



Centers of Excellence Award Winner

William Newton Hospital Emphasizes Healthier Foods/Beverages

Since joining the *Healthy Kansas Hospitals* initiative in 2016, William Newton Hospital in Winfield has been working to improve the food and beverage choices available to all shifts of employees, adopting a Healthy Foods and Beverages Policy regarding merchandise in the vending machine and options available in the cafeteria and snack bar. Despite a few initial hiccups that indicated a need to improve communication, William Newton staff members now are embracing healthier options and choosing to try new foods and modified recipes.

In recognition of the hospital's work to reduce sugary beverages, offer more fresh fruits and vegetables, and provide lower sodium and sugar snack options, the Kansas Hospital Association presented one of two 2018 *Healthy Kansas Hospitals* Centers of Excellence Awards to William Newton Hospital.

"We are honored to be recognized for our efforts to support employee wellness," said Ben Quinton, Chief Executive Officer. "We're about providing healthy options, not about forcing employees to go without salt and sugar. It's inspiring to see employees making healthy choices. It's exciting to see employees, when they take a break, go for a walk together instead of going out for a cigarette. It's encouraging," he said.

"Receiving this award validates the work the Wellness Committee has been doing," said Ruth Bumgarner, Healthways Coordinator. The committee crafted the Healthy Foods and Beverages Policy focusing on availability of free drinking water, limited access to carbonated beverages, elimination of the sale of carbonated energy drinks, enhanced use of fresh fruits and vegetables in the cafeteria and increased access to lower sodium, lower sugar grab-and-go snack options in the vending machine, the cafeteria and catered meetings. "Implementing the policy during the past two years, we've had lots of ups and downs," she noted. "We've seen positive changes, and we've tried things that didn't work." The Wellness Committee chair said, "It's hard work, but it's work worth doing."

Prior to the policy change, employees could enjoy free doughnuts on the first Monday of the month and access free soda in the cafeteria daily. Removing pop from the cafeteria surprised many staff members and created discontent. "Some employees thought people were making decisions for them," explains Taylor Stonerock, Business Office Director and a member of the Wellness Committee.



Kansas Hospital Association Senior Vice President of Healthcare Strategy and Policy Karen Braman, holding the check on the left, presented a *Healthy Kansas Hospitals* Centers of Excellence Award and check to William Newton Hospital representatives on July 11. Hospital staff receiving the award included, from left, Randy Mayo, administrative director of Technical & Support Services; Tina Wheeler, chief nursing officer; Ben Quinton, CEO; Karen Adamson, administrative director of Ancillary Services; Tom Herlocker, WNH trustee; Joan Cales, WNH trustee; Cathy McClurg, director of Human Resources; Ruth Bumgarner, Healthways Coordinator; Taylor Stonerock, Business Office director; Cheryl Brock, director of Volunteer Services; Whitney Hasselbring, staff accountant and Sarah Bryant, director of Marketing & Business Development.

Wellness Committee members not pictured include Veronica Ray, administrative assistant/Patient Account representative; Renee Vargas, assistant director of Health Information Management; Patrick Fromm, director of Dietary; Kylie Stamper, Marketing coordinator; Karla Smith, director of Occupational and Employee Health Services; Amy Soto, director of Materials Management; and Tiffany Shinneman, executive assistant.

Since making the initial changes, the hospital has been very proactive and has better, more timely communications. As a result, "everyone has been more receptive to changes," Stonerock said. "We set up focus groups on different shifts, involving people with different job duties, to learn about what they need, what they have access to. I've never worked a night shift, so I don't know what they need and what resources they have. We're doing the best we can for everyone," she explained.

Journey to Improving Health

William Newton began its journey to improving the health of employees as a participant in the Work Well Kansas program, created by a coalition of academic and business groups to provide guidance on how best to facilitate changes within an organization, Stonerock explained. The program's strategy is to "tackle one thing at a time. We had just finished a push on becoming a tobacco-free campus and changing tobacco use by patients as well as employees," she said. The employee focus groups showed the majority wanted to focus on healthier foods and beverages, which led to joining the *Healthy Kansas Hospitals* program.

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Choices Lead to Better Health

However, in addition to more and better food and beverages choices, William Newton has programs and events to encourage employees to live healthy, active lifestyles. For example, hospital employees receive a corporate discount with Winfield Recreation Center, and the hospital pays a portion of a year's membership, according to Stonerock. Team Well offers scholarships for employees who want to participate in an event, such as a 5K or marathon, or enroll in a fitness class. They are reimbursed the registration fee upon proof of completion, she explained.

Improving Vending Machine Options

Modifying the merchandise available in the vending machine would impact employees on all shifts and respond to focus group members' desires for healthier options. The vendor provided information on the best-selling items in the machine, and offered suggestions on lower sodium and sugar products that could be added. Before the modifications, the machine had two rows each of Snicker bars and Doritos. Duplication was eliminated and individual tuna salad packets, jerky and granola bars were added. While the soda fountain machine in the cafeteria was removed when the policy was adopted, pop still is available in the vending machine and snack bar.

"The reception was positive," Bumgarner said. "Sales have remained steady, and the new healthier items are selling." The hospital promoted the new selections to employees, and "we really tried to celebrate the change as it occurred. I think that helped quite a bit," she added.

The Wellness Committee has continued to work with the vending machine vendor to increase the selection of healthier options. Last year, green tabs were added to the machine to make it easy for employees and visitors to identify healthier choices that meet nutritional standards on a per serving basis, Stonerock explained.

Cafeteria Food/Beverages Evolve

Changes also have been made to offer healthier options in the cafeteria which serves lunch and dinner. A higher percentage of the food budget is spent on fresh fruits and vegetables, and Bumgarner reports that the reaction is positive. About 70 percent of the food budget goes to fresh produce because "the quality is better," said Food Service Director Patrick Fromm. Canned foods seldom are used.

Fromm has "revamped the salad bar" which previously served an iceberg lettuce blend, that had "no nutritional value." Fromm added romaine lettuce, spinach, many different vegetables, nuts, beans, berries and other fresh fruits. "We try to keep seasonal fruits on the salad bar," he said. "During the cold months, we purchase a pre-made fruit salad in juice, instead of sugary syrup," he added. According to Bumgarner, the changes are a hit. "We have the best salad bar in town every day," she said proudly.



Fromm avoids serving sugary foods and items high in fats. "In the cafeteria, we try to limit fried items to two per week on the hot menu. We didn't totally eliminate frying, but we have decreased the fat intake," he explained. For example, the chicken strips are fried, but Fromm uses "a smart oil." A smaller amount of the fat is absorbed by the food in the fryer, and flavors from other foods fried in the same oil are not transmitted.

"I always buy the highest grade food – premium grade," Fromm noted. His supplier, Ben E. Keith Company, enables Fromm to know "where it was picked, when it picked and by whom. During the romaine lettuce e. coli outbreak, we continued to place it on the salad bar because it is higher grade romaine and we knew where it was grown," he said.

Some regulars come in every day. "They are our foodies," he explains. "They eat at lots of different places in town, and they tell me the quality of food they buy here at the hospital is way ahead of any other place they eat," he said with pride.

People use the suggestion box in the cafeteria, and when Fromm brings in new items, he talks to diners and asks if it tastes good or not. "I stand out in the cafeteria and talk to employees. I have an open door policy. I'm all about new ideas and new things," Fromm said. "If we don't stay with trends, we're going to be left behind," he added.

Fromm also oversees meals for patients who may choose a heart healthy, diabetic or regular meal. "Patients can eat healthy even if they are not on a special diet," he said.

WHAT'S ON THE MENU?

William Newton Food Service Director Patrick Fromm reports that some of the best-selling items are Mexican food. The taco salad is made with a 10-inch tortilla shell filled with 3-ounces of meat, beans, toppings, salsa, sour cream and cheese. The tostada is built on an 8-inch tortilla. Another popular entrée is the carnita, made with chicken (which has lower sodium and fat than beef), roasted peppers and onions. Enchiladas also are popular, and all the entrees come with a cilantro-lime rice.

Employees also really like Chinese/Asian cuisine. "Everyone likes chicken fried rice," he said. Although not offered as frequently, sweet and sour chicken is another popular item.

"We get lots of requests for our cheeseburger with sautéed peppers and onions," he shared. Employees also like "soup and salad day, even on hot days!" Diners enjoy the soup of the day and an 8-ounce salad. Other popular items are the chicken Caesar wrap made with Italian-seasoned chicken and the Southwest chicken wrap.

Dessert options are available. "We make protein packs which have cheeses and salamis. We also make a yogurt parfait with berries as well as traditional homemade desserts. Diners have options to go good or bad," he noted.

Fromm identifies three options for healthier eating. "Some people are real sticklers. They eat lots of greens and avoid fatty foods and sugar all the time. Others take a more moderate approach, cheating every now and then. The 'hit-or-miss' person eats healthy two or three days a week, and doesn't worry about the other days," he said. "It's hard in my position," he added. "I try to sample everything that goes out of the kitchen. I see food as art. It needs to look good and taste good. It's just like a restaurant – 95 percent of food is how it looks. People are not going to come back if it tastes bad."

Promoting Healthy Eating

For the past two years, in February during Heart Health Month, the hospital has hosted a “taste-and-go” for employees and the community with demonstrations of how to prepare several heart-healthy dishes and then they are sampled. Stonerock reports a “huge turn-out” each year.

Fromm, the Food Service Director, has created a few YouTube videos demonstrating how to prepare healthy dishes, such as Cilantro-Lime Black Bean Salad. Donning a red chef coat, Fromm provides step-by-step instructions and demonstrates techniques in the short, fast-paced video. Check it out at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tAWJnNT8Qak>.



At least two shifts of employees have participated in the “Halls and Oats” walking oatmeal bar in which employees stroll through the halls to visit various stations – dried fruits, berries and nuts – with a final stop in the cafeteria for a ladle of oatmeal, all while enjoying the music of Hall and Oates and appropriately-themed decorations. “This promotes the importance of starting the day with a good, heart-healthy breakfast,” Bumgarner explained.



“Our employees love the walking oatmeal bar,” said Sarah Bryant, Director of Marketing and Business Development and a member of the Wellness Committee. “Because it’s an early morning event, our night shift nurses can participate. Staff members enjoy walking around the hospital and visiting,” she added.

Based on input from focus groups with second and third shift employees, the Wellness Committee is looking for ways to make healthy food and snacks available around-the-clock to fill the gap when the cafeteria and snack bar in the Gift Shop are not open and that will provide healthier alternatives to the vending machine. One idea being tested is a “grab-and-go” mini-market to make easy-to-eat snacks, such as cheese/meat trays as well as sandwiches, salads and fruit available. The challenge is to make the idea sustainable, and identify a secure location for the refrigerator. The hospital’s vending machine contractor has a “micro-market” program that provides sandwiches, salads and healthier snacks. Both options are being explored.

William Newton publishes a bimonthly newsletter for hospital employees, board and Foundation board members. It includes healthy recipes and tips on eating healthier. The newsletter is sent to employees via email, and paper copies also are made available.

CILANTRO-LIME BLACK BEAN SALAD

½ bunch cilantro (tough stems discarded; 1 cup packed)

Finely grated zest and juice of 2 limes (2 teaspoons zest and 2 tablespoons juice)

2 tablespoons white wine vinegar

3 tablespoons olive oil

½ teaspoon salt, or more to taste

1 teaspoon sugar

3 cups cooked black beans (rinsed and drained, if using no-salt canned)

2 or 3 ribs celery, cut into ¼ to ½ inch dice (1 cup)

3 large scallions, white and green parts finely chopped (1/2 cup)

Combine the cilantro, lime zest and juice, vinegar, oil, salt and sugar in a blender; process to form a pureed dressing.

Combine the beans, celery, and scallions in a large bowl; add the dressing and mix well. Let sit for 15 minutes, then stir again and taste; add salt as needed. Serve, or cover with plastic wrap and refrigerate for up to 12 hours. Mix well before serving.



Fromm and other Wellness Committee members have worked with internal groups planning employee events involving food and beverages. Committees are encouraged to serve smaller portion sizes, add more fruits and vegetables to the menu, and eliminate sugary beverages.

Dining with Diabetes

Recognizing the tremendous growth of diabetes in the populations it serves, William Newton partners with K-State Research and Extension (KSRE) in Winfield to present a four-week Dining with Diabetes educational series. The curriculum was developed by the University of West Virginia and shared with universities nationwide. Participants self-refer into the Dining with Diabetes program to learn more about the disease and how to prepare healthy meals for their families.

“While the focus of the course is on diet and food, participants also learn about their disease,” said Kathy Strom, RN, B.S., CDE, Diabetes Educator. A pre-class survey is used to assess the level of understanding students have regarding diabetes, diet guidelines and general food facts.

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Diabetes Educator Kathy Strom teaches participants in the Dining with Diabetes educational series about the differences in Type 1 and Type 2 diabetes.

Choices Lead to Better Health

“In the first session, we talk about diabetes in general – what it is, how it’s treated, and how medications, diet and activity work together,” the certified diabetes educator explained.

The second session focuses on carbohydrates and reading food labels.

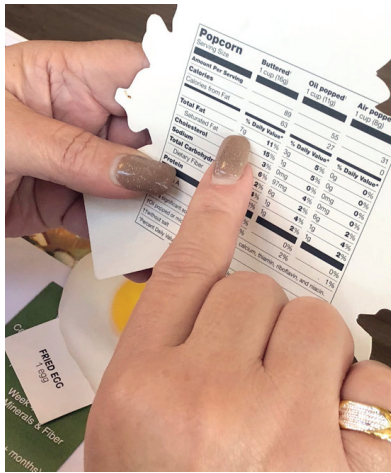
“Although not person-specific, the class talks about the level of carbohydrates appropriate for most diabetics,” Strom said. Participants may schedule one-on-one consultations with the registered dietitian who attends all the sessions.

The third week focuses on fats. “What are good fats and bad fats? We show them how to use fats in meals appropriately. We also talk about heart disease and the major risk factors for diabetics,” Strom explained. The final session focuses on protein and vitamins/minerals.

Each two-hour session includes a demonstration on how to prepare a meal that is appropriate for diabetics, Strom said. “Preparing the meal provides the opportunity to educate about portion sizes, the amount of carbohydrates in various foods and how to get the right balance of nutrients.”

The classes include homework, too. Each attendee is expected to set a SMART goal for him/herself to focus on during the upcoming week. The goal must be specific, measurable, achievable, relevant and timely. “The following week, everyone talks about how they did on their goal. Their sharing allows them to encourage each other,” Strom said.

From 12 to 20 people have participated in each of the four educational series offered to date. The total cost is \$25 for the four classes and includes the meal at each session, plus a three-ring notebook with recipes and information presented during the course.



“It’s fun to watch the group. The first week, they don’t know each other. By the third and fourth weeks, they are a close-knit group,” Strom said. “Having this disease, and sharing and learning together create a real bond,” she added.

“We’ve seen good results,” she said. “Some of the participants are testing blood sugars more often and seeing how different foods affect their numbers. Others have increased their activity and seen how it affects blood sugar. Several attendees also are in cardiac rehab, and the diabetes series ties very closely to what we teach them in rehab,” she explained. She especially enjoys it when a participant tells her, “I tried that recipe the other night, and my family really enjoyed it.”

RISE Cowley

The hospital is working to make the community healthier as well. Through RISE Cowley, William Newton Hospital is working with some 40 other organizations to make “Cowley County a healthier place to live and work. We’re working to increase access to healthy foods, provide more opportunities for physical activity and raise awareness of healthy behaviors,” said Bryant, a RISE Cowley steering committee member who chairs the Communications and Health Care subcommittees.

“RISE stands for ‘Raising awareness, Improving health, Supporting collaboration and Energizing communities’,” Bryant explained. The coalition applied for and received one of 16 *Pathways to a Healthy Kansas* grants from Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Kansas. The \$100,000 grant over three years allows RISE Cowley to lead and coordinate activities/initiatives related to food, activity and smoking/tobacco use cessation. Community organizations and businesses have the opportunity to apply for non-competitive implementation and achievements grants of up to \$400,000 cumulatively. *Pathways* grantees may receive a total of \$500,000 for their communities over the three-year period.

The two hospitals in Cowley County are eligible for up to \$10,000 in grant funds to engage employees and patients in all three areas of *Pathways* focus. While William Newton Hospital’s Healthy Foods and Beverages policy was already fairly progressive, BCBS *Pathways* wants hospitals to implement a new policy or update an existing policy. The WNH Wellness Committee is exploring new policies to improve employee health and increase access to healthy foods, beverages and physical activity.

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Delivering care packages to health care providers, RISE Cowley coalition members team up to challenge physicians and clinics to “blaze a trail.” The package included a trail mix treat and invitation to attend a *Pathways* informational session. From left: Ruth Bumgarner, William Newton Hospital Healthways coordinator; Rylee Jones, City-Cowley County Health Department public health educator; Sarah Bryant, William Newton Hospital director of marketing and business development; and Taylor Schwartz, Community Health Center of Cowley County community outreach coordinator.

Choices Lead to Better Health

In 2017, William Newton initiated the 5K Crop Hop in partnership with Walnut Valley Farmers' Market, one of three in the county. The event at Island Park begins at 7 a.m. in the parking lot before the market opens. "The Crop Hop is free to make it accessible to everyone," Bryant said. "Some people run, others walk. We have people with strollers, and we have dog-walkers. It is very scenic around the creek, and when they finish, they can buy fresh fruits and vegetables at the farmers' market," she explained. "People enjoy the landscape and the fruits of our labor here in the community," she added.



And they are off! The Crop Hop is a fun event for all ages.

The fun event attracts 60-plus participants, and is offered twice a year on the days when the market opens and closes. Together, the Crop Hop and farmers' market address two of the *Pathways*, and RISE Cowley is exploring opportunities to expand and promote local farmers' markets.

Partnering with Schools

Bumgarner works closely with the local school district and serves on its Wellness Committee. "Our school district requires an extremely comprehensive health class for all sixth grade students. The class covers mental and social



Lisa Muxlow, William Newton Healthcare Foundation assistant, helps Southwestern College's Little Builders add plants to the raised beds sponsored in part by the William Newton Hospital employee wellness committee.

health and addresses the impact of technology, such as the amount of computer screen time, use of cell phones and Internet safety," she explained. Another part of the course addresses the importance of hydration. William Newton provides each student with a reusable water bottle to encourage staying hydrated.

In 2016, Little Builders Early Learning Center created raised garden beds, but the grant ran out and the pre-school had no funds to plant the vegetable garden in 2017. "The hospital helped for 2017 and 2018 so they can keep the garden going," Bumgarner said.

Tips/Lessons Learned

From CEO Ben Quinton:

Get employees involved. "Don't do something like this 'for employees' but 'with' them so they have buy-in and are committed to it," he advised. "We're about providing healthy options, not about forcing employees to go without salt and sugar. William Newton wants to provide the options for employees so they can choose from there," he said.

From Ruth Bumgarner, Healthways Coordinator:

Communication is critical. "The real lesson is how key communication is when making these types of changes, especially when dealing with foods and beverages that impact everyone," she shared. "Communicating the 'why' is important too," she counseled. "We're doing this because we care about the health and well-being of employees."

Review programs regularly. William Newton reviews its food and beverage policy annually. Vending contracts and sales records are reviewed at least twice a year. New programs, like the grab-and-go snacks, are offered on a trial basis. "We hold focus groups with employees periodically to identify successes and opportunities for change," Bumgarner said.

From Sarah Bryant, Director of Marketing and Business Development:

Start small. "We didn't shoot for everything to be 100 percent at first. It's a work in progress," she says of the hospital's wellness initiatives. "If people want lasagna, salad and bread for lunch, it's OK," she said. "We want to educate about balance. We're going for increased access to healthier options – 100 percent replacement with healthy things would not work for us," she said. "We're definitely not where we want to be, but it's OK."

Communicate in advance. Celebrate even small victories. "From a communication stand-point, we really try not to spring things on employees. We make sure people know about changes well in advance," she said. The hospital shares information about implementing even small changes, and provides opportunities for feedback. "We celebrate the small wins because every little thing helps. We embrace celebrating, and we even have cake every now and then," she said.

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From RISE Cowley Steering Committee Member Sarah Bryant:
Work with your community. “We leveraged our partnerships in the community, and we are working with K-State Research and Extension, the farmers’ markets, the health department and the recreation center,” she said. “We’ve tried not to keep things just within hospital walls. We’ve reached out to the community and increased our resources and knowledge base,” she explained.

From Food Service Manager Patrick Fromm:
Think about the budget, and don’t try to change everything at once. When a hospital is looking at increasing its healthy food and beverage options, think about the budget, he advises. “When you start to serve healthier foods, it costs more. It can put a huge damper on your Dietary budget.” He suggests a gradual approach, changing one or two things per week. “Don’t change everything at once. Food is a huge thing that people feel they can control. When you change their options, there is

resistance and they aren’t happy,” he said with the voice of experience. “Slow change is what I’m focused on,” he added.

From Taylor Stonerock, Business Office Director:
Support from Administration and employees is required. “Administration has to be onboard, and employee buy-in is critical,” she said. “You can’t get anywhere without those two groups on board.”

She recommends getting feedback consistently from employees through surveys and focus groups. “We can’t make everyone happy, but we can give everyone an opportunity to provide feedback,” she said.

Look at resources available. While you can learn by trial-and-error, she suggests that “it helps to know that others are trying to do the same thing. You can see what has worked and what didn’t. Look at the resources available from the Kansas Hospital Association and Work Well Kansas.”

About William Newton Hospital

Located in south central Kansas, William Newton Hospital is a 25-bed Critical Access Hospital that serves patients in Winfield and the surrounding rural communities. Some 80 percent of its \$82 million in gross revenue comes from out-patient services. The not-for-profit community general hospital is locally managed and financially self-sufficient, receiving no tax support. The hospital is governed by a five-member Board of Trustees appointed by the Winfield City Commission. The hospital operates five rural health clinics, provides office facilities for medical staff members and offers occupational health, home health, labor and delivery, physical therapy, advanced wound care, and other general medical and surgical care for patients as well as emergency room services.

About Healthy Kansas Hospitals

The *Healthy Kansas Hospitals* initiative was federally funded through the Kansas Department of Health and Environment Bureau of Community Health Systems FLEX Program. The Medicare Rural Hospital Flexibility (FLEX) program is managed by the Federal Office of Rural Health Policy, Health Resources and Services Administration, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services.

The Kansas Hospital Association is a voluntary, non-profit organization existing to be the leading advocate and resource for members. KHA membership includes 217 member facilities, of which 124 are full-service, community hospitals. Founded in 1910, KHA’s vision is Optimal Health for Kansas. For more information, go to www.HealthyKansasHospitals.org.