

CONNECTIONS

IMPROVING THE HEALTH OF OUR REGIONAL COMMUNITY



September 2021

Neonatal critical care training supported by grant

A Salina Regional Health Foundation grant of more than \$16,000 has enabled the purchase of a new high-fidelity patient simulator that allows area health care professionals to practice critical care scenarios for neonatal patients.

Salina Regional Health Center's Organizational Development department began using the new simulator this summer to develop competencies for staff members. The simulator will be used by nurses, respiratory therapists, physicians, residents and nursing students at Salina Regional. Neonatal critical care training also is open to staff members from hospitals throughout the region.

The simulator, named Oakley by staff, mimics a neonate born 10 weeks premature weighing 2.9 lbs. and measuring 15.71 inches. Oakley provides life-like simulation for respiration, heart rate, wiggles, grunts, groans, cries and even turns blue. Staff members practice CPR, intubation, IV placement, and other critical care interventions depending on a multitude of scenarios. As they perform interventions they receive real-time feedback on the success of their efforts.

"Using patient simulators allows staff to develop skills needed during real high-risk scenarios without the fear of having a real life at stake," says Tina Hill, RN, education coordinator at Salina Regional. "Oakley's premature size makes some of these scenarios more of a challenge. Intubation for example can be harder with a smaller baby.

"The Foundation's support is instrumental in allowing us facilitate training opportunities like this with the latest technology."



ABOVE: Shingirai Chingaya, RN, practices critical care interventions on a new patient simulator with assistance from Education Coordinator Tina Hill, RN. The new patient simulator, named Oakley, mimics a neonate born 10 weeks premature and was purchased with support of a Foundation grant.

Nursing scholarships help support recruitment

Nursing shortages were occurring before COVID-19 and the worldwide pandemic has only made the situation worse. To help train and recruit the area's next generation of nurses, the Salina Regional Health Foundation awards a grant of \$225,000 each year for nursing scholarships. Thirty-two nurses have been awarded scholarships through the grant to date this year.

Nurses who accept the scholarships sign a service contract agreement to work at Salina Regional Health Center or one of its affiliate hospitals once their training is complete. Nurses pursuing an associate's degree in nursing can receive up to \$5,000 per year and nurses working towards a bachelor's degree in nursing can receive up to \$10,000 per year, with a one-year tie of service.

A standing committee meets on a monthly basis to consider applicants for scholarships. Applicants must have received acceptance into a nursing school for eligibility. The funds are paid directly to the student's school to cover educational expenses.

Salina Regional Health Center hires more than 100 nurses a year to fill open positions. In addition to the scholarship program, nurses can participate in a student loan forgiveness program, which pays up to \$18,000 in student loans with a five-year service agreement. A nurse residency program for new graduate nurses and relocation allowances are also offered.

"There are incredible opportunities for students interested in a career in nursing," said Tess Modrow, nurse recruiter at Salina Regional Health Center. "Nursing positions are in high demand and it's going to stay this way for the foreseeable future."

SHEC expansion completed in time for new class of nurses

The Salina Health Education Center (SHEC) in downtown Salina – home to the KU Schools of Nursing and Medicine – completed expansion efforts this summer as scheduled for the arrival of the incoming class of nurses.

Nursing class sizes at KU-Salina have been increasing over time, now accepting a capacity of up to 24 students per class. Now up to 48 nurses are on campus in Salina completing their third and fourth years of study for a Bachelor of Science in Nursing degree.

The \$3.4 million expansion effort utilized 15,871 square feet of vacant office space already connected to SHEC. Funding for the project was a partnership between the Salina Regional Health Foundation and the KU Endowment.

"The additional space accommodates our larger classroom needs and provides dedicated study space and testing space for students in both the schools of medicine and nursing," said Lisa Larson, PhD, RN, Dean of the KU-Salina School of Nursing. "It also provides our nursing faculty with needed office space."



Darby Peters, RN, completed her bachelor's in nursing degree at the KU-Salina School of Nursing this spring and now works in the Emergency Department at Salina Regional Health Center. She received scholarship support through the Foundation while she was in school.



The new class of nursing students at the KU-Salina School of Nursing practices using gait belts to transfer patients safely in lab space created with the recent expansion at the Salina Health Education Center.

Fe For A Cure canceled due to COVID-19, support needed

The annual Fe For A Cure 5K Race/Walk benefiting patients undergoing treatment at the Tammy Walker Cancer Center, planned in September, was canceled due to concerns about COVID-19. However, cancer doesn't stop for COVID, and local patients still need support.

"It was a hard decision to make, but the right decision," said Melanie Leepers, cancer program manager at the Tammy Walker Cancer Center. "Considering all of the cancer patients, survivors and their families who attend the event, and the risks patients face being immunocompromised from treatment, it posed too great of a concern."

Those who would like to support cancer patients may make gifts of any amount. One hundred percent of these donations are used to support local patients. Checks can be mailed to the Salina Regional Health Foundation, P.O. Box 618, Salina, KS 67402-0618 or donations can be given online at FeForACure.com.



For the second year in a row, the corporate underwriters for the Fe For A Cure have allowed their gifts to be redirected to support cancer patients. This year's underwriters are: Gold Medal – Hutton Construction, Salina Supply Company; Silver Medal – Empower Retirement; Bronze Medal – Advantage Trust Company, Edward Jones, Eide Bailly, First Bank Kansas, JMH Cleaning. Special support also has been provided by Mac Steele.

Foundation Board appoints new executive director

The Salina Regional Health Foundation Board of Trustees has designated Marla McElderry as the new executive director for the Salina Regional Health Foundation.

McElderry succeeds Tom Martin who retired in August after serving the organization for 30 years dating back to his days with the foundation for Asbury-Salina Regional Medical Center.

McElderry has been with the Foundation for 22 years – most recently serving as director of finance. She first started with the Foundation as an accountant.



Marla McElderry
Executive Director

Save the Date! ✂

14TH ANNUAL SALE (DRIVE-THRU SHOPPING DUE TO COVID)



PUMPKINS!
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Pumpkins for Patients

SATURDAY, OCTOBER 2

9 A.M. – 3 P.M.



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To expand, manage and distribute assets to improve the health of this regional community.

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