

Hospital ready to handle flu

By Sharon Corcoran

The Goodland Star-News

If "bird flu" becomes pandemic, hospitals can expect to be inundated with patients.

That possibility is something Goodland Regional Medical Center officials say they need to be prepared for.

The hospital is keeping up with recommendations from state and national health organizations, Administrator Jay Jolly told the board at its meeting Monday. He said the hospital is making plans to handle the flu, including to protect its staff, so they will be able to treat others.

The state health department is working on a plan, Jolly said, and the hospital wants to be prepared if and when the bird flu becomes human flu. As of this morning, Debbie Hickman, director of patient care services, said, no human-to-human cases had been reported in the world.

"We're kind of waiting," she said.

The concern about a pandemic (global outbreak) of avian (bird) flu is because of spread of the virus in others countries, says the Kansas Department of Health and Environment web site. So far, state health officials say, 116 people in Asia and Indonesia have caught the flu from chickens and other poultry, resulting in 60 deaths.

The virus has not yet mutated to result in easy person-to-person spread, but health officials expect it will or that another flu virus will mutate and cause pandemic influenza.

They won't be able to develop a specific vaccine until it's going around, Jolly said. What's scary about the bird flu, he said, is it will probably hit the younger, healthier people just as hard as the elderly. Usually with the flu, he said, it's the elderly and very young who are most at risk.

With bird flu, Jolly said, people

are contagious before they show symptoms, and it settles deeper in the lungs. It's bad news, he said.

"I recommend everyone learn what you can about it," he said, "and prepare to protect yourself."

A pandemic (global outbreak) can start when a new influenza virus subtype emerges, it infects humans, causing serious illness, and it spreads easily and sustainable among humans, says the World Health Organization's web site.

The bird flu virus is new for humans, the World Health officials say; it has infected more than 100 humans, killing more than half, and no one will have immunity if a virus like it becomes widespread in humans.

People become infected through direct contact with infected poultry, the officials say, or surfaces and objects contaminated by their feces. Most human cases have occurred in rural areas where many households keep small poultry flocks, which often enter homes and share outdoor areas where children play.

Because many households in Asia depend on poultry for income and food, many families sell or slaughter and consume birds when signs of illness appear in a flock.

Exposure is most likely during slaughter, defeathering, butchering and preparation for cooking, the health officials say; there is no evidence that properly cooked poultry or eggs can be a source of infection.

The most important warning signal of a pandemic, the World Health Organization officials say, is when clusters of patients with symptoms of the bird flu, closely related in time and place, are detected. This suggests human-to-human transmission is taking place.

More information can be found at www.kdheks.gov and at www.who.int/csr/disease/avian_influenza.

Senior's drug benefit subject of special panel

Congressman Jerry Moran will lead a panel discussion on the new Medicare prescription drug benefit at 7 p.m. on Wednesday, Nov. 2, during a special one-hour broadcast on Smoky Hills Public Television.

"Prescription drugs are a huge expense for Kansas seniors," Moran said. "As this new benefit is implemented, seniors need to know what their choices are so they can get the drug coverage that best meets their needs."

The Medicare prescription drug benefit will begin in January.

People eligible for Medicare will have access to new plans intended to help offset prescription drug costs.

Private health insurance companies are offering 40 different drug plans in Kansas, but seniors must enroll in a between Nov. 15 and May 15 to get benefits.

The broadcast will take a close-up look at the drug program, including its history, eligibility criteria, how to compare plans, the application procedure, and help and resources available.

Joining Moran for the discussion will be moderator Bryan Dennett, Smoky Hills Public Television producer and director; Bud Nolker, area director with the Social Security Administration; Nancy Schmidt, health insurance specialist with the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services; and Mary Lou Odle, a family and consumer sciences agent with K-State Research and Extension, who is a senior health insurance counselor.

Kids wear red bracelets for drug-free living



Grant Junior High kids are sporting red bracelets this week as part of the Red Ribbon Week. Natasha Hillman, 13, Heidi Lawson, 13, Ben Waugh, 14, and Ryan Irvin, 13, stopped in the hall to show off their new bracelets. The bracelets are part of the Red Ribbon Week awareness effort of the Goodland Elks Lodge. Zona Price, lodge secretary, said the bracelets were a new item this year and went to the junior high along with the red ribbons.

Jelly beans went to Central elementary, pencils went to North elementary and suckers were given out at West elementary she said. Red Ribbon Week is part of an annual national drug prevention campaign. The Red Ribbons are in memory of Enrique Camarena, a Drug Enforcement Administration agent murdered in Mexico in 1987. He is honored and the ribbons are to encourage kids to live a drug-free life.

Photo by Tom Betz/The Goodland Star-News

Two join Star-News advertising, design team

Advertising for customers of *The Goodland Star-News* has taken a step up with the addition of a graphic artist and a second advertising sales representative.

Erica Harlan, 24, of St. Francis, who has joined the staff as advertising make up person, brings a new perspective to the advertising design with her graphic arts education from Northwest Kansas Technical College.

Yvonne Ornelas, 39, of Goodland, is the new advertising representative. She attended a Kansas Press Association advertising training program last week in Mayetta, near Topeka. She joins Mona Carver working to help businesses increase sales and establish their market presence.

Harlan was born in Plainville and graduated from high school in 2000. She followed a friend to St. Francis in August 2001, where she went to work for Cheyenne Bowl.

"I saw the brochure for the graphic arts class, and just knew it was right for me," Harlan said. "I had wanted to go back to school and this was perfect for me."

She attended the college beginning in August 2004, and completed the graphic arts program in June.

"I was hoping to get to Kansas City to work for an advertising agency," Harlan said. "They kept saying they want to see three to five years experience."

"I wondered how I was going to get the experience, and the job at the



Harlan



Ornelas

newspaper is a good start. I like the newspaper, and want to grow to the *Kansas City Star* quality. It will take time.

"I don't have an artistic bone in my body, but with the computer, you tell it what to do and it does it."

She liked the photography part of the course the best, and took her model photos from her portfolio and won a Reserve Grand Champion ribbon at the Cheyenne County Fair.

"I like the photography," Harlan said, "and if the newspaper job had not come up, I was getting ready to open my own photography studio. "Shannon Garrett, the instructor, was willing to help me. She kept the classes very real, work-like, especially the deadline part."

Garrett is in her second year at the college, and had eight years experience in the graphic arts field.

Harlan commutes from St. Francis, where she lives with Kale Zimbelman, who works with her at the bowling alley.

"It is good for the newspaper and our advertising customers to have

someone with the graphic arts education that Harlan brings to our team," said Editor Tom Betz. "We are pleased the technical college has the graphic arts program, and glad to be a way for her to get experience in the newspaper industry."

Ornelas grew up in Denver and she graduated from Denver West High School in 1984.

Her father worked for St. Anthony's Hospital for 25 years and her mother worked at a bank.

After high school, Ornelas said, she attended Barnes Business College, majoring in accounting.

She worked and raised three children Melissa, 20, and Amanda, 19, who live in Denver, and Christopher, 16, who is in school in Oberlin.

She said the family was returning from Salina in Sept. 2001, just before the terrorist attacks, and found themselves stranded in Goodland.

"An insurance agent picked us up," she remembers, "and everybody was nice. Larry Townsend and Sheriff Doug Whitson helped get us bus tickets to Denver, and we came

back in a week to get the car and our dog."

Two years later, Ornelas said, she was tired of Denver and decided to move to Goodland. She worked for Golden West and the Goodland Churches Thrift Store. Her most recent job was working with Joyce Boehme at Jones Land Company.

"I learned a lot at the advertising training seminar," she said. "It was a good weekend of training, and it gave me a different perspective about working with my clients."

"Our job is to work with the businesses to promote their products and help them succeed."

She enjoys reading and writing, and is anticipating her first grandchild to be born soon to Amanda in Denver.

"We feel she will help our business customers increase sales and be successful," Betz said. "That is the key, because with the combination of her sales ability and fresh approach, we can provide the best advertising product for our customers."

student of the week



Name: Matt Rohr
Parents: Tom and Coleen Rohr

Grade: Senior

Age: 18

We've nominated this student because: Matt has done well in both Calculus and Advanced Computer Applications. Matt accepts the challenge of learning something new and has a serious approach to academics. He is willing to apply himself and work at it to succeed. Matt Rohr is an excellent role model for the younger students.

Student Comment: I will never forget the fun times I had

with my friends. I loved being involved at Goodland High School in many organizations

Activities involved in at school: FCCLA, band, jazz band, Student Council, National Honor Society and Science Olympiad.

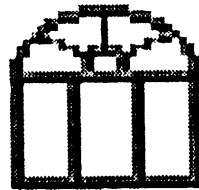
My choice of movies, books, and games: My favorite movie is "We Were Soldiers". I listen to mostly modern rock. I have many favorite bands. My favorite book is "Of Mice and Men". My favorite game is Halo 2 on XBOX.

After I leave Goodland High School I intend to: go to a Regents School in Kansas. My major is undecided.

And 10 years from now, I think I'll be: working at a steady job and possibly starting a family.

Favorite Quote: "Never let the future disturb you. You will meet it, if you have to, with the same weapons of reason which today arm you against the present." Marcus Aurelius Antonius

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