

# MOBILE HEALTH MATTERS

The University of Arizona Department of Family and Community Medicine Mobile Health Program (MHP)

Winter 2017

## Diabetes Care with the Mobile Health Program

As we reflect on 2016, there are a number of things for which we are grateful: our passionate and dedicated staff; our generous and committed funders; the schools and organizations who host us; and, of course, our patients. You can find more information about our numbers on the final page of this newsletter, but in 2016 we conducted 1,423 patient visits!

One of the populations we've focused on, especially during the second half of 2016, was our diabetic patients. Diabetes is a major problem all over the country, and Tucson and Southern Arizona are no exception. Diabetes causes or increases the risk of a host of serious problems, including heart disease and stroke; eye problems; nerve damage; kidney problems; and gum disease and loss of teeth.

Every three months, we schedule our diabetic patients to come in for an examination where we test their A1c, a blood marker of diabetic control. Many patients also keep a diary of their blood sugar levels during the period in between visits which we review with them. With the data at hand, we are able to engage the patient in his or her care and determine a diabetes management plan, including medications, diet, and exercise.

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### Why MHP Matters

When people don't have access to regular care, their visits to a clinic often are more about disease treatment than disease prevention. Preventable diseases are the leading cause of death in the United States with over half of all deaths each year due to preventable causes.

This is one of the reasons we work so hard to build strong relationships with our patients and provide continuity of care. When a patient comes in for regular care, check-ups, and screenings, we are able to prevent or catch many issues before they become a problem.

One patient first visited our clinic four months ago; she had been feeling ill for quite some time. We discovered she was diabetic and have treated her regularly since then. With ongoing care and changes to her diet, her diabetes is now under control. "I feel like I've come alive again. I'm a completely different person than I was when I first came," she told us during a recent clinic visit.



Edna Rodriguez, MHP Medical Assistant, checks a patient's blood sugar levels



MHP staff check a patient's blood pressure (left) and conduct a lipid panel where we check cholesterol levels (right).

**DIABETES (continued from Page 1)**  
 "Witnessing the change in health and energy when these patients are feeling better and they are committed to managing the condition really is remarkable," said MHP Medical Director Dr. Ravi Grivoi-Shah. "Implementing an effective Quality Improvement process has helped us determine how we can focus our resources and attention to make a meaningful impact in our patients' health," said Patrick Rivers, MHP Senior Program Coordinator.

## How You Can Help

One of the greatest barriers that we face in expanding care is funding for more staff to operate both our original and the new March of Dimes Mobile Health units at the same time.

If you are interested in donating your time or skills to the Mobile Health Program, or making a financial contribution, please contact Patrick Rivers at 520-621-0088. Together, we can truly improve health in our community!

# The Mobile Health Pulse

Ravi Grivoi-Shah, MD MPH  
 Medical Director of the Mobile Health Program



Members of the Mobile Health team often talk about our care of kids, patients who are pregnant, prevention and managing acute illnesses such as colds and coughs.

Management of chronic illnesses like diabetes is extremely important to the communities we serve as they can linger without symptoms for years, even decades, until complications arise. Most of these complications – damage to the heart, kidneys, nerves, and eyes, among others – are preventable with a strong relationship between the patient and his or her provider working

together to control blood sugar and blood pressure.

We've made great strides in 2016 in improving the care of our diabetic patients. As we started reviewing hard data about our care through the Quality Improvement process from the University of Arizona Department of Family and Community Medicine, we learned where we can improve.

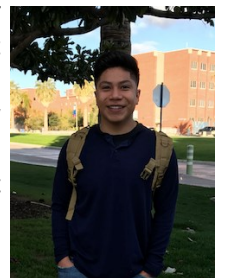
Through use of "registries," we're tracking our patients with poorly controlled diabetes to ensure that they stay engaged with us for their care and return for regular appointments. As a result, in the past six months alone we've nearly doubled the percent of patients with diabetes receiving regular A1c testing (a blood test for diabetes control), and increased by over 70 percent the number of patients with diabetes who are over 40 and on a statin medication to prevent heart disease.

These great strides to optimize our resources to care for our communities most at risk, but we're not stopping here!

Thanks to a generous grant from the AAFP Foundation, we're able to purchase a rapid A1c machine that will allow us to monitor the level of control of a patient's diabetes with results in minutes – not days – later. This will give us real-time information to help our patients care for their diabetes. Our new electronic health record, which will go live this summer will also allow us to better keep track of patients with diabetes – as well as other conditions – to help us provide the best care possible to meet our communities' needs.

## Volunteer Spotlight: Danny Contreras

Danny is a second-year undergraduate student double majoring in microbiology and family studies/human development. When not volunteering at the MHP and sharpening his Spanish-speaking skills,



he spends time with his family and likes to be with his younger siblings. He plans to go to medical school and hopes to specialize in pediatrics as a critical care or primary care physician.

Danny is fluent in Spanish and – in addition with recording patients' medical histories and vitals, provides translation services for staff and patients.





## The Mobile Health Program's 40th Anniversary!

In November, MHP staff joined members of the Ortiz Endowment and the community to celebrate the 40th Anniversary of the Mobile Health Program and to present awards to Michael Gray (bottom right), and Debra Johnson (top left) for their outstanding contributions to healthcare and access to services in Southern Arizona.

A truly great time was had by all!

**The MHP is grateful to all of our funders that help make our work serving the community possible, including:**

- University of Arizona, Department of Family & Community Medicine
  - Banner Health
- Pima County Outside Agency, CDBG and First Smiles Matter
  - March of Dimes Foundation
  - Delta Dental of AZ Foundation
  - AAFP Foundation
- The Dr. Augusto and Martha Ortiz Endowment



## Staff Focus: Elizabeth Knight



Elizabeth is the MHP's Nurse Practitioner (NP), and the provider for our family medicine clinics. She has been with the MHP for two and a half years. She is also a clinical assistant professor for the University of Arizona's College of Nursing, and received her PhD in Nursing and DNP (Doctorate of Nursing Practice) degree from the UA in 2015. Here's what Elizabeth told us about her work.

**Q: What is a Nurse Practitioner?**

A nurse practitioner is a registered nurse with additional education and training that allows him or her to provide a fuller scope of care to our patients. NPs in Arizona can diagnose and manage health problems, order tests, perform procedures and prescribe medications. NPs may work in primary care, specialty clinics, hospitals, or other community settings. They also collaborate with other members of the healthcare team, including physicians, pharmacists, or dietitians, when necessary. NPs have a holistic approach to caring for individuals, families, and communities—not just treating diseases!

**Q: What does a typical day look like for you?**

Mobile Health is always on the move, and no two days are alike! A day in clinic for me might involve setting up clinic equipment, visiting with and examining patients, calling around to locate good prices on medications or access to services, troubleshooting our computer network, performing physical exams for sports or kids going to Head Start, teaching patients how to use their home glucometers, finding health recipes to share, and working with Edna, our medical assistant, to follow up on patient calls, tests, and other needs. We keep busy!

**Q: What is your favorite part of working with the MHP?**

I have fallen in love with our patient population! I love that our small, close-knit team can treat our patients like family. The trust we have with our patients is a great asset to the health of our communities.

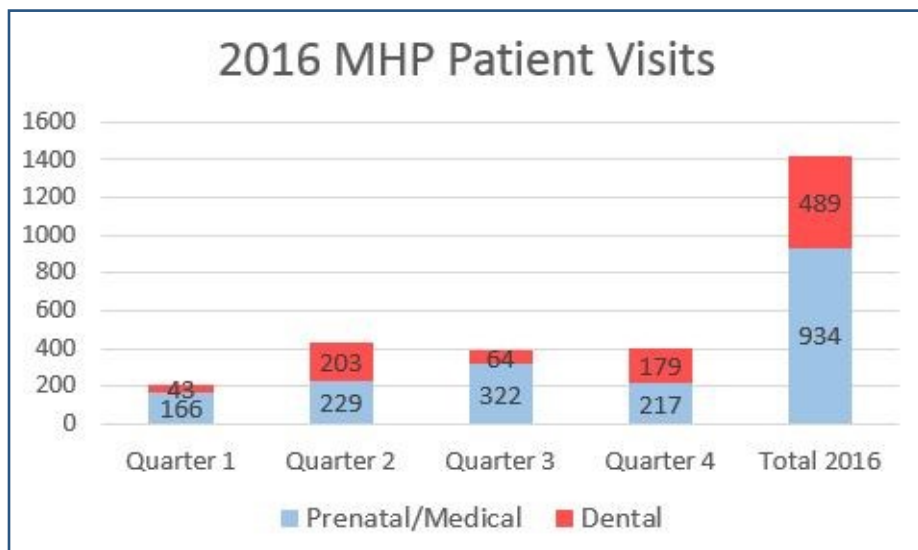
**Q: What are you looking forward to in the coming year for Mobile Health?**

Mobile Health has grown and evolved and continues to do so! I'm excited to continue to collaborate with residents and faculty from the College of Medicine, and to further expand our clinics to reach more people in need.

## Who We Serve

In 2016, we provided expanded our medical services to two new sites: Flowing Wells High School and Pueblo Magnet High School. We also maintained partnerships with our other six regular sites. We provided dental services to 12 local schools and day care centers, and screenings and other services at five health fairs. In total, we conducted 1,423 patient visits!

We would like to extend deep thanks to our staff, funders, and community partners who made this such a great year!



## Contact Us

For more information about our program, call Patrick Rivers, Senior Program Coordinator at **520-621-0088**.

To make an appointment, call Edna Rodriguez, Medical Assistant, at **520-626-0178**.

To connect with us on Facebook and see when we will be holding clinic in your area, visit [www.facebook.com/mobilehealthprogram](http://www.facebook.com/mobilehealthprogram).

## MHP Monthly Clinic Schedule\*

Flowing Wells High School  
3725 N. Flowing Wells Rd. Tucson 85705  
1<sup>st</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> Mondays, 2:00pm to 5:00pm, **Family Practice**

Summit View Elementary School  
1900 E. Summit St., Tucson 85756  
2<sup>nd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> Mondays, 2:00pm to 5:00pm, **Family Practice**

Community Food Bank  
3003 S. Country Club, Tucson 85713  
2<sup>nd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> Tuesdays, 9:00am to 12:00pm, **Family Practice**

Los Ranchitos Resource Center  
2054 E. Ginter Rd., Tucson 85706  
2<sup>nd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> Tuesdays, 1:30pm to 4:30pm, **Family Practice**

Santa Clara Methodist Church  
6740 S. Santa Clara Ave., Tucson 85756  
1<sup>st</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> Wednesdays, 9:00am to 12:00pm, **Family Practice**  
2<sup>nd</sup> Wednesdays, 9:00am to 12:00pm, **Prenatal Care**  
4<sup>th</sup> Wednesdays, 5:00pm to 7:00pm, **Prenatal Care**

Pueblo High School  
3500 S. 12<sup>th</sup> Ave, Tucson 85713  
1<sup>st</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> Wednesdays, 1:30pm to 4:30pm, **Family Practice**

St. John's Catholic Church  
602 W. Ajo Way, Tucson 85713  
Every Thursday, 1:30pm to 4:30pm, **Family Practice**  
1<sup>st</sup> Thursdays, 8:00am to 12:00pm, **Prenatal Care**  
3<sup>rd</sup> Thursdays, 5:00pm to 7:00pm, **Prenatal Care**

New Life Resource Center  
5245 S. 12<sup>th</sup> Ave., Tucson 85706  
2<sup>nd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> Thursdays, 9:00am to 12:00pm, **Family Practice**

\*Clinics subject to periodic change. Please call 520-621-0088 to confirm date and time.