

health Connections

FALL 2023

Seasonal Newsletter of Spencer Hospital

On the Cover:

Retiring Spencer Hospital President
Bill Bumgarner with Newly Appointed
President, Brenda Tiefenthaler



INSIDE THIS ISSUE

- Tiefenthaler Selected as New Spencer Hospital President
- Public Health Focuses on Community Wellness
- Reduce Risk of Dangerous Falls
- Emergency Department Project Takes Shape
- Donation Pops Up Fun Treat

100

RURAL & COMMUNITY
TOP HOSPITAL 2023
8-TIME RECIPIENT

CHARTIS



FROM BEDSIDE TO BOARDROOM

TIEFENTHALER APPOINTED HOSPITAL PRESIDENT



In August, the Spencer Hospital Board of Trustees unanimously appointed Brenda Tiefertal, a healthcare leader with 23 years of experience at Spencer Hospital, as its next hospital president. She will succeed Bill Bumgarner, who is retiring, on November 10.

Prior to joining Spencer Hospital, she worked in healthcare facilities in the metro-Omaha area, Ft. Dodge, and at the University of Iowa Hospitals & Clinics, specializing in oncology and organ transplants.

Julie Christensen, Spencer Hospital Board Chair, commented, "The search committee interviewed and evaluated many excellent candidates with great credentials; however, Brenda's leadership skills, knowledge of local healthcare and focus on exceptional patient care were qualifications which rose above the other candidates. We are so pleased that a thorough process and a national search provided us an opportunity to fully realize the many strengths Brenda offered."

Dr. Jason Keonin, president of the Spencer Hospital Medical Staff, added, "Through Brenda's patient care leadership role, our physician team has worked closely with her over the years and appreciate her transparency, listening and communication skills, and most of all, her focus on excellence in patient care which aligns with our goals. In addition to myself, we had other physician representatives involved throughout the search and selection process. We were in agreement Brenda was an outstanding choice to lead Spencer Hospital going forward."

"I look forward to engaging our leadership team, medical staff, hospital co-workers and community partners to build on Spencer Hospital's long history of ensuring comprehensive healthcare services for the community and region," Tiefertal stated. "We have a great team of mission-focused professionals and I'm honored to be entrusted with this leadership position."

Tiefertal has served in a number of leadership roles at Spencer Hospital as she earned higher levels of responsibility over her career. At Spencer Hospital, she's been a member of the executive team for the past 18 years, most recently as Senior Vice President of Patient Care and Operations. Tiefertal was also a former director of Abben Cancer Center.

Tiefertal holds Masters degrees in both Healthcare Administration and Nursing from the University of Phoenix; a Bachelors Degree of Nursing from the University of Iowa; and an Associate of Nursing Degree from the College of St. Mary in Omaha. Tiefertal grew up on a family farm in Fonda, Iowa. Together, she and her husband Jeff have five children, seven grandchildren and reside in Spencer.

FROM THE DESK OF BILL BUMGARNER...

I started my healthcare leadership career at Spencer Hospital in 1982.

For whatever reason, the hospital administrator at that time, Jim Striepe, must have recognized potential in a clearly undistinguished new University of Iowa graduate. He hired me to be his personnel director. That initiated a fulfilling career I could have never

foreseen or imagined, spanning 41 years and being blessed to engage with countless wonderful people in five different medical communities.

Back in those seemingly less complicated times, my job responsibilities also included marketing. Early on I was tasked with the assignment to update Spencer Hospital's logo. Jim's direction was simple . . . the new logo should signify growth and the project budget was small.

Most rural hospitals did not use marketing consultants back then.

So I reached out to a graphic designer from my days working as a part-time sportswriter, during my college years, at the Iowa City Press-Citizen. To make a short story shorter – with a single prototype – my former colleague conceived what is now Spencer Hospital's iconic tree logo. His concept is essentially the same logo we use today, although it's been refreshed a bit over the years. The cost . . . \$100.

That logo proved to be prophetic – and through the vision and commitment of so many – Spencer Hospital expanded services

significantly in the decades to follow. That included dramatic medical staff development that still distinguishes Spencer from other medical communities in the region. Then came inpatient behavioral health services. Abben Cancer Center. The Warner Dialysis centers. Three rural clinics. The Spencer Regional Health Foundation. Surgical robotics. And much, much more.

Complementing that growth were the acquisition of state-of-the-art medical technologies, campus expansion and ongoing development of modern hospital facilities.

A Message TO OUR COMMUNITIES

NEW HOSPITAL PRESIDENT LOOKS FORWARD TO SERVING COMMUNITY

As a farm girl who grew up in the Fonda area, I learned early on the valuable lesson of "If it isn't broke, don't fix it."

Spencer Hospital is a thriving medical center with a long history of success in serving the healthcare needs of those who live in and visit the region. This success has been achieved through the valuable contributions of the hospital team, medical staff and supported by a committed board of trustees.

My philosophy has always been straightforward – decision-making should never lose sight of what's best for patients.

Supporting excellence in patient care and services requires investing in our professional healthcare team, technology and facilities. To assure we're doing our part to promote a healthy community, we need to also ensure a healthy financial bottom line.

I've been blessed to learn many leadership lessons working closely with Bill, our current president; our board, the medical staff and other leaders and co-workers in

our organization. This has broadened my experience, working in a range of leadership positions at Spencer Hospital over the past 23 years, where I've gained valuable insights about hospital operations and the patients we're committed to serve.

We are also intentional about gaining feedback from our patients and will continue to encourage their input. I also look forward to opportunities to meet and collaborate with leaders in the communities we serve.

This opportunity is humbling, exciting and, of course, challenging. Yet, there is comfort in these three truths:

- This is a well-run hospital, thanks to past and current leadership and great support from the community. There is no need to make changes for the sake of change.
- It takes a team, and we have an exceptional one.
- And, as stated before, direction becomes clearer when we maintain focus on what's best for our patients.

Access to quality healthcare services is imperative for the well-being and growth of northwest Iowa. On a personal level, it's essential for our loved ones, friends and neighbors. We all have a part to play in a healthy community.

Collectively, we all experienced the effects of a world health pandemic, and few entities felt the responsibility of that moment more than healthcare. As we return to more normal times, I look to offer stability and a renewed energy to explore best practices for the health and well-being of our community.

I plan to remain committed to build on Spencer Hospital's past success, guided by its mission, vision and core values.

And, I also look forward to exploring ideas for future enhancements to our healthcare services. It's an honor and a privilege to serve an organization dedicated to healthcare excellence with a mission of

servicing. I am proud to be a member of this team and community.

Moving forward, Spencer Hospital remains committed to serving the people of our region to become "Healthier Together."



Brenda Tiefenthaler

Brenda Tiefenthaler

What once was a traditional community hospital with 300 employees, transformed into a regional rural health center that now employs well over 500 health professionals. And the kicker – to validate that what occurred was real growth in new medical services to the region – over this time, the population growth of Clay County was essentially zero. Today Spencer Hospital supports eight service locations in four counties.

Since returning to Spencer in 2009, I've come to learn the tree logo also represents stability and strength. There are two basic

reasons why Spencer Hospital's reputation as one of the state's preeminent mid-sized hospitals endures. The first is that the good people of Spencer, Clay County and the surrounding region remain steadfast in their trust in Spencer Hospital. The second is that the hospital and its medical staff have always chosen to collaborate, not compete . . . never losing sight of the fundamental understanding that hospitals need doctors and doctors need hospitals.

Said another way, hospital stakeholders have consistently em-

braced the long view. Knowing that our local system of care will prosper only if we balance our self-interest with community need. Recognizing that when a patient chooses to support one service at Spencer Hospital, they are actually choosing to support all its services and the ongoing vitality of the whole.

As my healthcare career concludes, with confidence and a full heart, I pass on the stewardship of the Spencer medical community to my long and trusted colleague Brenda Tiefenthaler. She'll continue to serve our community

and region with energy, devotion and good judgment as she has for the past 23 years. Brenda is the right person to lead Spencer Hospital at this time.

With the tree logo sustaining its enduring watch over the mission and values that guide us each day, I'm certain, Spencer Hospital's best days are yet to come.

Bill Bumgarner

Bill Bumgarner, President

CLAY COUNTY PUBLIC HEALTH SERVICES

PROMOTING GREAT HEALTH FOR AREA RESIDENTS

CLAY COUNTY PUBLIC HEALTH'S MISSION IS TO PROTECT AND IMPROVE THE PHYSICAL AND MENTAL HEALTH OF OUR CITIZENS. THIS WORK IS ACHIEVED AS WE PROMOTE HEALTHY LIFESTYLES AND PREVENT DISEASE, INJURY AND DISABILITY.

A NEW MOM BREATHES A SIGH OF RELIEF WHEN THE VISITING MATERNAL CHILD HEALTH NURSE ASSURES HER THAT HER BABY IS MEETING APPROPRIATE DEVELOPMENT MILESTONES.

AN EXCITED 5-YEAR-OLD PROUDLY SHOWS OFF HIS STICKER RECEIVED AFTER HIS PRE-KINDERGARTEN VACCINATIONS.

A MIDDLE-AGE GENTLEMAN EXPRESSES APPRECIATION AFTER A WEEKLY FREE BLOOD PRESSURE CHECK, HELPING HIM TO CONVENIENTLY MONITOR HIS GOOD HEALTH.

These are just a few of the many examples of how Clay County Public Health professionals touch lives each day as they strive to promote good health practices and outcomes for local citizens.

"Everyone should have a fair and just opportunity to achieve good health and well-being," commented Colette Rossiter, Clay County Public Health director. "Our services are

designed to assist local citizens to have the information and programs needed to help them achieve their health goals."

She explained that each county's public health organization is charged with periodically assessing the health needs of the community and responding to those needs. Recently, Clay County Public Health conducted a community health assessment – to include a survey of Clay County citizens – and is in the process of developing a community health improvement plan.

The information gained through the assessment process helps identify health priorities for the county. For example, the previous assessment completed approximately five years ago indicated a need to focus on curtailing obesity among local citizens and encouraging health screenings, such as regular breast, prostate and colon exams.

"We're a small team with a big mission," Rossiter said.

"We're fortunate to have input from the Clay County Board of Health to establish priorities and support Spencer Hospital to implement services and share important health information."

The public health team's diverse programming includes:

- **Reportable Disease Surveillance and Follow-up:** Iowa law requires certain communicable diseases be reported to the state to track, monitor and help control the spread of disease. These include viruses, such as hepatitis, to bacterial infections such as salmonella and listeria. Several years ago, Clay County Public Health staff investigated a community outbreak of measles, which required identifying potentially infected citizens and providing vaccinations. More recently, public health was responsible for tracking COVID-19 cases and, once vaccines became available, for administering immunizations.
- **Emergency Preparedness and Response:** Public health responds to health emergencies, striving to mitigate illnesses or injuries and aid in recovery. While the COVID-19 pandemic was much larger in scope compared to a smaller health emergency, such as a measles



Left to Right: Dr. Janessa Mechler, DVM; Dr. Michaela Sailer, DDS; Dr. David Keith, DO; Cammy Hinkeldey, BSN, RN; Randy Swanson, Clay County Supervisor

or mumps local outbreak, the same principles of emergency response were placed into action, including investigating, educating and providing needed healthcare services.

- **Education and Outreach:** The public health team continually strives to provide community members with information to help them obtain and maintain good health. Information is shared routinely through radio interviews, newspaper and website articles, school and community presentations and social media. Events are held such as child car seat safety checks and weekly blood pressure clinics.
- **Maternal Child Health Services:** The Best Care for Better Babies & Children program supports families with young children from birth to age four years. One-on-one time is spent with families to help increase their knowledge and confidence in caring for themselves and their babies or toddlers. Home visits include breastfeeding support, health and growth assessments, developmental screenings, and sharing of resources.
- **Childhood Immunizations:** Public health nurses host weekly vaccination clinics for all children under the age 18 years old. Additionally, influenza vaccination clinics are held each fall in the schools located within the county, and adolescent vaccinations are offered to every 6th and 11th grader each spring to prepare them for the required vaccines needed to enroll in the next grade.
- **Partnerships:** Clay County Public Health works closely with community partners, such as the county, schools and local healthcare entities, to fulfill its mission of protecting and improving the health of area citizens.

“Public health is the profession that serves behind the scenes to protect the health of communities. We fill gaps in health care and strive to protect the community from outbreaks or health concerns through policy and action,” commented Dr. David Keith, medical director for Clay County Board of Health. “It’s important work.”

CHILDHOOD IMMUNIZATIONS OFFER BEST SHOT FOR DISEASE PREVENTION

KEEPING YOUR CHILD HEALTHY INVOLVES A NUMBER OF PREVENTATIVE MEASURES, SUCH AS USING CHILD-SAFETY SEATS, MONITORING BABY’S SLEEP, AND OBTAINING THE RECOMMENDED IMMUNIZATIONS TO HELP PREVENT ILLNESSES.

Due to advances in medical science, diseases that once threatened illness or death among children have been eradicated or the risk of contracting such illnesses has been significantly reduced. For example, polio was once America’s most-feared disease, causing death or disability, but because of preventative immunizations, polio is no longer a health threat in this country.

“Childhood vaccination rates in Clay County remain strong, yet we do know the pandemic disrupted many well-child visits where vaccinations were typically administered,” explained Colette Rossiter, director of Clay County Public Health. Uncertainties by some involving the COVID vaccine lead to hesita-

tion for traditional vaccines, which have proven over the years to be successful in disease prevention.

In fiscal year 2023, Clay County Public Health professionals administered over 5,954 doses of child/adolescent vaccinations. Additionally, the team held influenza and adolescent vaccination clinics in area schools and offered extra clinics for students entering Kindergarten, seventh and twelfth grades to obtain school-required vaccinations.

“We are happy to provide parents with information about each vaccine to make informed decisions for the health of their child and also for all those the child comes into contact with,” Rossiter said. “The disease prevention benefits for your child and others outweighs possible side effects. Through on-going immunization programs, common illnesses can be reduced or eliminated in the future. Diseases like polio, tetanus, and even chickenpox have mainly been eliminated world-wide through successful immunization programs.”



Public Health nurse Gina Heiter provides routine immunizations.

Routinely, childhood vaccinations are scheduled with Clay County Public Health in coordination with a youth’s well-child appointment with their family medical provider. For more information, contact Clay County Public Health offices at (712) 264-6380.

ROSSITER CONCLUDES LONG PUBLIC HEALTH CAREER; SMITH STEPS INTO LEADERSHIP ROLE

OVER COLETTE ROSSITER'S 23 YEARS LEADING CLAY COUNTY PUBLIC HEALTH, SHE'S MANAGED VARIOUS PUBLIC HEALTH CHALLENGES, RANGING FROM OUTBREAKS OF HEAD LICE AND MEASLES TO INVESTIGATING AN EBOLA CASE AND MORE RECENTLY NAVIGATING THE UNCERTAIN WATERS OF A WORLD-WIDE COVID PANDEMIC.

However, as the year 2023 comes to an end, Rossiter will be retiring and concluding her long career in service to the community. Leadership of Clay County Public Health will transition to registered nurse Angel Smith, who has been an instrumental member of the public health team for nearly 10 years.

"Promoting health and wellness in our community has been my professional passion and I'm going to miss the people I've worked with so closely who are like-minded in that mission," Rossiter said. "But, I'm

excited to pass on the leadership role to Angel, who along with the rest of our public health team shares those goals in helping others obtain and maintain their optimal health."

Jen Dau, vice president of nursing, remarked, "Colette's knowledge and commitment to excellence in public health has served our community well for over two decades. We're excited to see Angel and her team continue that tradition of aiding local citizens in learning about their path to good health."

Hospital president Bill Bumgarner also shared his appreciation for Colette's professionalism and commitment.

"Colette's work is interesting in that it's seemingly low key most the time, but when certain types of trouble hit, all heads turn to her," he said. "Her skills and experience were simply essential during the COVID-19



Retiree, Colette Rossiter (left), with new Clay County Public Health manager, Angel Smith (right).

pandemic. Many people and organizations placed their trust in her for guidance. The community owes Colette its gratitude for her long service in support of public health."

BEST CARE PROGRAM SUPPORTS YOUNG FAMILIES

IMAGINE HAVING A NURSE COME TO YOUR HOME TO ASSIST YOU WITH YOUR MANY QUESTIONS REGARDING YOUR BABY. IS SHE EATING ENOUGH? HOW DO I GET MY SON TO SLEEP? IS MY BABY DEVELOPING AT AN AGE APPROPRIATE RATE?

How reassuring it would be to have a maternal child health professional right at your doorstep. Fortunately, new parents in Clay County do have just such an option through the Best Care for Better Babies & Children program.

"There's a myth that once a woman gives birth, her motherly instincts will naturally fill her brain with everything she needs to know about the health and well-being of her baby," commented Darcie Follon, maternal child health nurse specialist with Clay County Public Health. "While moms have so many great instincts, all of us can benefit from support and assurance in caring for babies and toddlers to help them get a healthy start."

The Best Care for Better Babies program is

available for expectant moms through their child's first birthday, and the subsequent Best Care for Children provides support through age four. Through financial support from Early Childhood Iowa, the programs provide free, in-home support to assist new parents in their child-raising journey.

Services include one or more home visits, spending time with families to help increase their knowledge and confidence in caring for themselves and their baby.

Services include breast-feeding support, health and growth assessments, developmental screenings, dental screenings, and links to community resources. Some parents opt for a single "welcome home, baby" visit to make sure they're off to a great start, while others appreciate periodic check-in visits to provide on-going reassurance.

One new mom who expectantly struggled with post-partum depression commented, "Never in a million years did I think it would happen to me, but it did. Without the help of my nurse, it would have been much more

difficult. Having that support person who was also another mom I could relate to was a blessing."

For more information about the Best Care for Better Babies & Children programs, contact Clay County Public Health at (712) 264-6380.

Public Health's child health nurse Darcie Follon provides in-home visits



UI HOLDEN COMPREHENSIVE CANCER CENTER AND SPENCER HOSPITAL PARTNER TO ENHANCE CANCER CARE IN NORTHWEST IOWA

PROVIDING COMPREHENSIVE CANCER CARE CLOSE TO HOME IS THE LONGTIME MISSION OF ABBEN CANCER CENTER. A NEW PARTNERSHIP WAS RECENTLY ESTABLISHED THAT WILL CONTINUE TO ENRICH THE MANY SERVICES AND TREATMENTS AVAILABLE LOCALLY.

This summer the University of Iowa Holden Comprehensive Cancer Center and Abben Cancer Center of Spencer Hospital entered into a partnership to support medical oncology cancer care in northwest Iowa.

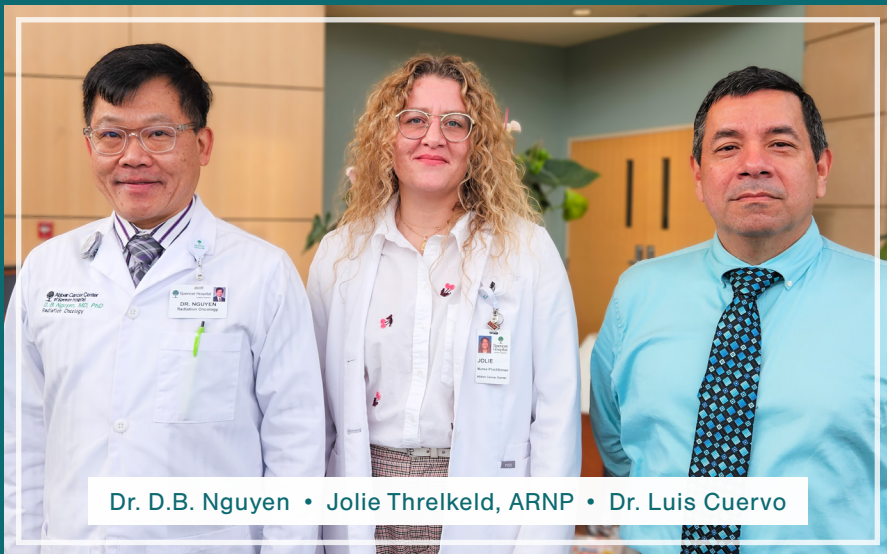
UI Health Care physician Bilal Rahim, MD, a hematologist-oncologist at Holden, is now serving as medical director for medical oncology services at Abben Cancer Center, providing clinical oversight of those services and performing multidisciplinary patient review. He will also assist in the development of new medical oncology services in Spencer, increasing awareness of cancer prevention, screening and survivorship throughout the region.

In addition to Dr. Rahim, Abben Cancer Center's medical oncology team includes Dr. Luis Cuervo and oncology certified nurse practitioner Jolie Threlkeld, who provide onsite care. Dr. D. B. Nguyen, radiation oncologist and medical director for that service, rounds out the professional care team.

Dr. Cuervo is new to the Abben Cancer Center, having joined the center in September as the primary medical oncologist through September 2024. Dr. Cuervo is onsite three weeks each month, and then sees patients via telemedicine one week of the month.

Dr. Cuervo is highly acclaimed, having been named the 2021 Physician of the Year at Carteret Health Care in Morehead City, NC. Dr. Cuervo earned his medical degree from the University of Texas, completed his residency and fellowship at Scott and White Medical Center in Temple, TX, and has served as a field surgeon in the Army National Guard. He has over 11 years of medical oncology experience.

"We believe our new partnership with University of Iowa Health



Dr. D.B. Nguyen • Jolie Threlkeld, ARNP • Dr. Luis Cuervo

Care will take Abben's medical oncology services to an even higher level," said Bill Bumgarner, Spencer Hospital president.

"Our organizations share a common vision to improve outcomes for all Iowans affected by cancer. Through this collaboration, we'll use a multidisciplinary team approach that leverages the best practices of University of Iowa Health Care with Abben Cancer Center's skilled and experienced oncology team."

The partnership will advance to include offering patients access to participate in clinical trials and innovative cancer care in Spencer, an opportunity that typically requires travel to a larger medical community.

"Patients in more rural areas often have difficulty accessing comprehensive care and treatment options unless they travel," said Rahim. "I am very excited for the opportunity to help deliver advanced cancer care to patients, closer to their homes."

Spencer Hospital has provided medical oncology services to northwest Iowans for several decades, and through the Abben Cancer Center, has offered comprehensive cancer treatment, including radiation oncology, since 1997.

The center's commitment to excellence for its patients includes investing in leading-edge technology and comprehensive care processes that are unrivaled by other rural treatment facilities.

CONVERSATION WITH A HEALTH PROFESSIONAL

PREVENTING FALLS BEFORE THEY HAPPEN



THE FRACTION OF A SECOND IT TAKES FOR A PERSON TO EXPERIENCE A FALL CAN BE LIFE ALTERING.

Each year over 800,000 patients are hospitalized in the United States as the result of a fall injury. Falls are the most common cause of traumatic brain injury in all ages, and more than 95 percent of all hip fractures are caused by falling.

In her 13 years of treating patients for a variety of health concerns, Spencer Hospital physical therapist Kellie Perry is especially passionate about fall prevention education.

“I’ve seen too many people experiencing life-altering injuries as the result of a fall, many of which could have been prevented,” Kellie commented. “As such, I’ve taken specialized training to help educate the public on fall prevention.”

To promote increased awareness, Kellie has provided answers to some common questions regarding falls and how to lower a person’s fall and injury risks.

Q: What are some health conditions that puts a person at risk for falling?

Kellie: “The three main motor and sensory systems that integrate to make up our balance are inner ear, vision, and sensors in the joints/muscles, which are like your body’s internal GPS system and give input to the brain on how your body is positioned/moving. The brain and the nervous system process this input and even have specific brain centers such as the cerebellum and basal ganglia that control balance. Health conditions

that impact any of these systems (vision changes, neuropathy, muscle weakness, heart disease and others) can increase risk for falling.”

Q: What are some routine habits someone can adopt to help decrease their fall risk?

Kellie: “Make exercise a part of your lifestyle. Staying active, flexible, and strong can help to decrease fall risk. Muscle loss increases with age but can be impacted by a regular exercise/strengthening program, at any age, to build muscle and bone density and combat muscle loss.

“Also, schedule regular eye exams. If you wear prescription eyewear, make sure to wear them as directed and keep them clean. Don’t delay cataract management.

“Annually review medications with physician and/or pharmacist. Being on four or more medications is linked to increased fall risk and certain medications, such as anti-depressants, anti-anxiety, and sleeping medications, have stronger evidence of increased fall risk. A general guideline is that if a medication states ‘caution with driving’ it is reasonable to consider ‘caution with walking’ since they often slow down movements/reaction time and can cloud thinking.”

Other quick tips include:

- Minimize clutter and keep doorways and pathways clear.
- Carry a flashlight at dusk and at night.
- Reaching back and pushing up for chair/support surface when you go from sitting to standing.
- Get enough sleep.
- If you need them, make sure to wear your hearing aids or glasses when you are outside.
- Use a railing if present for climbing stairs or stepping onto a curb.
- Have proper fitting footwear and clothing. Long and/or loose pants/skirts can be a trip hazard.
- Avoid or limit alcohol.

Q: What are some balance and strengthening exercises you’d recommend to help prevent falls?

Kellie: “I have several I’d recommend to help strengthen ankles and legs, plus others for flexibility and balance. I’ve included a few quick examples.”

Seated Heel Toe Raises – The first line of defense for better balance comes from strengthening a person’s ankles. Sit upright with your feet shoulder width apart. Slowly raise your heels off the floor, then lower then back down, and then raise your toes from the floor. Lower your toes and repeat this series 10 times each day.

Sit to Stand with Armchair – This exercise works on all the muscles in the lower body and helps with practicing weight shifting and improving your balance. Begin by sitting upright with your feet flat on the floor and your hands on the armrests of the chair. Lean your torso forward so your head is over your toes, then press your feet and hands to push your body up into a standing position. Slowly sit back down, using the armrest for support. Repeat 10 times and try to do this exercise daily.

Side Stepping with Counter Support – The second line of defense for balance is hip strength. Strengthening these muscles can help keep toes from catching when walking. Begin in a standing position with your hands resting on a counter in front of you. Step sideways along the length of the counter. When you reach the end of the counter, side step in the opposite direction, back to your starting position and exercising both hips. Aim for doing 10 repetitions each day.

Q: Do adaptive devices help and which ones would you recommend?

Kellie: “Assistive devices such as a walking stick, cane, or walker can help by increasing your base of support for stability and by providing more support and input for your body to improve safety and keep you moving.

“Sometimes people who would benefit greatly from using a cane or walker avoid doing so due to perceived stigmas around their use. Unfortunately, this can increase problems, leading to decreased activity around the house and tendency to limit social outings. As a result, the person may experience greater mobility issues, from greater weakness from decreased activity and from lack of challenging the balance centers with different environments. It’s important to use an assistive or adaptive device consistently and properly when indicated.”

Q: If someone feels like they’re starting to fall, are there tips to help minimize potential adverse outcomes?

Kellie: “If you cannot avoid a fall, below are tips to minimize potential adverse outcomes.”

- Protect your head.
- Tuck your chin to protect your head and neck. Turn head to the side if falling face first and bring arms up to level of the head for additional protection if able.
- Turn as you fall.
- Try to turn your body so you land more towards the side of your body since landing directly on your back or forward can increase risk of injuring your head, arms, face, and spine.
- Keep arms and legs bent.
- It’s tempting to try and put out an arm to “break the fall” but this can lead to the arm absorbing the impact of the fall and can injure the arm/shoulder and break the wrists/arm bones.
- Stay loose.
- Try breathing out as you fall to try and keep the body more relaxed so the impact is dispersed rather than being absorbed by the body when it is tense which can lead to injury. Roll out the impact.
- If able, try to tuck and roll to decrease the energy from the impact being absorbed by the body and causing injury.

When should someone consider scheduling an assessment and appointments with a Physical Therapist?

Kellie: “Unfortunately, many people don’t seek assistance for addressing balance or falls until they have already had a fall. It’s never too early to schedule an appointment or assessment with a physical therapist for a thorough assessment of strength, range of motion, functional mobility, quality of walking, and standardized balance testing to determine if you are at risk of falling and to provide exercises, tips, and strategies to decrease fall risk, minimize risk of injury and increase confidence and safe mobility.

“Falling is not a normal part of aging. Balance and strength can be improved at any age. Even if falling/balance is not a concern for you at this time, it is important to adopt healthy lifestyle habits now to keep your body healthy, strong, and moving well to improve your quality of life and set you up for success in the future and decrease your fall risk.”

To schedule an appointment with one of Spencer Hospital’s physical therapists, please call (712) 264-6189.



Kellie Perry, Physical Therapist

Kellie Perry has provided expert physical therapy treatment after earning her Doctorate in Physical Therapy in 2010. She works with patients of all ages and with a variety of health conditions. She has a special interest in providing education on preventing falls, as she has witnessed patients with life-altering injuries after experiencing a fall. She is also certified in Pregnancy and Post-partum Physical Therapy and recently certified in Lymphedema management.

CONTRIBUTING TO YOUR HEALTHCARE PROFILE ENHANCES INFORMATION FOR YOUR CARE TEAM

PATIENTS LIKELY KNOW THEIR MEDICAL INFORMATION, SUCH AS LAB RESULTS, IMAGES, PRESCRIPTIONS AND MORE, IS PLACED IN AN ELECTRONIC HEALTH. BUT, DID YOU KNOW YOU CAN CONTRIBUTE TO YOUR HEALTH RECORD, PROVIDING VALUABLE INFORMATION TO YOUR MEDICAL TEAM TO ASSIST IN YOUR CARE?

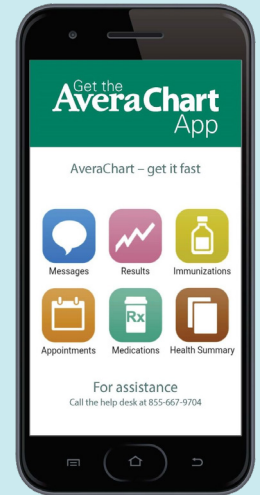
AveraChart, which is used by Spencer Hospital as well as health facilities throughout the Avera system, is an important information and communication resource. You can message your care team to request a prescription refill or seek clarification. You can update your patient profile, verifying your address, emergency contact information, and such. You can even include your preferred name and select your preferred pronouns, to help assure your care team addresses you according to your wishes.

Your AveraChart access provides a common patient portal for healthcare services obtained at Spencer Hospital and any Avera-affiliated clinic, hospital and other service sites, including these locations:

- Avera Medical Group Spencer

- Northwest Iowa Ear, Nose & Throat
- Hartley Family Care
- Milford Family Care
- Sioux Rapids Family Care
- Avera McKennan Hospital
- Other Avera hospitals, specialty clinics and facilities

In addition to offering you convenient access to your medical information, AveraChart also provides physicians and other medical providers immediate access to your medical history across service sites as may be needed. More and timely medical information can improve care outcomes.



Spencer Hospital's registration staff can help you enroll in AveraChart during your next visit to the hospital, or to any of the above clinics. You may also enroll by calling the AveraChart help desk at 1-855-667-9704 weekdays between 7:30 AM – 6:30 PM.

NEW COFFEE SHOP OPENS AT THE HOSPITAL

BOBBI SCHMITH OPENS TWISTED SIPS COFFEE SHOP AT SPENCER HOSPITAL

WHEN YOU'RE IN NEED OF A JOLT OF MORNING CAFFEINE OR LONG FOR A MID-AFTERNOON PICK-ME-UP, THERE'S NOTHING QUITE LIKE A GOOD CUP OF COFFEE. OR, PERHAPS YOU'RE MORE OF A CARAMEL-MOCHA LATTE GAL OR ENJOY THE LIGHT, NATURAL CAFFEINE OF A GREEN TEA LOTUS BEVERAGE.



Twisted Sips, the new coffee shop located in Spencer Hospital, has all these drink choices plus a whole lot more.

When Deb Coleman, owner of Muggabeans Coffee Co., expressed her intentions to retire and sell her business, Bobbi Wolery Schmith realized the opportunity to fulfill her long-time dream of owning and operating her own shop. Schmith officially purchased

the business at the end of September and has rebranded it as Twisted Sips.

Schmith, who has seven years of experience as a local barista, commented, "I've thoroughly enjoyed working as a barista and am so excited for this opportunity to put those skills to use in my own business. We're just getting started so I encourage our customers to keep stopping by as new flavors and treat options will continue to be added."

Schmith plans to continue to serve many long-time customer favorites while continuing to add new offerings. Currently, her seasonal menu includes fall favorites such as pumpkin spice and s'mores and a lotus tea creation known as "Sanderson Sisters" for fans of the classic "Hocus Pocus" movie. She also serves a variety of freshly baked cookies and fruit-filled croissants.

"In the next few weeks, we'll start serving breakfast sandwiches and soon after, we'll have items for lunch too," she said. "I'm looking forward to serving up new flavors and continuing to update our seasonal menu."

Twisted Sips is open each weekday from 6:30 AM to 4:30 PM. Stop by to welcome Bobbi and enjoy your favorite treat or try something new!

EMERGENCY SERVICES EXPANSION TAKES SHAPE



SPENCER HOSPITAL'S EMERGENCY SERVICES EXPANSION PROJECT IS MOVING FORWARD, WITH BASEMENT WALLS AND FLOORS BEING POURED AND STEEL SOON TO BE ERECTED TO FORM THE BUILDING STRUCTURE LOCATED ON THE SOUTH SIDE OF THE HOSPITAL CAMPUS.

Earlier this fall, the hospital's fleet of ambulances moved into the newly constructed garage located on the east side of campus, and a second ambulance garage will be attached to the new emergency department once completed. The project has experienced some timeline delays due to supply and personnel availability as well as weather; however, currently is on track for completion in 2025. Once completed, the new emergency department will increase the number of treatment rooms, expand the family and friends waiting area, provide a separate bereavement room, and enhance the private work area for the professional staff. In addition, the department will be clearly visible from

Grand Avenue, offering improved ease of access to patients.



Pictured to the left is Spencer Hospital's new ambulance garage with paramedic staff (left to right) Chuck Custer, Chris Meyer - ambulance director, and Jeremy Voit.

TEAM GEM: SUPPLY CHAIN STAFF DELIVERS EXCEPTIONAL SERVICE WITH A SMILE

Each day, Spencer Hospital's Supply Chain team is ordering, receiving and distributing thousands of supplies and equipment throughout Spencer Hospital, and providing excellent "service with a smile." About 90% of all the products entering Spencer Hospital is received by the Supply Chain team and they maintain over 2,000 different types of products in its expansive store room. These "behind-the-scenes" essential team members were honored with a Team GEM Award, recognizing how individually and collectively they "Go the Extra Mile" in caring for patients and supporting their co-workers. Congrats!



Haley Jewell • Ken Montgomery • Jamie Igou • Mike Prange • Nancy Kramer • Brad Smith • Zac Paulsen

TEAM DAISY: CARDIAC REHAB STAFF SHOWS HEART IN CARING FOR PATIENTS

The Cardiac Rehab/Athletic Enhancement crew was awarded Spencer Hospital's very first TEAM Daisy Award. The team received two separate nominations for the Team Daisy Award. As one patient noted, "The team at Cardiac Rehab is amazing! They have made me feel cared for, challenged and secure under their care. I can feel their compassion every day I am there. The initial education and guidance given is first-rate, but the ongoing care they all show is amazing. They are all so welcoming each time I arrive and make exercise fun!"



Jill Heinrichs • Jason Trierweiler • Corey Ebel • Anne Rosendahl • Tim Birkey

GOING THE EXTRA MILE TO MEET PATIENTS' NEEDS AND EXCEED EXPECTATIONS

TWO SPENCER HOSPITAL PROFESSIONALS RECEIVED FALL 2023 GEM (GOING THE EXTRA MILE) AWARDS, RECOGNIZING THE OUTSTANDING CARE AND SERVICE THEY PROVIDE.

Kristy Connor, social worker at Abben Cancer Center, not only provides individualized services for patients, she literally went a few extra miles for a patient receiving life-saving cancer care. After seeming to exhaust all attempts to arrange transportation from all the usual sources for one patient in need of cancer treatment, Kristy didn't give up. Instead, she helped line up escorts so the patient could safely use regional transportation services. She also arranged for a motorized scooter and wheeled walker. Kristy even provided the use of her own vehicle when the weather was bad so this patient could make it to the Cancer Center for her treatment and supportive care.

Access to care is more than transportation, as another challenge in obtaining healthcare may involve appropriate insurance coverage. More than one grateful patient nominated Cindy Essick of Patient Accounts for her skills in helping them navigate the world of Medicare. One patient noted: "There

is no possible way to perfectly express my heartfelt thank you to you! For the kind way you helped me through a very unexpected and trying time. But it was your calm voice and your sweet patience that kept me grounded...because of you and your guidance, I was able to navigate uncharted waters and restore my Medicare and my supplement to the correct retirement settings. So appreciate you taking the time to call me to say my accounts were where they should be!"



Kristy Connor



Cindy Essick

DAISY AWARDS HONOR CARING NURSES

TWO NURSES RECEIVE DAISY AWARD FOR PROVIDING COMPASSIONATE CARE



Clarissa Brackett



Andy Riemenschneider

TWO SPENCER HOSPITAL NURSES RECENTLY RECEIVED DAISY AWARDS, WHICH ESPECIALLY RECOGNIZED NURSES WHO HAVE PROVIDED EXTRAORDINARY CARE.

Clarissa Brackett, a Birth Center nurse, was nominated by a coworker and new mom who wrote: "Clarissa went above and beyond for us. This baby was so different from our first baby. She came in right away in the morning, helped us with him, taught us ways to help/work with baby, and then offered to take him since it was a rough night. As the day went on and more things came up, she came in and took the time to teach us, support us, and help us. She had so much compassion and love and was willing to go above and beyond. We will

forever be grateful for the help and lessons. The OB team is absolutely amazing, and Clarissa is a great addition to the team!"

Andy Riemenschneider, a Medical/Surgical Unit nurse, was also nominated by a coworker who noted, "Andy provided extraordinary care for my grandpa who had recently been diagnosed with terminal cancer and was dealing with a large amount of pain. Andy worked quickly and diligently to get my grandpa's pain under control so he could be more comfortable during his stay. Andy did his best to help with any requests that my grandpa had, whether it was providing more blankets to keep him warm or trying to find a solution to keep his pain at bay. It was clear that Andy cared for my grandpa and wanted to do all that he could to help take care of him. We are so fortunate to have him as a nurse at Spencer Hospital."

Nominate Someone Fantastic!

Anyone - a coworker, manager, patient, family member or physician - can complete a nomination form for either a GEM or DAISY nominee. You can nominate anyone who works at Spencer Hospital or any of the Spencer Hospital clinics - including the two off-site dialysis centers, Northwest Iowa ENT, Hartley Family Care, Milford Family Care or Sioux Rapids Family Care. The online nomination form can be found at www.SpencerHospital.org under the "Patients & Visitors" tab and then clicking on "Recognizing Our Finest."

DONOR DOLLARS AT WORK

CONTRIBUTIONS DESIGNATED TO BENEFIT EMPLOYEES; SERVE COMMUNITY

Popcorn Fridays!



A generous donor who wished to do something special for employees has sparked a new weekly tradition at Spencer Hospital, Popcorn Fridays!

This wonderful donor's gift to the Spencer Regional Healthcare Foundation was used to purchase a popcorn machine and supplies. In addition to weekly Popcorn Fridays, special "Pop-Up Popcorn" events are randomly held on other dates and times to help include all staff, who work a variety of shifts.

"These days are bursting with flavor and fun," says Sara Taylor, executive director of the foundation. "The Spencer Hospital leadership team takes turns cooking up the freshly popped treat each Friday afternoon. You can smell the aroma of popcorn all throughout the first floor of the hospital during these times. It's so fun to see different staff members come and grab popcorn to share with their coworkers to get that afternoon pick-me-up. Our visitors enjoy it too!"

Next time you're visiting the hospital on a Friday afternoon, swing by the cafeteria to enjoy a treat! This is just another gesture to show appreciation to our "a-maize-ing" team!

Sensory Room!

Having an overwhelmed and over-stimulated child when spending time at the Clay County Fair has sometimes required the visit to conclude for the day.

The introduction of a newly equipped sensory room within the Family Place enabled many families a location where they could take a much needed break to refresh and recharge. The room was outfitted with items such as a black-out den, a swing, an activity alligator, a crash pad and a variety of fidget items, carefully selected by Spencer Hospital's Nursing Image Council and funded through the Spencer Regional Healthcare Foundation.

"We know the fair brings in a lot of people and to some this may be

overstimulating, especially for children or adults with autism and other health diagnoses," said Cassie Davids, Image Council captain. "We were so excited to have the opportunity thanks to the wonderful fair team, Family Place volunteers and the foundation to make this a possibility this year! We are looking to potentially add a couple more items next year to continue to help many fairgoers!"

The Image Council is part of Spencer Hospital's shared governance model, designed to enhance communication and participation in decision-making amongst nurses. The Image Council strives to promote the profession of nursing within the community.



Thank you, Abben Golf Classic Sponsors & Supporters!

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FOUNDATION GRANTS SUPPORT FOR MILFORD FAMILY CARE, VALET SERVICES

New wheels are available at Milford Family Care! Not only does the Spencer Regional Healthcare Foundation help to enhance the care and services offered within Spencer Hospital, the foundation also provides support for the family medicine clinics in Sioux Rapids, Hartley and Milford. Recently, our team at the Milford Family Clinic received a new

Stryker wheelchair to utilize for our patients. This modern wheelchair is easier to maneuver and use than traditional models for both staff members and patients of all ages!



Valet staff weathers

through it all! The valet staff at Spencer Hospital recently received new rain suits, thanks to generous donors from the Spencer Regional Healthcare Foundation. As we know, winter is around the corner and these rain suits can be used for a variety of weather conditions. This allows the valet team to continue to help patients and families park their cars and get to their appointments while staying warm and dry.

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I would like my gift to remain anonymous. **Give a gift online at: www.spencerhospital.org and click on Donate!**

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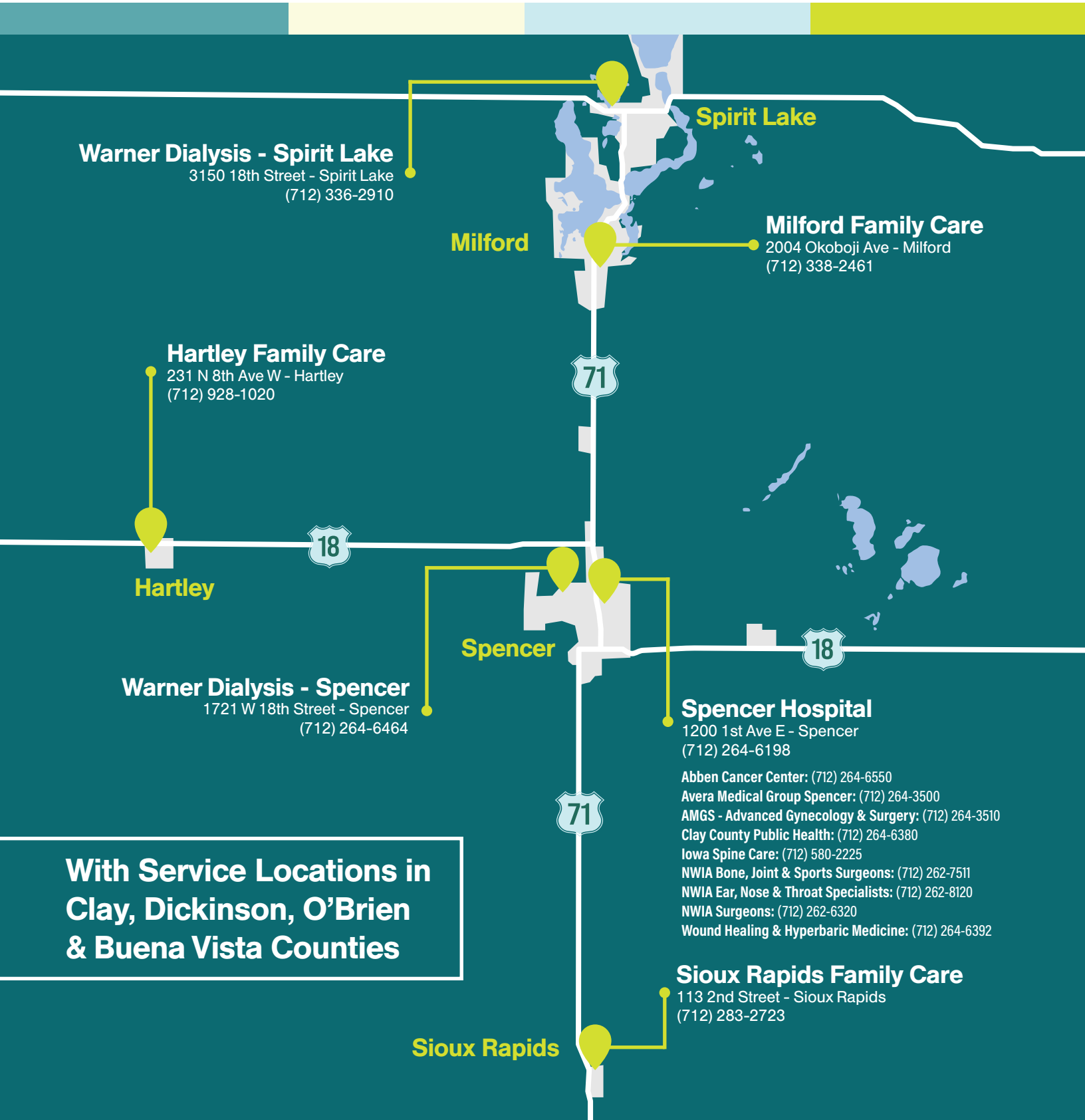
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