

TLC delivery: Clinic offers prenatal care to needy



By Cherry Kahan
staff writer

Prenatal examinations "pick up complications of pregnancy and treat them before they become serious," said Dr. Roger Shomo, chairman of the obstetrics/gynecology department at Garden City Osteopathic Hospital.

These complications could be blood pressure elevation, gestational diabetes or placenta previa.

Obstetricians can also detect a multiple birth or a baby of small size, information of great importance when birth begins. The obstetricians at Garden City Osteopathic Hospital have found that pregnant women who come to their clinic for prenatal care have fewer birth complications than the general population. They also have a lower Cesarean rate than the general population.

"People who seek early prenatal care have a lower incidence in prenatal complication and infant mortality," stressed Dr. Diane Moch of Garden City, chief obstetrics/gynecology resident.

The hospital pays close attention to the infant mortality issue, which is currently troubling Detroit. It is doing its part to prevent needless infant deaths through prenatal care in its obstetrics/gynecology clinic. This care is offered to those without insurance, or whose income is too large to qualify for Medicaid, yet not enough to pay full hospital costs.

Payments are based on ability to pay. It is a flat fee, and these patients are not billed for extra lab work. Instead of being socked with a \$3,000 bill, the families pay a maximum of \$1,750. However, the average patient pays between \$800 and \$1,000 over a period of time worked out with the financial department.

The CLINIC opened for two reasons. First, the hospital wanted to offer its resident physicians training in office prenatal care. Second, it was a chance to give a needed community service at a time of heavy unemployment and reduced insurance.

The need for this service was mentioned at one time by Jackie Kearns of the Family Planning Association in Westland, according to Gary Ley, assistant hospital administrator. She asked what services there were at the hospital for pregnant teen-agers, who had no insurance.

"We didn't have a program here," said Ley. "We referred them to Wayne County General Hospital."

However, before long a program, which is now in its third year, was launched. Through it about 100 babies were delivered each year to mothers on the clinic program.

Patients have an initial visit and monthly visits to the clinic. As they go

down to the wire, they see a doctor every two weeks at eight months and every week at nine months. They also get a six-week checkup after delivery.

"About two-thirds of our (clinic) patients are from the Family Planning Center," said Ley. "We stress patient education."

He also said that the residents are under the supervision of certified obstetricians.

SHOMO DISCUSSED further the need for prenatal care, and why it is important.

"We look at the size of the baby," he said. "If it is smaller than it should be at that time, we stress nutrition. It is something that would be ignored if the mother were not seen by a doctor."

He said if the placenta were too small and not getting enough nutrition to the baby, it would be better to deliver the baby. Otherwise it might lose weight and decrease in size.

Other advantages of early detection are making the physician aware of placenta previa, a situation in which the placenta is ahead of the baby and blocks the opening of the uterus.

Dr. Diane Moch, chief resident in obstetrics at Garden City Hospital, and Dr. Roger Shomo, chairman of obstetrics/gynecology, are in their department.

Resale shop begins sale

All winter merchandise has been greatly reduced in The Second Edition, the resale shop operated by Farmington Community Center volunteers on the second floor of the center, 24705 Farmington Road.

As Mary Feecey, who heads up the shop and coordinates the workings of the volunteers mulling it, weeds out the winter clothes for sale, she looks forward to spring consignments and donations.

Used clothes in good condition are accepted on consignment, with a tax-deductible receipt if requested, or as an out-and-out donation. All proceeds that come from Second Edition sales are given for the operation of the center and the activities it offers to the community.

Shop hours are from 11:30 a.m. to 2 p.m. Monday through Friday and from 10 a.m. to noon Saturday.

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