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Fall 2019

A Catholic Health
Initiatives Newsletter

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**CHI St. Francis
Health**

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Introducing **Dr. Jennifer Sheffield**

Jennifer Sheffield, MD,
CHI St. Francis Health Primary Care
and Walk-in Clinic's newest family
practice provider, brings her faith
and compassion to her new role.

Dr. Sheffield is available throughout the second and third weeks of every month in addition to her part-time clinical work at the hospital.

She earned her Bachelor of Science degree from the South Dakota School of Mines and Technology in Rapid City, South Dakota, and her medical degree from the American University of the Caribbean in St. Maarten, Netherland Antilles. She then completed her residency at the University of North Dakota Center for Family Medicine in Bismarck, North Dakota. After completing her education and clinical training, Dr. Sheffield focused on family medicine at a critical access hospital in Hettinger, North Dakota, for seven years.

She is board-certified in Family Medicine and a member of the American Academy of Family Physicians and the American Society for Colposcopy and Cervical Pathology.

A Desire to Serve

Dr. Sheffield has been practicing medicine for nearly a decade. However, in the beginning, her career almost took a different path. She was actually pursuing a mission studies degree at Trinity Bible College and Graduate School in Ellendale, North Dakota, when she first began to consider a career in the healthcare industry.

"I had gone on a mission trip to Ecuador and really enjoyed it, but I did not feel as if I was called to preaching," Dr. Sheffield says.

"My advisor at the time was an administrator at the local hospital, and he really encouraged me to follow my gut. By the time I was finishing medical school and starting my residency, I could not imagine doing anything else."

Despite the change to her career path, Dr. Sheffield continues to pursue very similar ideals—to impact patients with the love and compassion of Christ.

"What I love most about my work is the relationships I am able to build with families," Dr. Sheffield says. "In both good and bad situations, you can establish a bond. It is about more than treating coughs and colds. It is about asking patients how things are going for them and how their families are doing. Taking the time to get to know your patients helps build trust and creates an environment in which they feel like they can be honest and open."

Outside of work, Dr. Sheffield enjoys traveling, going on medical mission trips, and spending time with her dog, Finn, and both her immediate and extended family.

The CHI St. Francis Health Primary Care and Walk-in Clinic is open seven days a week. No appointment is necessary, but you can save time by reserving your place in line. For more information, call 218-643-0747 or visit www.sfcare.org/en/services/clinics/walk-in-clinic.

CHI St. Francis Health complies with applicable federal civil rights laws and does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, age, disability, or sex. For more information, see link on our homepage at www.sfcare.org.

ATENCIÓN: si habla español, tiene a su disposición servicios gratuitos de asistencia lingüística. Llame al 1-218-643-0405.

LUS CEEV: Yog tias koj hais lus Hmoob, cov kev pab txog lus, muaj kev pab dawb rau koj. Hu rau 1-218-643-0405.

Here Comes the Sun

Though fall is here, you still have to protect yourself from the heat and the sun's dangerous ultraviolet (UV) rays.



Staying safe in the sun means keeping cool and staying hydrated by drinking plenty of the right kinds of beverages. Opt for water over sugary beverages, such as soda or lemonade.

"Drink throughout the day to avoid becoming thirsty—once you're thirsty, you're already dehydrated," says Jessica Wirth, APRN, FNP-C, MSN, family practice nurse practitioner at CHI St. Francis Health. "People should drink about eight to 10 glasses of water

a day when they're not spending time in the sun, and more when they do."

Sick of the Heat

Staying hydrated can prevent heat-related illnesses such as heat exhaustion and heat stroke. Symptoms of these conditions include dizziness, headache, weakness, rapid heartbeat, nausea, and cramps.

If you or someone you know is showing symptoms of a heat-related illness, move them to an air-conditioned room and have them sip a sports drink or water. Seek out a walk-in clinic or call a primary care provider if symptoms don't improve in an hour. Severe heat-related symptoms, such as chest pains, labored breathing, or loss of consciousness, are signs that you should call emergency services immediately.

Skin Deep

Sunlight helps create vitamin D within our bodies, which helps with calcium absorption and bone development. However, too much sunlight can damage your skin and raise your risk of developing cancer.

"We want to get our vitamin D when we can, but we want to be careful, especially in the summer and fall," Jessica says. "Wear hats, sunglasses, and sunscreen when you're outside to avoid skin damage."

Any sunscreen or sunglasses you wear should protect against both types of UV rays—UVA and UVB. Look for sunscreen with a sun protection factor of 30 or higher and make sure to reapply sunscreen at least every two hours when spending time outdoors. If you're sweating or swimming, make sure to reapply sunscreen more often.

Walk-Ins and Regulars Welcome

The CHI St. Francis Health Primary Care and Walk-in Clinic is open each day of the week during the following business hours:

- Monday–Friday, 8 a.m. to 7:30 p.m.
- Saturday–Sunday, 9 a.m. to 5 p.m.

"We're the only walk-in service provider in the community," says Jessica Wirth, APRN, FNP-C, MSN, family practice nurse practitioner at CHI St. Francis Health. "We offer appointments online and over the phone in addition to walk-ins, and we also do follow-up visits, which many walk-in clinics don't provide."

If you like the practitioner you see, you can even choose to make that person your primary care provider moving forward.

Visit www.sfcare.org and click on "Services" to access the drop-down menu. Click on "Primary Care Walk-in Clinic," then click "Book Now" to schedule an appointment online.





Care **Close** to Home

Mary Ihland was no stranger to knee replacement surgery. About a decade ago, the Kent, Minnesota, resident had her right knee replaced at a nearby hospital. At the time, Mary's doctor told her that her left knee needed to be replaced as well, but the married mother of two grown children didn't feel like she was ready to undergo another procedure.

Over the years, however, Mary's pain worsened, and work on the family farm with her husband, Butch, and her son, Charlie, became difficult.

"I do a lot of climbing," she says. "I'm in and out of tall machines. I'm stepping over things. All of that was impossible to do with knee pain."

Injections provided relief for a while, but soon her pain was so intense she was unable to sleep. Mary knew it was time to do something, so she made an appointment with Dr. Brennen Smith, orthopedic and spine surgeon at CHI St. Francis Health.

"I held off on replacing it for as long as I could," she remembers. "I waited eight years."

Compassionate Care

When she first met Dr. Smith and his staff, Mary knew she was somewhere special.

"I've never been in a doctor's office where the staff was so thoughtful," she says. "You just don't get that level of care in bigger places."

And the compassion she received from Dr. Smith extended beyond the walls of his office. Mary was impressed when Dr. Smith walked her to her car following an appointment, and the conversation the pair had along the way outside made a huge impact on Mary.

"Dr. Smith told me he used to be a veterinarian," she says. "To me, that says a lot about his character. People who are kind to animals have a natural compassion."





“I was so glad I found CHI St. Francis Health. I’m a big believer in shopping local and supporting the businesses in your community, and this was a great experience all around.”

—MARY IHLAND

Surgical Success

After reviewing Mary’s extensive imaging studies and learning that her pain was confined to only one part of the knee, Dr. Smith revealed some good news: Rather than undergoing total knee replacement surgery—which would involve additional recovery time—Mary was a candidate for partial knee replacement. During this procedure, only the affected part of the joint is replaced. Mary was elated.

Her surgery was scheduled for early March, and she continued to be impressed with every staff member she met at CHI St. Francis Health along the way. On the morning of her surgery, Mary was nervous, but her fears were soon calmed.

“I was impressed with the nurse anesthetist,” Mary says. “I’ve had trouble with anesthesia before, and he talked with me about what’s worked in the past. I’d never been asked that before, and I thought that was really nice.”

After she came out of anesthesia, the nurse anesthetist noticed she was in pain.

“He asked if I was OK, and I said, ‘I’m fine.’ He took one look at me and said, ‘I can tell you’re not fine.’ He was like an older brother in that way, very perceptive and very caring.”

Recovery during physical therapy also helped Mary feel like part of a family.

“One of my therapists reminded me of my daughter Maggi,” she laughs. “My daughter is a lawyer in Bismarck, so it was nice to have a little reminder of her.”

Since her surgery, Mary has been able to sleep again, as she no longer has knee pain keeping her awake. She is recovering faster than she expected, and she credits that to the care and compassion she received from her providers at CHI St. Francis Health.

“The care I’ve received locally is better than any care I’ve ever gotten,” she says. “Our community has a real gem with CHI St. Francis Health.”

To schedule an appointment with the Orthopedic and Spine Clinic, call 218-643-0415.

Meet Breanna Paulson

Breanna Paulson, APRN, FNP-C, family nurse practitioner at CHI St. Francis Health, is no stranger to the facility. Her mother has worked at CHI St. Francis Health for 25 years, and Breanna worked as a certified nursing assistant at the facility as a high school student. Today, she works with Dr. Brennen Smith, orthopedic and spine surgeon at the CHI St. Francis Health Orthopedic and Spine Clinic.

Then and now, Breanna recognized there was something special about CHI St. Francis Health.

“I’ve seen how much CHI St. Francis Health staff members care about their patients,” she says. “That’s important to me.”

Breanna grew up in Breckenridge and received her Bachelor of Arts in Nursing from Concordia College. She then completed her Master of Science in Nursing at the University of Mary. Before becoming a nurse practitioner at CHI St. Francis Health, Breanna worked to provide primary, emergency, and acute health care to rural areas.

“I worked in a town with about 500 people,” Breanna says. “I loved it. I got to know my patients really well, and I came to CHI St. Francis Health because I wanted to work at a place where those kinds of relationships were still possible.”

Currently, Breanna lives in Graceville with her husband, Jonathan, and two children, 10-year-old Bristol and 8-year-old Tucker. She enjoys playing softball and often brings her children to her games, just as she remembers her father doing when she was their age.

“I’m glad I have the opportunity to give back to my community,” she says. “I think everything I’ve done in my career has helped prepare me to work here with Dr. Smith.”





The Comforts of Home

Resident Shirley Jensvold loves the amenities available to her at St. Francis Home.

Norma Moulsoff was reluctant to leave her home, but when she arrived at St. Francis Home, she knew she'd found another.

After back surgery, Norma, who lived alone on a farm in Barney, North Dakota, found navigating the stairs in her house to be problematic. She made a difficult decision so many older adults have to make: to leave her home and move into a facility that offered nursing services and rehabilitation therapy. Norma knew exactly what she wanted.

"I knew St. Francis Home had private rooms, which is what I was interested in," she says. "I wanted my own restroom. I moved in December 2012, and when I arrived, I said to myself, 'This is my home for as long as I need it.'"

Norma feels right at home.

"I was sad to leave the farm, but when I'm in my room with the door closed, it's almost like I'm back there," she says. "I have my computer, magnifying reading machine, and TV, and I feel as if I were in my living room in my old house."

A Vibrant Community

Residents of St. Francis Home have access to a variety of amenities and activities, including:

- Audiology services
- Barbershop and salon staffed by a licensed beautician
- Bingo
- Chemical dependency services
- Gardening
- Laundry service
- Mental health services
- Optometry
- Pet therapy
- Pharmaceutical services
- Social activities
- Transportation to and from medical appointments

Norma enjoys sending and receiving emails, reading news online, and, like many residents, playing bingo, which she describes as "a big deal."

"I couldn't say enough good things about the staff at St. Francis Home because they treat me well," Norma says. "I don't think they could do a better job."

To learn more, visit www.sfcare.org, click on "Senior Living," and select "St. Francis Nursing Home."

Norma Moulsoff, 95, passed away on Aug. 15, 2019, shortly after being interviewed for this article. Our condolences go out to her family and friends.

More Than a Workplace

"I enjoy caring for our residents," says Deb Bontjes, LPN, unit nurse at St. Francis Home. "I dispense medications and oversee their medical well-being, but my job is more than that. Every day, I visit with residents and talk about what's going on with them and in the community. We form close bonds. The relationships I have with residents are the best part of my job."

After 40 years of working at St. Francis Home, Deb says her job is anything but boring or predictable.

"Every day is different, which is one of the reasons I enjoy my job," she says. "We're all part of a happy family here."

Community Servant

For decades, Terry Goerger has depended on CHI St. Francis Health. He shows his appreciation by serving on the CHI St. Francis Health Foundation Board of Directors.



“When you support your local hospital, you better your community for you and everyone else, and everyone that will live here in the future.”

—TERRY GOERGER, MEMBER OF THE CHI ST. FRANCIS HEALTH FOUNDATION BOARD OF DIRECTORS

CHI St. Francis Health has been there for Terry since the beginning—he was born at the old hospital in 1955. Over the years, he’s turned to CHI St. Francis Health for several medical procedures, and his mother lived at the St. Francis Home for a time. A lifelong resident of Mantador, North Dakota, Terry stays busy as a farmer and owner of a farm seed supply company, but he makes time to support CHI St. Francis Health through his service on the Foundation’s Board of Directors.



“A former board member asked me to serve, and I just finished my first three-year term,” Terry says. “I’ve served on several statewide agricultural boards, but being a member of the Foundation Board of Directors allows me to help a local organization and my community. It’s important to support CHI St. Francis Health because it’s a significant employer for our community and provides great medical services.”

The Foundation of Health

The CHI St. Francis Health Foundation is a nonprofit organization that supports CHI St. Francis Health—and, by extension, the health of everyone in our community.

The Foundation has funded many services and programs at CHI St. Francis Health, such as provider recruitment and the CHI St. Francis Health Primary Care and Walk-in Clinic, which provides a place to turn to for after-hours care seven days a week.

“One of the Foundation-funded services that most impresses me is the ability for emergency medicine physicians at CHI St. Francis Health to call their colleagues in Sioux Falls and speak with them on a video screen in the Emergency Department if they need to consult about a patient,” Terry says. “That way, patients can receive care from a team of physicians and nurses.”

The Foundation also supports the St. Francis Home and scholarships for students who plan to enter healthcare fields, among other programs and initiatives. Perhaps most importantly, the Foundation helps ensure local healthcare continues to thrive.

“Having a hospital in our community is super important because it would be difficult to have to travel an hour away for medical appointments or to visit friends or family in the hospital,” Terry says. “Medical services close to home are vital.”

Terry thinks CHI St. Francis Health is a hidden gem, but he hopes that’s changing.

“Many people don’t know about everything CHI St. Francis Health has to offer,” Terry says. “They think they need to go to Fargo for the services they need. Once people realize that excellent health care is close to home, I hope they’ll support CHI St. Francis Health. It’s a great place with caring people.”

To find out how you can support health care in your community, visit www.sfcare.org, click on “About Us,” and select “Foundation.”



Donations enable the foundation to purchase state-of-the-art technology to support and enhance services.



This publication in no way seeks to serve as a substitute for professional medical care. Consult your doctor before undertaking any form of medical treatment or adopting any exercise program or dietary guidelines.



Kelly Nelson, RN

Kelly Nelson, RN, is the Operating Room Lead for CHI St. Francis Health. Kelly attained her RN from Minnesota State Community and Technical College in Detroit Lakes, Minnesota, and has been employed at CHI St. Francis Health for almost seven years. Kelly has spent the last five and a half years as an Operating Room and Recovery nurse. She also has nursing experience in Medical Surgical, Nursery, Emergency Room, and as a surgical scrub nurse. Kelly, her husband, and two children have lived in Wahpeton, North Dakota, for over seven years. She enjoys spending time at the lake, having water balloon fights with her daughter, nieces, and nephews, watching her favorite Minnesota sports teams (all of them!) with her husband, and, of course, spending as much free time with her friends and family doing absolutely anything!

Amie Benedict, RN

Amie Benedict, RN, BSN, is the ER Lead for CHI St. Francis Health. Amie received her RN from North Dakota State College of Science and later earned her Bachelor of Science in Nursing degree from Kaplan University (now Purdue University Global) in Iowa. Amie has nursing experience in Medical Surgical, Intensive Care, Emergency Room, Nursery, and Charge. Amie has been with St. Francis for 16 years. She has a supportive husband and three daughters. Her hobbies include spending time with her family, organizing whatever she can get her hands on, and traveling.

