

MercyCare is taking community's pulse

By Lisa Gilmon
Staff writer

BRIDGING THE gap between high-tech hospital emergency rooms and visits to private physicians.

That's the intent of MercyCare's first Immediate Care Center, on Orchard Lake Road in Farmington Hills.

Backed by the Sisters of Mercy, the center is directly supported by St. Joseph Mercy Hospital in Pontiac and Mt. Carmel Mercy Hospital in Detroit — two of five MercyCare hospitals in southeast Michigan.

The chief of emergency services at both hospitals, Dr. Thomas Patanga, is the Immediate Care Center's director. The center is staffed by St. Joseph and Mt. Carmel emergency room physicians. They spend time rotating between the hospital emergency rooms and the center.

A REGISTERED nurse, a registered radiology technician, a lab technician and a receptionist are on duty at the center 14 hours a day along with one staff physician.

A person who needs an ambulance is not a candidate for care at the center, although if emergency service is unavailable, the center's staff can begin treatment, said Dr. John Walker, an on-duty physician. All services are aimed at area residents, he added.

Farmington Hills was chosen for the center because the two MercyCare hospitals sought communities where MercyCare services were untapped, said John Kerr, MercyCare executive vice president.

Sisters of Mercy's corporate headquarters are also in Farmington Hills. Choosing the same neighborhood for the first Immediate Care Center was a community-service move on the part of the Sisters of Mercy, Kerr added.

"WE DON'T want to usurp private physicians," Kerr stressed. The Immediate Care Center is designed to "augment (local physicians') services."

The center has the equipment and know-how necessary to start any medical treatment. A referred specialist takes over, or patients return to their regular physician after treatment at the center, Walker explained.

"If they (patients) don't have a regular doctor, we'll find one," Walker said. "Simple (bone) fractures, lacerations, colds and pneumonia" are what the center is equipped to treat, he added.

"What we're seeing (at the Immediate Care Center) is an embodiment of several (health care) trends," Kerr said.

business talk

A page of local business news

MERCYCARE'S SUBURBAN center is more in tune to an individual's needs than a hospital, in Kerr's view.

Long hours (8 a.m. to 10 p.m.) make the center more accessible to the public. The center is a place where a variety of immediate health services can be offered in a single location.

The center doesn't require what goes into a hospital emergency room. As a result, this form of health care is less expensive than hospital emergency care, Walker said.

Another factor that brings costs down at the center is that a major corporation is the sponsor. But the 14-hour work day does tend to increase costs, Kerr acknowledged.

"A conscious decision to build a fa-

cility that was not cold and sterile" is the reason behind the center's colonial facade, Kerr said.

CREATING A building that contrasted with the surrounding brick and glass structures on Orchard Lake Road was MercyCare's intention. A non-forded impression was most important, according to Kerr.

A grand opening was held Aug. 10. Prospective patients are residents within a three-to-five-mile radius.

The center includes two physician's offices, seven exam rooms, a central treatment room, a cast room, an x-ray room, a laboratory and a waiting room.

An average day, according to Kerr, brings 25 patients for a 30- to 40-minute treatment.



MercyCare medical assistant Kahty Ortwin operates a blood analyzer in the laboratory.

These clinics are for sick children

By Pamela Dundas
Special writer

The changing structure of the suburban family unit has brought about a change in medical care for suburban children.

Three evening-hour pediatric clinics have opened in Farmington, Birmingham and Troy. The doctors spearheading the effort hope to eventually provide evening-hour medical care for children, throughout metro Detroit, at a fraction of the cost of hospital emergency care.

When a parent comes home from work to discover his or her child is sick, and the pediatrician's office is closed, there are two main options:

• Try and treat the child at home, worry and lose sleep all night and hope the child improves.

• Take the child to a hospital emergency room, spend several hours watching accident victims being treated, often only to learn the child has a virus, which must simply run its course.

"WE ARE offering another, we think

more effective, alternative for today's parents," said Dr. Harvey Firestone of Pediatric Associates of Farmington.

We feel strongly that pediatric problems must be dealt with by pediatricians, and that our extended-hour practices can provide care for the child when today's parents need it available.

Dr. Firestone of Farmington, J. Patrick Quigley of Troy and Ruben Kurnetz of Birmingham have the cooperation of 30 tri-county pediatricians in offering evening office hours at three pediatric clinics.

Farmington-area doctors will work out of the Kids' Care Clinic, 29133 Orchard Lake Road, Birmingham pediatricians will rotate duty out of the Kurnetz/Jay Eastman practice on Pierce and Troy doctors will share duties at the Night Owl Pediatric Clinic in the William Beaumont medical building on Dequindre.

"Many pediatricians already have office hours. But in a two- or three-man practice, the drain on a doctor to have office hours several evenings a week can be tremendous.

"By having 10 or so doctors rotating

duty out of one central location, doctors and staff have the benefit of knowing patients are being well cared for without the physical drain of working so many days and nights," Quigley said.

THE GROWING number of American families where both parents work, plus the increasing number of single-parent families, has meant a growing number of parents who can't get sick children to a doctor during traditional office hours.

As a result, many children are not getting the medical care they should. They are also being taken to hospital emergency rooms, and receiving non-child-oriented care.

Emergency-room care is generally top-notch, Firestone is quick to point out. "But those doctors are trained to treat adults — heart attack victims, accident victims and such. They cannot be especially attuned to the illnesses of children."

Children with chest pains are rarely having heart attacks, but may be given EKGs. Urinary tract infections are rarely serious for adults, but often serious for children.

And medication good for grown adult bodies is not always good for growing children's bodies. A pediatric specialist would be more aware of a child's specific needs, Firestone said.

Also, an emergency room dealing with injuries and accidents can be much more scary than a doctor's office. The blood, emotional outbursts and frequent urgency of dealing with a patient in trauma can be even more traumatic for a child who has to watch it all while waiting for a doctor.

IN FACT, some pediatric "mini-clinics" have been added to ERs and found less effective because of the sights and sounds of the hospital, Firestone said.

One of the biggest reasons the doctors are cooperating on this new service is to help cut down on medical costs.

"The insurance companies are highly supportive of these extended-hour programs," Quigley said. "The cost of an office visit is approximately one-half that of an emergency room visit."

Even parents with full insurance coverage end up paying higher premi-

ums with hospital ER care. And doctors paying high malpractice premiums can no longer afford to advise parents over the phone. They need to see the patient to make the most accurate diagnosis possible, Quigley said.

Firestone, Kurnetz and Quigley, speaking for the doctors involved in the new service, say they will not take patients away from other doctors. Explanations of diagnosis and treatment will be sent to the family's doctor for follow-up.

"WHAT WE'D really like to see is every area pediatrician participating in the service," added Firestone. "Because then the child would have an even better chance of seeing his or her own doctor."

The clinics will not provide health care for adults, and will not perform general physical examinations.

But they will provide a place for parents to bring their sick children. They will be the place where more and more service professions providing services at times convenient for the user rather than the provider.

short takes

If you recently opened a shop, captured an award, earned a promotion or are planning a new venture or project — and there's a Farmington-area business angle — we'd like to hear from you so we can share your news item with other Farmington Observer readers. This column appears twice a month. Send items to Short takes, Farmington Observer, 33203 Grand River, Farmington 48024.

BRANCHING OUT

Craig Heath of Farmington Hills and James Eggl of Birmingham have opened their first Hector & Jimmy's restaurant in Milford Township, a division of their Michigan-based firm, Quest Ventures Inc. Heath, his wife, Pat, and their sons, Scott and Todd, recently moved from Fairfield County, Conn. Both are Detroit-area natives.

Eggl and his wife, Sheila, are natives of Ohio and Michigan, respectively.

NEW SUBSIDIARY

Automotive Products, an international group of companies manufacturing components for the worldwide automotive industry, has formed a new subsidiary, AP Electronics Inc., 13005 Commerce, Farmington Hills.

AP Electronics will manufacture high-capacity, solid-state switching devices for automotive, telecommunications, aerospace and domestic appliance industries. Product offerings will include custom-engineered electronic systems, such as engine fan speed controllers.

Diesel engine white smoke controllers are already produced and sold by the new company. AP Electronics will initially employ 20, 15 of whom will be hired locally. Employment is projected to reach 120 by 1988.

AP Electronics becomes a sister company to Automotive Products (USA) Inc., a Sterling Heights-based subsidiary of Automotive Products plc. Automotive Products (USA) Inc. designs, tests and manufactures pre-filled clutch hydraulics for American vehicles.

Automotive Products plc, headquartered in Leamington Spa, England, employs 9,000. It had 1984 sales of \$150 million. Products include brakes, clutches, steering and suspension joints, and automatic gearboxes. Plants are in the United Kingdom, the United States, France, Italy, Germany, Holland and Japan.

HE'S PROMOTED

Dickinson, Wright, Moon, Van Dusen & Freeman, a Detroit-based law firm, has selected Martin Rosenfeld of Farmington Hills as chief operating officer.

Rosenfeld will be responsible for the planning, implementation and management of financial, human resource, information processing, risk management, purchasing, office automation, property management, marketing support and telecommunications functions.

He had been vice president of his own company, M.J. Rosenfeld Associates, a management consultancy specializing in organizational design.

Previously, he served as executive vice president and chief executive officer of Warren Hospital Corp. — responsible for all corporate operations.

Dickinson, Wright, with 140 attorneys, is a national law firm with offices in Detroit, Bloomfield Hills, Lansing and Washington, D.C.

NAMED MANAGER

Von Polk has been named general manager and division vice president, management products at CBS/Fox Video, Farmington Hills.

Polk is in charge of the operation of the management products division, which originates, produces and markets video-based training products for the industrial, institutional and government markets.

CBS/Fox Video is a major worldwide producer and marketer of pre-recorded videocassettes.

"Von's promotion recognizes his contributions to the division's growth. Under Von's leadership, the management products division has grown into a significant business, with sales up 400 percent. The division has attracted leading industry talent in the areas of marketing, sales and program development and has attained a highly respected position in the industry as evidenced by the many major awards received," said Fred Feibauer, senior vice president for the commercial products division.

Polk was formerly CBS/Fox Video's division vice president for commercial products. He joined the firm in 1983.

Previously, he was with McGraw-Hill in Chicago. Prior to that, he was executive vice president of his own Chicago-based firm, Hadden Inc. He is the winner of eight "Addy" awards for commercial writing and production excellence.

NEW ACCOUNT

Anton's men's specialty stores has appointed Hermanoff & Associates Inc. to handle its public relations.

Anton's, which opened its first store in Mount Clemens 50 years ago, has nine stores in Southeastern Michigan. Headquarters are in Mount Clemens with other stores in Fairlane, Lakeside, Twelve Oaks, Briarwood, Oakland, Eastland, Northland and ReoCen.

Hermanoff & Associates Inc. is a full-service public relations firm with offices in Farmington Hills.

CHANGING HATS

Eric Wexler was named account executive at Hermanoff & Associates, a full-service public relations firm in Farmington Hills.

The Oak Park resident was previously with the Beeline Group Inc. as a copywriter.

A graduate of Michigan State University, Wexler earned a bachelor's degree in journalism, specializing in public relations.

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