

MMH stays focused on patient care

Written by Kyle Arnoldy

East Phillips County Hospital District continued to address ways in which they can better serve the community at the Tuesday, March 26 board meeting.

Through community linkage policies, the board has set a precedent that they want to know what the community needs and wants. Many of their programs in the past have been based off of not what they told the community they need, but what members of the community have pinpointed as areas of importance.

“Ultimately we are a community resource,” MMH administrator John Ayoub said. “We are owned by the citizens of the district, and we are here to serve the citizens of the district, so if we can do a better job of that, that’s why we exist.”

In previous years, the hospital has conducted a phone survey about how to better provide their services for the district. These surveys played an instrumental role in determining the needs of the citizens. This year the hospital is going to replace the surveys with a more personal approach.

“This year, instead of doing another telephonic survey where we just take a small sample size of the community, we have engaged an outside group to come in and facilitate dialogue between and among members of the community,” Ayoub explained.

Beginning May 23, the group will seek out members of the school district, city, churches, clubs, some of the bigger employers and anyone who wants to participate.

“We want to provide folks with what they need to lead the healthiest life that they can because they only get one shot at it, so why not try and make the most of it?” Ayoub said.

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Board discusses ways to speed up billing process

While discussing ways to better serve patients, board member Mike Woodhead raised concerns with the amount of time between seeing a doctor and receiving the bill. As much as a year could pass before patients are billed, and speeding up the billing process is just another way the board plans to improve patient care.

Some of the reason for the time it takes to receive a bill has to do with the new electronic medical record program. Although the new EMR offers many benefits for the hospital, it has caused a few hiccups with the financial department.

As the department works to learn the program, they have fallen a month behind. Ayoub noted that they should be caught up within a month or two.

“When we come into conflict as an organization and there are patient care issues that need to be resolved or when there are financial billing issues, patient care always comes first,” Ayoub explained. “There are only so many people that work here and so many people with information technology backgrounds and training, so we put our time and focus on making sure the patient gets the best care possible.”

The board is planning to hold a special workshop to further discuss ways to speed up the billing process.

Health fair rescheduled for April 27

The health fair has been rescheduled for Saturday, April 27 at the Phillips County Event Center from 9 a.m.-noon.

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It was originally planned for March 23, but due to an uncooperative spring blizzard, it had to be postponed.

Those who are planning to have their blood drawn are reminded to fast for 10-12 hours and to avoid alcohol and coffee but drink plenty of water.

Those who already had their blood drawn can bring their results in to discuss with a provider.

Many providers will be on hand and a number of services will be offered such as measuring height, weight, blood pressure and body mass index.

For any questions or concerns, contact Sharon Greenman at the hospital at 970-854-2211 ext. 225.

Other business

In other business at the March 26, the EPCHD board:

—approved credentials of Christy Young, M.D., neurology; John Drury, M.D, cardiology; Richard Kaplan, M.D., radiology; Betsy Bronson, M.D., radiology; Judith Corey, M.D., radiology; John Harris, M.D., radiology/PADNET; David Kellam, M.D., radiology; Michael Myers, M.D., radiology; Jeffrey Murrish, M.D./radiology; Phillip Cook, M.D., radiology; Keith Spellmahn, M.D., radiology; John Wright, M.D., radiology; Paul Val Meredith, CRNA, anesthesia; Carrie Harvey, M.D., radiology; Arnold Pfahnl, M.D., cardiology; David Board, M.D., radiology; Douglas Carter, M.D., ophthalmology; Susan Enlow, M.D., radiology; Eric Hoyer, M.D., radiology; Archana Lucchesi, M.D., radiology; Marshall Mallory, M.D., radiology; Thomas Neveldine, D.O.,

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radiology; Suzanne Homer, M.D., radiology; Bradley Tipler, M.D., radiology; and Eric Trefelner, M.D., radiology.

—learned that Dr. Thomas Lininger, oncologist, will be retiring this summer. He has been with the hospital since 1995.

—heard that Dr. Jeremy Drechsler will be reducing his time in Holyoke as he has taken a full-time position in Denver.

—noted the next board meeting will be held Tuesday, April 23.

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