

Colby financial campaign brings in \$1.9 million so far

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practicing at the clinic.”

Unger said that unlike many other hospitals in northwest Kansas, Citizens does not receive any financial support from the county budget, or any kind of property or sales tax support.

“We have been very fortunate to be able to expand our organization to meet medical needs in the 21st century that better enable us to serve our community,” Under said. “We have invested \$8.6 million in capital improvements, expansions and technology over the last five years alone.

“It has been 30 years since we have asked our community for financial assistance. Improving the health care services we offer and facilities to house these services and providers has been part of our master plan since 2008. And, now more than ever, it is time to expand.”

Unger said the \$1.9 million campaign is being spearheaded by a steering committee. Through personal giving, board contributions, trust contributions and employee giving, \$668,000 has already been raised in just two short months.

Among the many upgrades over the past five years, the clinic has moved from paper records to electronic medical records, a technology many facilities are struggling with.

The clinic is so ahead of the curve, Unger said, that they have been cited as a premiere location for electronic medical records by the Regional Extension Center. Clinic manager Scott Focke and nurse practitioner Jenny Niblock help train employees making the transition in other facilities. They are proud to say they are nearly 90 percent complete with the clinic’s records.

“We had almost 10,000 records to transition,” Focke said. “Having the electronic files allows us to be better interface with the hospital, and exchange orders and results faster and more reliably with other providers, too.”

Citizens Chief Executive Officer Kevan Trenkle said the hospital has invested a lot in electronic medical records. He said the initial investment was close to \$1 million and they’ve since spent almost \$2 million more in software and education.

He said Medicare provides financial incentives to make the electronic upgrade more palatable, and gives penalties to facilities that don’t upgrade.

“All of these things combined is a strong indication that we are continuing to grow,” said Unger. “Any business that stops growing becomes stagnant, and being stagnant is simply not a possibility in today’s health care arena.”



Kim Weigel must calibrate the Magnetic Resonance Imaging machine at the Citizens Medical Center every morning to ensure part of the complex device is communicating effectively. A fluid-filled bottle is used to give the high-powered magnet something tangible to scan. – Cristina Beringer/Colby Free Press

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Renovated radiography suite a draw for Hoxie

By Cynthia Haynes

The Oberlin Herald
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The Sheridan County Health Complex renovated its radiography suite this year, thanks to money from donors using the state Community Service tax credit program.

With new computers, radiography, picture archiving and communication systems, the staff can now capture all medical diagnostic imagery in digital files. Increased efficiency should translate to improved patient care, as radiologists in another office or another town can read the digital images directly transmitted by computer, speeding turnaround time.

The next project on deck is to renovate the kitchen and dietary area in Sheridan County Long Term Care, the 38-bed nursing center attached to the complex. The renewed facilities will allow the center to offer both more menu items and a more flexible serving schedule to residents.

The health complex had hoped to use tax credits for this also, said Steve Granzow, the hospital's chief operating officer. However, that did not work out because of last year's project. At the end of the year, however, there were some unused tax credits in Sheridan County and the hospital will get about \$161,000 from that for the project.

Meetings are going on now to finish plans and Granzow said he hopes work can start in June.

While Hoxie has no resident physician at present, the hospital, its clinics in Hoxie and Selden keep a full schedule through the work of its chief of staff, Dr. Brewster Kellogg of Colby, cooperating doctors from Bluestem Medical in Quinter, and consulting specialists from both Hays and Kearney, along with allied health professionals in Hoxie.

This year, the Hoxie clinic has expanded services and is open for walk-in treatment from 7 to 9 a.m. five days a week.

The Selden clinic, open on Wednesdays, sees patients either as walk-ins or by appointment in the morning.

Health care is provided by physician assistant Kelly Rezac, who joined the staff in November, and nurse practitioners Kaylee Watkins and Heather Mauk.

The hospital is still looking for doctors to live in Hoxie and Sheridan County, Mr. Granzow said.

Visiting consultants offer specialized care in cardiology, orthopedics and general surgery. They include:

- Dr. Ross Stadalman, a surgeon from Hays who comes every two weeks for surgical consults, endoscopy exams and minor surgery.
- Dr. Charles Schultz, a surgeon from Hays



The Sheridan County Health Complex used the state tax credit program to help finance a renovation of its radiography suite. The hospital's next project will be a renovation of the kitchen at its Long Term Care Center (above).



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- **Revenue 2011** – \$6.5 million.
- **Profit 2011** – \$324,000.
- **County money** – \$765,000.
- **Doctors** – cooperative agreement with Bluestem Medical in Quinter, Dr. Brewster Kellogg of Colby as chief of staff, two nurse practitioners, one physician assistant.
- **Administrator** – Steve Granzow.
- **Phone** – (785) 675-3281.

who comes every four weeks for surgical consults, endoscopy exams and minor surgery.

- Dr. Ahmed Kutty, a cardiologist (heart specialist) from Kearney.
- Dr. Michael Lasley, a surgeon from Hays, comes every two weeks for surgical consultation, endoscopy exams and minor surgery.

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