

Metro, Ford hospitals to join in health plan

By SHERRY KAHAN

A new Detroit area health plan involving cooperation between Metropolitan Hospital and Henry Ford Hospital is now in the final stages of negotiation and is expected to go into effect late in February.

Called the Health Alliance Plan (HAP), it will make use of both Detroit-based hospitals plus their outlying health centers. Ford Hospital has centers in Dearborn, West Bloomfield and Troy. The Troy center offers only limited services.

Metropolitan operates Metropolitan West Hospital in Westland plus additional centers in Detroit, Dearborn and Allen Park.

According to a hospital administrator involved in negotiations, the HAP plan was founded with the cooperation of the Big Three auto companies and the United Auto Workers with the hope of saving money on health care costs. They also felt that competition provided by the plan might move Michigan Blue Cross and Blue Shield toward better cost containment procedures.

Marketing of the new plan will probably begin in late February, with individuals being invited to participate as well as those who can opt for the plan through their place of employment.

THE MOST NOTABLE feature of the plan is that it will operate as a health maintenance organization (HMO). This means that participants will get more than the hospital care offered by the Blues and other insurance companies. They will also have their day-to-day health care needs met through visits to the various medical

centers operated by the two hospital systems.

Since it was founded 19 years ago by UAW president Walter Reuther, Metropolitan has operated as an HMO. But it is a new departure for Ford Hospital, one of the largest in the area, to offer its facilities for an HMO program.

"We spent a lot of time with the medical staff at Ford Hospital reviewing the concept of HMOs and their implications," said Dave Campbell, a Ford Hospital employee who has been given a new assignment under the new system. "It ended with support by the staff for involvement with the HMO."

Ford Hospital expects that only from five to 10 per cent of its patients will be part of the plan. It will continue in its role as a major referral center and as a fee-for-service hospital.

HAP is now going through the final phases of obtaining a state license and federal certification. However, a significant move toward implementation was made last October when Ford Hospital signed a management contract to administer the Metropolitan system. Prior to that move, it had been administered by its own staff. Before that it was under the auspices of Blue Cross-Blue Shield.

CAMPBELL, who is the new administrator of the Metropolitan system, for Ford, pointed out the cooperation between the two hospitals does not mean there has been a merger.

"Each hospital will maintain its separate identity," he explained, adding

that Ford Hospital's involvement in the day to day running of Metropolitan "is limited to me."

Each hospital will continue to have its own board. HAP will also have its own board. James Walworth, president of HAP, pointed out that its board will be made up of representatives of the big three auto companies, other companies, the UAW, the two hospitals and consumers.

Under Michigan's HMO law, one-third of the board must be made up of subscribers elected by the other subscribers. "They must be elected within 12 months of the licensing by the state," he added.

It is the hope of the HAP administrator that the plan will have 130,000 members in five years.

For the 75,000 now participating in the Metro Health Plan through Metropolitan Hospital, there will be little visible change. They will, however, receive new membership cards bearing the HAP name.

It was the Ford Motor Co., searching for a way to reduce the costs of health care for its workers that initiated the plan. It requested representatives from the California HMO, Kaiser-Permanente, to come to the area and do a survey.

"In 1977, Kaiser concluded an HMO would be feasible," Campbell said. "A suggestion was made that Ford Hospital be included and provide management of the system."

Contact was made with the other two auto companies. The UAW was put in

the picture through the negotiations with Metropolitan Hospital. Vice-president Ken Bannock is president of the Metropolitan board.

Possibly too, inspiration came from comments made by Joseph Califano made in an address last year to representatives of leading U.S. companies.

"HMOs save money," he told them. "Our best evidence suggests that HMOs can reduce outpatient visits by 15 per cent and hospitalization by 30-60 per cent. A national reduction of only 10 per cent in hospital use would have saved \$3.2 billion last year. With total spending on hospital care at \$64 billion in 1977, the potential impact of HMOs becomes truly impressive."

HMOs save money several ways.

"They practice preventive medicine. For a minimum fee a subscriber can see a doctor. Through the MHP a patient can see a doctor for a complete checkup at a Metropolitan health center for from \$3 to \$4, depending on the kind of coverage. A similar fee is charged for needed lab services."

This encourages patients to come in vertically instead of horizontally, say HMO administrators. "Because costs are low, they seek help before they get so ill they require hospitalization."

"Tests are done on an outpatient basis, whereas in most other plans a patient must be hospitalized to have his tests covered by insurance. With the high cost of hospital care, outpatient testing can result in considerable savings."

The lively needle

Here's a handy fiber guide

By MARY KAY DAVIS

There's more to needlepoint and embroidery than wool, lovely though it may be. Local shops carry beautiful and different fibers which can lift your work out of the ordinary into the special. Use these fibers with, or instead of, wool and I promise that the results will be spectacular.

Silk is beautiful, takes dyes magnificently and is expensive. Rayon is a less expensive substitute for silk. Linen and cotton are natural fibers which wash and wear well. Mylar and Velour are synthetics which have characters all their own.

All shops do not carry all fibers. Call ahead to find out who stocks what you

want. Then try your new find on a small stitchery first so that you can get the feel of working with it.

This column was prepared with the help of Pam Lala - The Creative Needle, Anthony Searano - Robert Kidd Associates, Shay Pendray - Needle Arts, and Elaine Cohen and Myrna Edgar - The Stitching Post.

FIBER	BRAND	RESEMBLES	COLORS	SHEEN	USE*	COMMENTS
Silk	Elsa Williams	7 ply floss	110	med.	np & e	colorfast small pgs.
	Au Ver a sole	7 ply floss	200	soft	np & e	not colorfast
	Zwicky	6 ply floss	100	shiny	np & e	
	Glossila	floss	20	shiny	e	
	Marlett	4 ply floss	100	shiny	e	washable
Rayon	Ostara		55	soft	np	soft, thick sometimes pills
	Bella Donna	#3 pearl	75	shiny	np & e	very slippery
	El Molino	#3 pearl	5	shiny	np	
	Danish Flower		100	mat't	e	colorfast shrinkproof
	DMC Embroidery and cutwork thread		3		e	white & natural finer than floss
Cotton	no brand	#3 pearl	20	mat't	np & e	colorfast
	Kulort	#5 pearl	250	hard mat't	np & e	excellent colors
Mylar (plastic)	no brand	translucent	plastic	creative		2 different thicknesses
?????	Veloura	very thin velvet ribbon	20	velvet	np	blockable

*np is needlepoint; "e" is embroidery

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 - C. Ladder Back Side Chair with upholstered seat.....SALE from \$185
 - D. Ladder Back Arm Chair with upholstered seat.....SALE from \$199
 - E. Flip-top Mobile Server, 43x20x31 h., opens to 61".....SALE \$576
 - F. Breakfront China, 64x19x85 h., lighted interior, gridded & glass doors.....SALE \$1377
 - G. 40x62 Parquet-top Table, opens to 106" with two aproned leaves.....SALE \$661
 - H. Cane-back Side Chair with upholstered seat.....SALE from \$199
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