



Newsletter | August 2020



Exalta Health[®]

Our community. Our health.

Exalta Health reflects the spirit of Christ by providing compassionate, accessible healthcare.

A Q&A with New President Ed Postma

Ed Postma, a former chair of the Exalta Health Board of Directors, is the organization's new president. He says: "We want to work and go as God directs." Learn more about Ed and his vision for Exalta Health in this Q&A.

You recently decided to remove the interim tag from your title to become the permanent president of Exalta Health. What led you to that decision?

It wasn't technically my decision, it was a Board decision, though I was in favor of it. There were a few reasons for doing that. The most important to me was that it's harder to take ownership of an organization if you're an interim president. We want to raise the identity of Exalta Health. For me, it was important to raise that identity not as an interim person but one who is invested in its success. It was gratifying that the Board, people who I have served alongside for several years now, agreed and gave their approval.

As you take on the role of president, what are the challenges and opportunities facing the organization in both the short and long term?

One of the more critical short-term challenges, and an opportunity as well, is recovering from the challenges brought on by COVID. We needed to renew our ability to provide full-time service for our patients, not a small endeavor. We knew that we serve a community hit hard by COVID, not only in healthcare, but also in the psychological and spiritual aspects of health.

Our response to the problems brought on by COVID is short term. We have learned a lot and will carry

that with us in the future. We're blessed in that our biggest asset is a competent staff. Long term, we are in a position to give quality healthcare to those who need it and may be expanding our services. That opportunity will never go away as we raise our identity. We're in a good position to do that as we collaborate with so many other organizations. The



President Postma with Karem Merrick-Trevino, Billing Specialist at Exalta Health.

major long-term challenge is finding funding that will support our operational costs. That certainly is a reason for our desire to raise our visibility. There are needs in the healthcare community where we believe we can play a role and make a difference. Our size allows us to stay nimble so when those opportunities come around, we can respond.

(Story continues on page 3)

A COVID-19 Update from Dr. Vander Molen

Someone asked me the other day if I'd ever seen anything like COVID-19 during my career as a doctor. My answer was plain and simple: "No."

When I talk to my colleagues -- the doctors and nurses who volunteer at Exalta Health and those who serve other clinics and hospitals around the area -- it is clear to me that what we have dealt with as a medical profession these last few months is unprecedented.

Yet, how Exalta Health has responded is not unprecedented. We have risen to the challenge, as we have done for almost 25 years now.

Through all the unknowns what we have learned at Exalta Health is that it is great to work as a team and our great God continues to work in the midst of all that is happening. We really have an incredible

“Through all the unknowns what we have learned at Exalta Health is that it is great to work as a team and our great God continues to work in the midst of all that is happening.”

team, one that is passionate about how to care for our patients. And I am humbled, honored and grateful to work with this team.

As we near the end of summer, we are also grateful to be moving toward a more traditional model of care for Exalta Health. We are seeing more and more patients, for routine care and chronic illness management, and volunteer providers are coming in to work. We are seeing slightly fewer patients than a year ago at this time because not all our volunteers are able to come back to work, but we are getting closer by the day. What a blessing.

Of course, we have changed a few things about the way we do business because of COVID-19. We have strict protocols for personal protective equipment for our staff and our volunteers so that they feel safe

and are safe. We also have put into place stringent cleaning protocols for exam rooms and common



Telehealth has been a significant tool for Dr. Laura Vander Molen and staff at Exalta Health.

areas, and we have changed patient flow in the office, added HEPA filters to exam room ventilation, required masks for patients and more. We want our patients to feel safe and be safe.

Through all of this we have stayed in close contact with local hospitals such as Metro Health, Mercy Health and Spectrum Health, and with our local Kent County Health Department and the Centers for Disease Control, learning from them as to the best ways to provide the amazing care our patients have come to expect.

We continue to do telehealth, though these sorts of "visits" have decreased. We are interested to see if in the future telehealth visits may be of some benefit to our patients, including consultations with Exalta Health specialists.

In all that we do, we work always to be the hands and feet of our Great Physician, Jesus, who heals the sick and weeps with those who weep. To Him be the glory.

Dr. Laura Vander Molen, Medical Director

Did You Know....

...a donation of \$75 pays for a dental exam for a new patient at Exalta Health?

...your \$150 donation provides a visit for a new medical patient?

...that \$85 allows a medical patient to be visited by an Exalta Health social worker?

...\$85 also allows an adult to have a complete dental cleaning?

A Q&A with New President Ed Postma (continued from page 1)

When did you first become connected to Exalta Health and what drew you to the organization?

About four or five years ago, I was asked to join the Board. I had served on the boards of other nonprofits, but the ministry of Exalta Health is different. What I saw was an organization that provided great medical and dental care for people in need. The ministry is holistic in its care for people, we can work with the whole person to include psychological and spiritual help. Our providers walk alongside our patients who may come to us for medical care but who also have other needs. You can't take healthcare out of the context of the environment the person is in, and we don't. We provide care as our Mission Statement says, "reflecting the spirit of Christ."

How has Exalta Health changed during the years in which you have been involved and in what ways has it stayed the same?

With the exception of some personnel changes, I haven't seen anything that has changed dramatically. There are two constants I think that makes Exalta Health strong. Twenty-five years ago (August 1995) a team of doctors, nurses, ministers, social workers and business people began meeting to plan what

"You can't take healthcare out of the context of the environment the person is in, and we don't. We give care as our Mission Statement says, "reflecting the spirit of Christ."

would become Health Intervention Services. That entity is now Exalta Health. They were excited about an "evangelical medical mission" to serve people who otherwise didn't have the resources to receive medical care. Now, 25 years later that "evangelical medical

mission" serves more than 2,000 people each year. We've been blessed, and I think we have blessed the lives of the people we serve, in the name of Christ.



Dental Director Daniel Armstrong and Ross student Gamaliel Garcia

What was your career prior to becoming the Exalta Health president and how has it prepared you for this moment in Exalta Health's history?

I've been around some. Grew up in Grand Rapids, educated in Christian schools, and attended Calvin College. I went to war serving in the 82nd Airborne Division. I have worked with the Probate court in the juvenile justice system and then became the Assistant Director for Baxter Community Center. That opened my eyes to a lot of the needs in the community, and a lot of those needs have not changed. To be more effective, I wanted to complete school and to support myself. So I went to work at Amway where I was given many opportunities and had a long career. I have since used many of the skills that I learned there while serving on various Boards of nonprofits. All of my experiences have prepared me to go where God takes me. The beautiful thing about God's hand in your life is you may not see it at the time, but when you look back at your life, you see the meanderings and how He was in those meanderings all the while.

Exalta Health and Guiding Light Collaborate



In late July, Exalta Health was blessed to have a team of men from Guiding Light Recovery come out to do some landscaping. Guiding Light Recovery is an intensive drug and alcohol treatment program designed to give men structure and opportunity to engage in change. Part of its four-to-six month residential program emphasizes gratitude and giving to others. In many ways, Guiding Light's

holistic approach mirrors Exalta Health's with patients on issues of body, mind and spirit. When Guiding Light clients arrived on that warm July day, it was immediately clear to them that there was work to do, and they did it.

President Ed Postma said: "Collaboration with other organizations, especially Christian organizations, has always been important."

Guiding Light Executive Director Stuart Ray says: "We collaborate and work to promote our shared values."

Exalta Health is very grateful.



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SAVE THE DATE

October 7, 2020

Annual Luncheon

We invite you to a luncheon to learn more about our programs and services.

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