



Managing Chronic Disease

Reducing Side Effects, Improving Health...

Eisner Pediatric & Family Medical Center is a private, nonprofit health center dedicated to providing high-quality medical and dental care, children's day care and early intervention programs that are affordable for all families regardless of income level.

Patients who suffer from a chronic disease such as asthma, diabetes or hypertension often feel not only sick, but helpless.

Whether through lack of knowledge, language barriers or limited access to needed care, they don't know how to manage their condition to improve overall well-being.

At Eisner Pediatric & Family Medical Center, we believe that all patients can benefit by learning about the role they play in managing their own health. As a result, our services for patients with chronic illnesses include

not only high-quality medical attention, but a range of educational and support services, too. "We use a preventive approach," says the Center's patient education coordinator, Yvette West, RN. "What that means is that we wrap education, counseling, nutrition services and more around our clinical services. We educate patients about their disease and how they can improve their health regimen to prevent deterioration of their health or an increase in side effects."

For example, a female patient with symptoms of

type-II diabetes will see one of the Center's physicians for a full diagnosis and a treatment plan. We will also provide education so that she under-

stands what caused her condition, what she should anticipate with regard to both short- and long-term health effects,

Continued on page 7

One patient's story

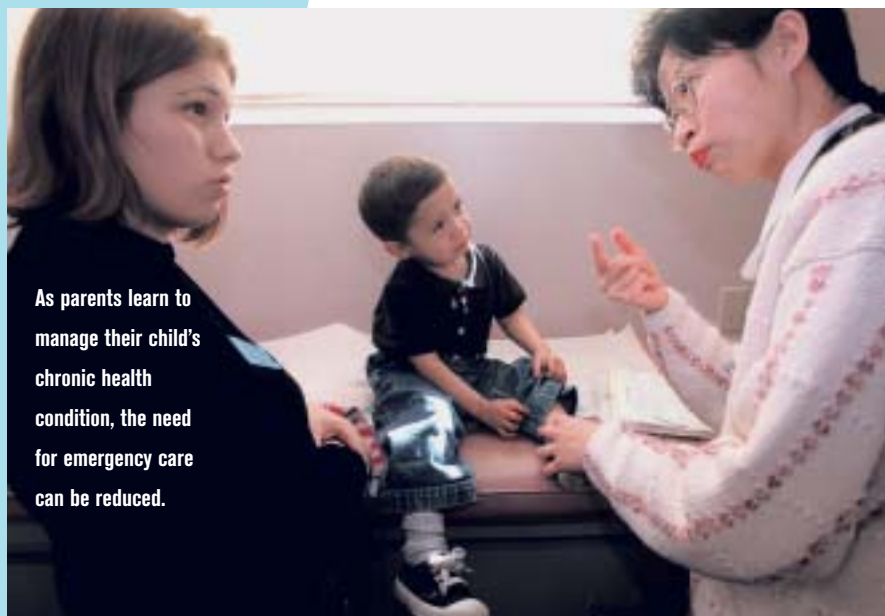
Six months ago, 40-year-old Lorna*, an uninsured single mother of two teenage boys and a young daughter, discovered that she had diabetes. Having watched her own father struggle with complications and ultimately die of the disease, she said the diagnosis "felt fatal."

At the time, Lorna did not appear to have physical problems, yet her blood sugar count, at 300, was twice the level considered normal for healthy individuals. In addition to providing medical care, Lorna's physician at the Center encouraged her to take advantage of our patient education program, in order to help her and her family cope with her newly diagnosed health condition.

As a result of her participation, Lorna has learned how to manage her disease—and no longer feels that her diagnosis is a death sentence. She has begun to exercise by walking and going to the gym. She follows a new diet, recommended by our staff, and has begun to reduce her weight to a healthier level. "I feel better," she says today. "I've learned how to correct my eating, my confidence has increased, and I am not scared anymore."

Lorna also now knows how important it is to educate her children about diabetes risk factors and to encourage improvements in their lifestyle habits. As a result, she is not only improving her own well-being, but paving the way to a healthier future for her entire family.

*Name and some details changed to protect privacy.



As parents learn to manage their child's chronic health condition, the need for emergency care can be reduced.

California Budget's Impact



“In efforts to reduce state spending, there are unprecedented proposals to reduce healthcare reimbursements and benefits, and to make it harder for children and families to qualify for certain assistance.”

It's no secret that Sacramento is home to much uncertainty. Frankly, it's still difficult to tell how the many proposed budget cuts will affect Eisner Pediatric & Family Medical Center—and other nonprofit healthcare providers serving low-income patients here in Los Angeles.

In efforts to reduce state spending, there are unprecedented proposals to reduce healthcare reimbursements and benefits, and to make it harder for children and families to qualify for certain assistance. Other programs may be cut altogether. In fact, the financial challenges are so great that even legislators who can generally be counted on to stand behind affordable healthcare initiatives are now being pressured to compromise their views. This presents a great obstacle in providing quality and affordable care for our clients who have few if any other resources for care.

Of course, drastic changes may also be forthcoming at the

federal level. Our incumbent president and his opponent have signified their very different approaches to the healthcare crisis in our nation. Thus, the results of this November's election could have a significant impact on the funding landscape. Whether that impact will be positive or negative remains to be seen.

While such uncertainty swirls around us, the Center nonetheless remains devoted—as we have since our founding in 1920—to meeting the health needs of our community. Our commitment to

servicing the children and families of Los Angeles has not, and will not, waiver. Because we know there are literally thousands of children and families who need our help each year.

Perhaps the enormity of the uncertainty has you feeling helpless right now. What, after all, can one person do in the face of the juggernaut of California's budget crisis? Actually, there is something...I encourage you to remain updated about events in Sacramento and Washington, D.C., and I urge you to continue

to support the efforts of Eisner Pediatric & Family Medical Center. With your help, we can continue to bring high-quality care to children and families in our community—and that's what we believe is important.

Carl E. Coan
President & CEO





The Center's Comprehensive

Oral Health *Services*

At the age of 23, José had never seen a dentist. But he knew he needed help. In fact, when José first came to see the Center's dental director, Daniel Romo, DDS, his pain was so severe he could no longer bear to brush his teeth. He also found it impossible to chew food on one side of his mouth.

To determine the source of José's pain, Dr. Romo conducted a thorough oral-health exam. The exam revealed José had severe periodontal disease. José needed immediate treatment to prevent further deterioration of his condition—up to and including the loss of his teeth.

Thanks to L.A. Care Health Plan CHIF III funding, Eisner Pediatric & Family Medical Center is able to help patients like José, right here in our own dental clinic. Our periodontal program provides the services of a periodontist, as well as related health education to help ensure that patients keep their mouths healthy.

The program's periodontist, Mary Fitzgerald, DDS, cares for patients two days a week at the Center, with services including professional consultation as well as both surgical and non-surgical treatment, as



appropriate to the severity of the patient's condition. "There's a great need for periodontal services among the Center's service population," says Dr. Fitzgerald. "Many individuals who come to the dental clinic have gum disease . . . and most are unaware of its effect on their oral health and overall well-being."

The periodontal program's education component helps patients gain a greater understanding of gum disease and how to prevent it. Part of the instruction includes hands-on practice of oral hygiene techniques that help keep the gums and mouth healthy. "Our two-pronged approach, including intervention and education, has been extremely successful to date," says Dr. Romo. "We've seen a marked improvement among patients who participate in oral-health education here, and these individuals really

Continued on page 8



"Our two-pronged approach, including intervention and education, has been extremely successful to date."

For more than a decade, Eisner Pediatric & Family Medical Center has served as a vital training ground for future practitioners in the field of mental health. And our postgraduate interns in turn provide important direct services to our patients, making our internship program a crucial element in our overall programs of care.

Today, the Center trains five interns at any one time—three in psychology and two in the field of social work. As they provide family counseling, group therapy and parent education, among other services, their work is closely supervised

by our professional mental health staff. The hands-on experience they obtain helps ensure a qualified cadre of future practitioners with experience serving low-income, inner-city families. At the same time, their presence on our campus allows us to serve more patients than would otherwise be possible—in an area where the need is great.

“We have a solid reputation,” says Stephanie Taylor-Dinwiddie, PhD, director of the Center’s Strong Families/Healthy Children Initiative, “and, as a result, we’ve been able to establish

relationships with well-respected local colleges and universities.” Current interns are drawn from the USC Graduate School of Social Work and from Alliant International University, which has a strong doctoral-level program in psychology.

Notes Dr. Taylor-Dinwiddie, “The presence of these interns has really helped us reach out to our community in new ways.” For example, two of this year’s interns created and implemented a series of week-end support groups for teenage girls, while another provided bilingual parenting education classes for local families.

The old adage that “to teach, one must know” also holds true in our internship program. “Not only do our students get real-world experience,” says Dr. Taylor-Dinwiddie, “but our whole program benefits, as our staff must remain updated in their fields to provide supervision. At the same time,” she adds, “the enthusiasm and fresh ideas of our interns keep us all motivated, and ensure continued innovation. It’s truly a mutually beneficial relationship.”

Clinical psychologist Lila Goldsman, Ph.D. (right) supervises mental health interns at the Center, as they learn to work with inner-city children and families. Shown here in a play therapy area (left to right) are Marmar Zahari and Robyn Mandelbert.



Empowering Patients *through* Education



EISNER PEDIATRIC & FAMILY MEDICAL CENTER

Eisner Pediatric & Family Medical Center's comprehensive care includes a strong educational component—designed to build awareness of health-related issues among children and adults. Included in our array of programming is education related to reproductive health. By building patients' knowledge and increasing their self-esteem, we help women and girls to make informed choices, avoid unwanted pregnancy, prevent sexually transmitted disease and ensure optimal health during pregnancy.



Nurse practitioner Vivian Dorsey (left) provides vital education services related to reproductive health at the Center and in the community.

In our newly renovated Medical and Dental Services Pavilion, we have included an area specifically designated for the provision of patient education services. Here, in an attractive and private setting, individual and group education sessions are conducted. After each session, patients can ask questions and feel comfortable voicing concerns about their most intimate health-related issues. Patients also receive a variety of written information and a phone number that they can call to talk to one of our staff, should any other questions arise. We find that patients often share this information with friends, thus further widening the circle of those reached.

In addition to services provided at the Center itself, we also reach out to individuals in the community through conducting informational and educational sessions on reproductive health topics—and how to access needed clinical services. An important part of this outreach is conducted through the Center's school-based clinic at nearby Metro High School. Vivian Dorsey, N.P., who runs the clinic, visits the school once every week to address health needs and provide health-education services.

"Through my work at the Center, both on site and in the community," says Dorsey, "I regularly meet with individuals who lack the information they need to make informed decision about their reproductive health.

"The education services we provide," she adds, "are vital. We are helping to ensure that our patients have the knowledge they need to make responsible choices and to practice positive health behaviors for life."

"We are helping to ensure that our patients have the knowledge they need to make responsible choices and to practice positive health behaviors for life."

Leadership Profile

Christina Siegel

Board Member

Christina A. Siegel's dedication to Eisner Pediatric & Family Medical Center is apparent to everyone who knows her. Not only have Christina and her husband, Mark, personally given generously to the organiza-



tion, but they also included us in their matrimonial plans: For their June 2003 wedding, the couple asked that guests make donations to the Center in lieu of gifts.

But Christina's fundraising efforts have not stopped there. As co-chair of our Capstone Council, she is also helping us complete the final phase of the Center's capital campaign. On the Center's board for three years, Christina has a legal background that is of significant benefit to the organization. "I'm grateful I can use my professional training to give back to the community," says Christina, who received her law degree from Harvard Law School in 1993, following an undergraduate degree from Reed College in 1990. After law school, she began a career in health-care law, specializing in both regulatory compliance and mergers/acquisitions. Ultimately, Christina became a partner at McDermott, Will & Emery. Last year, she decided to leave full-time work to devote more time to her husband and her community.

Christina, whose father was a physician, recognizes the high quality of care provided at the Center, and is enthusiastic about her involvement. "The staff is highly motivated," she says, "and provides exceptional services to many children and families. Health care is unfortunately a scarce resource, but at the Center, everyone works together to serve people in need."

Capital Campaign Donors

Eisner Pediatric & Family Medical Center is extremely grateful to the foundations, corporations and individuals who have so generously contributed or pledged support to our capital campaign.

Guardian Angel: \$2,500,000

The Eisner Foundation

Angel: \$500,000-\$999,999

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The California Endowment
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The Cheryl Trinidad
& Douglas Stewart Family

The Ralph M. Parsons Foundation Provides Critical Access to Care

Eisner Pediatric & Family Medical Center recently acknowledged a \$300,000 grant from the Ralph M. Parsons Foundation by naming our dental clinic in recognition of the foundation's commitment. The funds were designated toward the Center's capital expansion and enhancement project, which is now nearing completion.

The project will allow us to provide additional health-care services to the medically indigent residents of central and South Los Angeles. In the area of dental health, for example, we will be able to achieve a 77-percent increase in dental visits over pre-construction levels. Overall, we expect to expand to serve as many as 84,000 patients this year, of whom children under the age of 12 represent the largest sector.

Notes Wendy G. Hoppe, executive director of the foundation, "Our grant towards Eisner Pediatric & Family Medical Center's capital campaign represents an extraordinary opportunity

for The Ralph M. Parsons Foundation to make an investment in our community. The Center is a well-run agency," she adds, "that meets the needs of families in a comprehensive way."

The Ralph M. Parsons Foundation was established in 1963 with the goal of supporting and facilitating the work of the region's best nonprofit organizations. The foundation recognizes that many of those in need today will go on to shape the future of Southern California, to define, redefine and help it set and achieve new goals. In addition to health, the foundation focuses its giving in the areas of social impact, civic and cultural programs, and higher education.

The foundation's grant represents a significant contribution to our growth, and we are proud to partner with them to provide excellent care for children and families in Los Angeles.

Reducing Side Effects, Improving Health...

continued from page 1

and how to identify complications. Our staff will also help the patient learn relevant self-care techniques that can help prevent negative outcomes. Of course, we also develop an appropriate schedule for follow-up physician visits, and—as needed—our staff coordinate referrals to services offered by other providers.

Throughout, treatment at the Center involves more than simply filling out a prescription: “For patients with chronic disease,” notes West, “long-term health improvement generally requires some lifestyle modifications. With guidance from our staff, patients learn about triggers that may exacerbate their condition, and how to avoid them. They also receive help and support in changing eating habits, creating and maintaining an exercise regimen and more, as appropriate to their condition.”

Additionally, the Center recognizes the importance of a support network for patients with chronic disease. Friends and family can help ensure that lifestyle recommendations are being implemented, by providing encouragement to the patient along the way. Family involvement can be particularly important when the patient is a child, of course. Children with asthma attend educational classes at the Center with their parents, for example, so that the



whole family understands how to reduce asthma triggers in the home and prevent life-threatening attacks.

“The outcomes of our approach have been very positive to date,” notes our medical director of pediatrics, Luis Lopez, MD. The benefit is measured not only in human terms, as patients improve their overall well-being; in addition, the cost of their care is reduced over time, with benefits to our entire community.

“Families who learn how to better manage their condition generally require fewer physician visits and fewer trips for costly emergency room care,” explains Dr. Lopez.

In the future, in partnership with Kaiser Permanente, the Center will further expand its services: Patients who have themselves participated in education to manage their own conditions will now be trained to teach and mentor other patients with simi-

Chronic disease— a look at the statistics

- ▶ An estimated 80 percent of the Center’s pediatric patients are at risk for developing diabetes.
- ▶ Every month, the Center identifies between 20 and 40 patients with previously undiagnosed type-II diabetes.
- ▶ Each year, approximately 1,100 patient visits at the Center are related to hypertension, and more than 2,000 are related to asthma.

lar health problems. Additionally, with member clinics of the Community Clinic Association of Los Angeles County, the Center continues to assess ways to enhance our programs still further.

Collaboration with other service providers greatly improves our capacity to address the needs of our patients with chronic disease, and to help these patients achieve healthier futures.



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We would like to acknowledge the following organizations for their recent and continuing support.

Foundation and corporate grants and awards received July 1, 2003, through March 23, 2004.

Blue Shield Foundation of California*
California Pizza Kitchen Foundation
California Community Foundation
Ella Fitzgerald Charitable Foundation
For All Kids Foundation
K & R Foundation
The Rite Aid Foundation

*In-kind support

We hope you like
our newsletter's new look.
Thanks to new technology,
we are now able to produce
our publication in a
four-color format at no
additional cost.

The Center's Comprehensive Oral Health Services

continued from page 3

understand the steps they need to take to prevent recurrence of the disease."

Prior to implementation of our periodontal program, the Center provided referrals for periodontal services

at other locations, but patients found it difficult to follow through as a result of cost, transportation barriers, or because other services were already full. As a result, many patients remained with untreated disease, increasing the chances of health complications. Left untreated, periodontal disease can, for instance, dramatically reduce the body's ability to process insulin, leading to heightened risk for diabetes. It has also been linked to an increased risk for heart disease.

Since the Center's periodontal program began in mid-2003, more than 1,100 patients have already been screened for the disease and almost 600 have been diagnosed with a periodontal condition requiring treatment, education or both.



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