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2015 Golf Event – Another Successful Year of Raising Funds for HIS!

Our 12th Annual Golf Event was a success! Over one hundred twenty participants enjoyed the beautiful course at Thornapple Pointe Golf Club with friends and colleagues. The day started off with a half-hour delay due to a heavy downpour...the rain continued off and on throughout the morning, but that did not stop the largest morning flight in the history of our event with 40 golfers from completing all 18 holes! Following our afternoon flight, a delicious dinner and a silent auction took place. Over \$31,500.00 was raised for the ministry of Health Intervention Services! We thank you for your continued success of this important event!

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“If we don’t know where we are going...”

On September 22, a great American philosopher died.

When he died at age 90, Yogi Berra, considered one of the greatest catchers in baseball history, had become as famous for his “yogiisms” as he was for his hitting. The simplicity, humor, and “truth” of such sayings as “a nickel ain’t worth a dime anymore” had made him the most quoted American since Mark Twain.

Much has changed in the health care delivery system recently, especially since the advent of the Affordable Care Act and Healthy Michigan, the expansion of Medicaid in our state. Five years ago, our role in Grand Rapids’ health safety net was pretty clear – we provided health care to those who were uninsured. Now many of the working poor that we have served are eligible for Medicaid, the government’s health insurance for the financially disadvantaged.

So what does this mean to our mission, our vision, and our services? Faced with such dramatic changes in our environment, HIS is engaged in strategic planning to understand where we currently are and what our future is.

Like Yogi said: “If you don’t know where you are going, you’ll end up someplace else.”

We are not expecting the plan to be completed until February, but we have early indications of where we are going.

First, we know we are not just here to serve the uninsured. While this continues to be a very important part of what we do (over 90% of the patients we see do not have insurance when they come to us), we know that an insurance card (including Medicaid) does not necessarily provide access to quality health care. Most providers limit the number of Medicaid patients they take because of reimbursement. Those that serve people with lower incomes have long waiting lists. Sometimes being “poor” means you get “poorer” services. Language, cultural differences, ethnicity, transportation, and attitudes all impose barriers on serving “the least of these.”

Research on health care dramatically shows that “social determinants” dictate access to quality health care. And we are determined not to let social “determinants” dictate who gets quality health care.

We also know that our vision is not to just provide health care. Let me say that again: our vision is not to just provide health care.

That may surprise you. But our vision includes a healthy community. To achieve this we need to create an environment where the people we serve have the information, tools, and skills to manage their own health – with a little help from their friends.

Yogi said, “If you come to a fork in the road, take it.”

Our fork is health care versus healthy living. And we are going to take it.

As much as I love them, “yogi-isms” are not what is inspiring us in our planning. On my wall at HIS is a much greater inspiration. I’m sure many of you know it well: “I know the plans I have for you’, says the Lord. ‘They are plans for good and not for disaster, to give you a future and a hope.’”

As we plan for our future, we are inspired and reassured by Jeremiah. We know that HIS is in His hands. We know He knows where we are going.



When HIS began looking for a new Dental Coordinator, HIS Dental Director, Dr. Daniel Armstrong, immediately thought of former co-worker, Daniel Garcia. "I was drawn to his faith walk and his work when we worked together at Cherry Health Services" Dr. Armstrong said. "He is a hard worker and a good listener. He is patient, gentle and compassionate."

Daniel Garcia, whose parents came to the U.S. from Mexico in 1983, is the second of four children. A graduate of The Potter's House School, he attended Cornerstone University and received his Dental Assistant Certificate training from Everest College.

The decision to come to HIS - a decision wrapped in much prayer - was inspired by a desire to help others just as his family was helped along their journey. Since joining the team in March, Daniel's proficiency in Spanish and English as well as his professional and people skills have been greatly valued.

Daniel's family is walking through a difficult new chapter as Daniel's mom, Olga passed away at the age of 56 in September. Through his tears, Daniel's smile has not dimmed and his faith is growing deeper. He is seeking to be an encouragement to his Dad, brothers and sister. Please pray for the Garcia family.

We are so glad to have Daniel at HIS. Dr. Armstrong sums it up well: "He has been a blessing to me and our patients. I am looking forward to his continuing service at HIS!"

WE ARE SEEKING...
Volunteer Staffing Needs
Optometrists
Nurses
Medical Assistants
Interpreters
Dentists
Dental Assistants

If you can volunteer, please let Nancy know at 475-8446 ext. 116

Equipment
Instrument sterilizer -
(autoclave e.g. Midmark M11)
Digital Xray (intraoral sensor)
Surgical handpiece system for
difficult extractions
e.g. Osada Model PEDO-30W

Donations: please contact Thressa at 475-1326 or Bill at 475-1363

Do you wonder how your dollars help dental patients?

"Jose's" story, told in his own words as translated from Spanish, shows what a "little thing" like a dental cleaning can do!



My wife and I both had serious issues with our teeth. I had really bad breath. I didn't want to laugh out loud or open my mouth. We heard about Heath Intervention Services and I am so glad we did. I needed two teeth pulled to start and right away the bad smell was less obvious. Then Sandra (HIS' dental hygienist) cleaned my teeth. During the cleaning, little "stones" seemed to be breaking off in my mouth and I was worried that

those "stones" were parts of my teeth; but they were not ---the stones were chunks of built-up tartar! Sandra didn't make me feel bad about my teeth; she just told me the truth and patiently cleaned them. It took four sessions but when she was done, I felt fantastic! Then I needed some cavities filled. The dentists took care of some of those too.

I am so thankful to God for the services my wife and I received. When I see someone with a problem like mine or my wife's, I try to kindly let them know that there is a place where they can go to get help.

Thank you, God, for the people at HIS.

And thank YOU for helping Jose and his wife smile once again!

**Introducing...Ken Kraft
 Director of Advancement**



Ken brings a unique and varied background to his role as Director of Advancement at HIS.

Ken grew up in Ithaca, NY as an only child with a single mom. He is married to Becky, a Michigan native. They have 7 children and 9 grandchildren. Currently living in Lowell, they attend Ada Bible Church.

Ken is a graduate of Piedmont International University in North Carolina. He is an ordained minister who has served churches in Michigan and Florida as well as being the executive director of a Christian camp for nine years. Most recently, prior to joining HIS, Ken was the Manager of Partner Relationships for Guiding Light Mission in Grand Rapids.

We warmly welcome Ken and his love of people and Christ to the HIS ministry!

A Tale of Two Gifts

The Child's Mite



It was a beautiful early summer day in June and Luke Ekkens, age 7, decided he wanted a lemonade stand. With the help of his 5 year old brother Will (and his parents Kristin and Dave), Luke made the lemonade, constructed a sign, and converted a sand box into a stand. The warming temperatures brought a brisk business, and a couple of hours later, the proud entrepreneur split the proceeds with his happy brother.

Then came the life lesson.

Dave and Kristin explained to the boys the concept of tithing. While Will decided his tithed 32 cents would go to his church where Sunday School is an important part of his life, Luke had a different idea. "I want to give to

HIS. And I want to give it all!"

In early July a very proud grandpa, HIS President Bill Paxton, accepted with enthusiasm Luke's \$3.20. Luke, Will, and Kristin received the official HIS tour and "presidential" in person thanks.

The Corporate Compliment

Healthier Communities is one way Spectrum Health reaches out to the underserved-people in our community whose demographic, economic or cultural characteristics place them at risk for poor health outcomes. It accomplishes this through programs and funding of community partners like HIS. Each year we apply for and receive up to \$75,000 to help the underserved achieve access to quality health care.

In late July Bill Paxton received a call from the office of Dr. Ken Fawcett, Vice President of Healthier Communities, stating that some of the staff would like to stop by and present HIS with a check. Healthier Communities' fiscal year had just ended and the staff wanted to share the net proceeds with its partners. They had selected HIS to be a recipient.

Arrangements were made and on July 21 a check was presented to HIS for \$30,000! Dr. Fawcett explained that staff members are very proud of their relationship with HIS and of the remarkable work HIS is doing to provide quality healthcare to the underserved in Grand Rapids.

Dr. Fawcett and his staff – like Luke and his brother -- received the official HIS tour and an enthusiastic "presidential" thanks.

While these are two very different gifts, at HIS we thank God for both. Both gifts indicate that we have touched the hearts of the givers through our work and relationships. And God is blessing HIS as we strive to represent His healing hands in our community.



Pictured from left to right: HIS Board Members Dan Butler and Laura Finelli, Medical Director Dr. Laura VanderMolen, President Bill Paxton, Dr. Ken Fawcett, Mark Lubberts, and Jose Reyna

November is American Diabetes Month. The American Diabetes Association is celebrating their 75th anniversary in 2015. For more information visit their website: www.diabetes.org.



There are times when medical professionals respond to a crisis by skillfully rescuing a patient from death or disaster. This is not one of those stories. Rather, this is a story about the joy of comprehensive, preventative care that averts the crisis.

HIS has been the medical home for Fidelina for some time now. "It makes me very happy to come to HIS. I am often very lonely." she shared one day. Her English is limited, so our staff's multi-lingual skills are reassuring to her.

Fidelina was originally referred to HIS by another community organization. We have been able to help her in many ways. For example, our Patient Navigator was able to help her find insurance coverage. He also has found short term supplies of her expensive medications. Recently, Fidelina was included in Diabetes Day, a monthly program that includes lab work, screening of retinas, feet and teeth, and education. Education is essential as we empower patients to manage their diabetes. Classes are offered in Spanish and English. On occasion, our staff even makes home visits to help patients and their families.

Our Medical Director, Dr. Laura VanderMolen, comments regarding Fidelina, "Her story may not seem that exciting in that I did not diagnose a rare or awful disease, but I find it beautiful that for some patients we are able to intervene in their health before they have terrible complications. Fidelina was seen in time to prevent disease progression. She likes to come here and she receives excellent medical care. For me this is very exciting!"

So maybe this IS a story of high drama. For Fidelina, having HIS in her life has indeed been life saving and life changing. And isn't that what really matters?