is proud to welcome Dr. Brett Copley, Family Practitioner based at the North Clinic, located on Highway 50 between Louisville and Weeping Water, Neb. Dr. Copley's passion for community well-being and commitment to excellent patient care makes him a valuable addition to the SAH team, both in our clinic and at the hospital.



Raised just down the street from the old Syracuse hospital, Dr. Copley's return is a homecoming marked by heartfelt connection and a desire to contribute to the health of his hometown region. His expertise spans general family medicine, diabetes management, preventive healthcare, and more.

"I'm excited to join this team and serve the community where I grew up. It's incredibly rewarding to be back and contribute to the health and happiness of the people in this area."

As a board-certified Family Practitioner and active member of medical associations, Dr. Copley brings a wealth of experience and dedication to his practice. SAH is thrilled to have him on board and looks forward to his contributions to community wellness.

To make an appointment with Dr. Copley at the North Clinic, call 402.267.5330 or learn more about our medical team at syracuseareahealth.com.

Family Matters

SAH's Family Practice Clinics Deliver Exceptional Care

The Family Practice Providers at Syracuse Area Health (SAH) provide specialized care to all ages, assisting with annual wellness visits, immunizations, preventative screenings, student and sports physicals, and women's health services, as well as care for injuries, illnesses, and other health concerns.

SAH has two family practice clinic locations for your convenience:

Syracuse Clinic

Located within SAH Hospital, easy access to services like the SAH lab and both traditional and specialized radiology (MRI, CT scans, ultrasound), and flexible before/after school hours Monday through Thursday.

402.269.2411
2731 Healthcare Drive
Syracuse, NE 68446

North Clinic

On-site retail pharmacy, radiology and lab services, and same-day appointments are typically available.

402.267.5330
7512 Highway 50
Weeping Water, NE 68463



Randy Bain, DO



Brett Copley, DO



Kayla Heidinger, MD



Doug States, MD



James Steckelberg, MD



Lindsey Eggers, APRN



Heather Noerrlinger, APRN



Molly Skomer, APRN

FAST, EFFICIENT CARE

*The Emergency Department
at Syracuse Area Health*



The Emergency Department (ED) at Syracuse Area Health (SAH) stands ready to tackle any challenge with efficiency, expertise, and a dose of heartfelt care.

“People who live in rural locations deserve the best possible care. I feel that, at SAH, we offer the very best in critical access care,” shared White. “We deliver efficient, quality healthcare at any time of day or night and have a provider team that is both qualified and empathetic to the people and community we serve.”



Jim White, APRN

Such dedication and high-quality care were recently put into action for one local boy who suffered an injury at school.

A Mother’s Perspective

Kristie Hartman, a special-education teacher, resident of Weeping Water, Neb., visited SAH’s ED last November when her son Russell – a third grader – had a sudden, unexpected injury and needed quick emergency care.

“He was playing baseball in the school gym while on recess, and he ran to a base, then hit the wall and broke his arm in two places upon impact,” she explained.

“Our Family Practice provider is at the North Clinic, so I trust them to guide us and tell us what to do. They said he likely broke a bone and to go to the ED right away.”

Once they arrived at the ED, Kristie filled out the intake paperwork. They only had to wait for about five minutes before they were seen.

“The nurses came in to assist us right away. We didn’t have to wait long for anything. They quickly gave him pain medication, assessed the damage, and took him for x-rays,” shared Kristie. They helped talk through everything with Russell, so he wasn’t as scared.”

When Kristie took Russell to see an orthopaedic specialist, they were impressed with the work SAH had done.

“They said SAH’s ED providers did such a good job of setting the bone that surgery would not be needed,” she said.

Russell had to be casted for three weeks, then wear a splint for three weeks after that. Once he was out of his splint, Russell was so well healed that he immediately went into playing little league basketball during the spring and is now playing baseball this summer.

“They supported Russell and also supported me because they could tell I was worried,” explained Kristie. “The staff even sent us a ‘get well soon’ card that they all signed – I was so impressed. I would truly trust them with anything.”



A Pillar of Rural Emergency Care

SAH's ED is conveniently located at Hwy 2 and Hwy 50 in Syracuse, Neb. It is open 24/7, 365 days a year, and equipped with state-of-the-art facilities and a compassionate, expert team.



Whether facing injury or illness, individuals of all ages can trust SAH to deliver unparalleled treatment with unwavering dedication.

Receive the emergency help you need, fast!

Patients who come to our ED do not experience the long wait times that are common in the surrounding larger metros.

Teach kids how to dial 911.

Here are some tips for educating your kids on how to call for help in an emergency:



Information: Have them practice saying both their first and last name out loud, along with their home address. Post your location address in a high-traffic area in the home (refrigerator, corkboard, etc.) for babysitters or caretakers to access.

When to Call: Explain different emergency situations that might require dialing 911, such as:

- Fire
- Medical emergency
- Car accident
- Stranger danger

Unlock & Dial: If you have a security lock on your phone's home screen, teach them how to unlock it. From there, practice finding the keypad option or pre-loaded emergency button.

Practice, Practice, Practice: To help kids become more comfortable with a mobile device, have them practice making a call to a friend or family member. The more repetition you can provide, the easier it will be for them to recall the steps, even in a stressful emergency situation. Remind them that actually calling 911 should only be for true emergencies.



The Role of BREAST MRIs IN HEALTHCARE

MRIs (magnetic resonance imaging) play a crucial role in many different aspects of breast health. Efficient and exact tests, they are adept at providing an additional layer of diagnostic accuracy. SAH proudly added this capability in February 2024.

“Breast MRIs are more sensitive to smaller abnormalities, ensuring they can be spotted quickly.”

- *Technologist Jill Janssen,
RT (R)(MR)(CT)(ARRT)*

Janssen also shared that the process is centered on a positive patient experience: “My goal is to make patients as comfortable as possible. They must lie still, so they can listen to music or just relax during the scan.”

Common reasons why an individual may undergo a breast MRI include:

High-Risk Screening: Screenings recommended for those with a 20% or higher lifetime risk of breast cancer.

Evaluation of Implants: The FDA advises this should be done every two to three years.

Newly Diagnosed Breast Cancer: MRIs can help in understanding the extent of the cancer.

Problem-Solving: MRIs can be used when other imaging results are inconclusive or when further information is required.

Pre-Operative Planning and Staging: A breast MRI is often essential for treatment planning and staging, as well as for assessing the response after treatment is complete.

Learn more about SAH's MRI services at syracuseareahealth.com/our-services/mri/.

EMPOWERING PATIENTS WITH BETTER CARE

The Chronic Care Management (CCM) Program at SAH

Living with chronic health conditions can feel like navigating a maze without a map – each turn presents new challenges and uncertainties. However, within these complexities lie opportunities for transformative care and support.

At Syracuse Area Health (SAH), our Chronic Care Management (CCM) program, led by Care Coordinators Nikki Wenzel and Becky Pohlman (RNs), is designed to provide patients with personalized support and guidance as they manage multiple chronic conditions.

Eligible to patients with two or more long-lasting chronic health conditions like arthritis, cardiovascular disease, diabetes, and more, CCM offers a range of benefits aimed at improving patient experiences and health outcomes.



**NIKKI
WENZEL, RN**



**BECKY
POHLMAN, RN**

Care Coordination

“Our role as Care Coordinators is to provide an extra set of hands, eyes, and ears to help patients manage their chronic conditions,” said Wenzel.

Through close collaboration with healthcare providers, Wenzel and Pohlman ensure seamless coordination of appointments, procedures, and specialist consultations.

Enhanced Communication

Central to CCM’s success are open communication channels. Pohlman explained: **“We work closely with providers and help triage symptoms.”**

Patients feel comfortable reaching out for updates, sharing concerns, and seeking guidance, fostering trust and a better rapport.

Health Record Updates

CCM involves meticulous maintenance of health records to ensure they are accurate at all times.

Wenzel and Pohlman work diligently to ensure comprehensive records, empowering patients with a clear understanding of their health status and treatment plan.

Symptom Management

CCM includes robust symptom-management strategies like diabetes management and medication compliance. These are aimed at improving overall well-being and reducing discomfort.

Care Management and Care Plan

The cornerstone of CCM is the development of personalized care plans tailored to each patient’s unique needs. Collaborating closely with providers, Care Coordinators craft plans encompassing medical interventions, lifestyle modifications, and support strategies.

Putting Patients First

The CCM program allows those with multiple chronic conditions to gain back valuable time, improve their healthcare journey, and focus on what they care about most.

If you have two or more long-term chronic conditions, reach out to your family practice provider to learn more about CCM at SAH. Referrals are required.

INTRODUCING ADVANCED KIDNEY CARE

*Nephrology Services Now Available for
Inpatients and Skilled Rehab Patients*

Syracuse Area Health (SAH) proudly introduces nephrology services tailored specifically to inpatients and skilled rehab patients. With the integration of this care, delivered remotely via telehealth, SAH is exploring new avenues for meeting patients' specific health needs, close to home.



Seamless Integration for Enhanced Care

SAH's nephrology services offer a seamless approach to kidney care. Whether patients are in the Emergency Department (ED), admitted as inpatients, under observation, or admitted as skilled rehab patients, specialized nephrology consultations are readily available, eliminating the need for transfers or disruptions in care.

Direct Access to Expert Guidance

Patients gain direct access to nephrology specialists through virtual consultations, allowing for tailored care and guidance from the comfort of their hospital room. This ensures timely interventions and personalized treatment plans that prioritize each patient's well-being.

Breaking Down Geographic Barriers

SAH's tele-nephrology services eliminate geographical barriers, bringing specialized care directly to our acute care patients, right here in the Syracuse area. With no need for transfers or ambulance rides, patients can receive uninterrupted access to the expertise they deserve, ensuring continuity of care in a familiar environment.

Collaborative Care for Enhanced Outcomes

Collaboration is key in our approach to kidney care. SAH's dedicated team of providers and hospital staff works seamlessly with nephrology specialists to ensure a streamlined, sensible process and more thoughtful, comprehensive care.

By combining local expertise with specialized insights, we're elevating outcomes and ensuring patients are on the correct path to wellness.

Looking to the Future

With these nephrology services now available for both inpatients and skilled rehab patients, SAH continues to lead the way toward a brighter, healthier tomorrow. Through innovations like this, we're ensuring fast, efficient, and expert-driven kidney care for our community.

To learn more about nephrology services available at SAH, please call 402.269.2011.



2731 Healthcare Drive
Syracuse, NE 68446

AN AWARD-WINNING HEALTHCARE PROVIDER

Thank you to our patients, staff, and local community! We could not earn these awards without your dedication and support.

FOR THE THIRD CONSECUTIVE YEAR!



**MODERN HEALTHCARE
BEST PLACES TO WORK
IN HEALTHCARE 2024**



**TOP 20
CRITICAL ACCESS HOSPITAL
PATIENT SATISFACTION
2022, 2023, 2024**



**PRESS GANEY
HUMAN EXPERIENCE AWARD
EMPLOYEE EXPERIENCE 2023**