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February is School-Based Health Care Awareness Month



School-based health centers (SBHCs) provide access to the health care services that students need to succeed.

Poor academic outcomes

and high dropout rates are major concerns of educators, policy makers, and parents alike—and poor health severely limits a child’s motivation and ability to learn. SBHCs provide a setting to foster learning readiness and academic achievement, while giving children resources to improve their health.

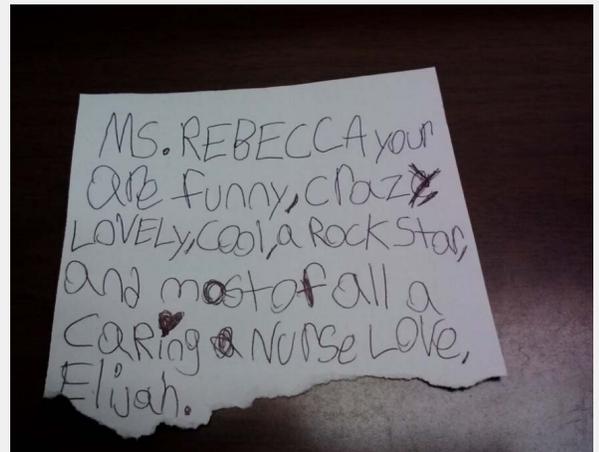
Whitney Young Health operates three SBHCs in the Albany School District and we hope to raise enrollment and the number of students with a documented physical on file to 90% by the end of this school year.

WYH and Equinox Partner to Provide Integrated Mental Health and Primary Care



Patients receiving mental health and chemical dependency care at Equinox can now receive integrated primary care provided by WYH at a

Patient Thank-Yous



To SBHC staff Rebecca Sheehan, NP

"For some reason, most of the time when I call I speak with Joseph [Switalski] in the call center. I just wanted to put in a good word for him and let you know that he always goes above and beyond his required service... He is friendly, very knowledgeable and he really makes a difference. He has a wonderful attitude and treats people with respect and dignity and that's important when you're sick."

WYH Awarded \$72,500 to support children's programs

Between November and December of 2014, WYH was awarded \$72,500 in grants to support dental, medical and literacy programs for children.

The Review Foundation and the Community Foundation for the Greater Capital Region's Standish Family Fund each granted \$10,000 and M&T Charitable Foundation granted \$7,500 for the

new, on-site clinic. The primary care clinic opened this month at Equinox's 500 Central Avenue location in Albany.

Funded by a grant Equinox received from the New York State Office of Mental Health, the clinic will help patients coordinate physical health care with their mental health treatment. Case managers at Equinox will be able to share patient information with WYH physician's assistants to ensure the most effective care is provided. "Embedding primary care in a behavioral health setting with which patients are familiar will hopefully lead to a great level of trust of care providers and continual service," says WYH CEO David Shippee.

A report conducted by the National Association of State Mental Health Program Directors shows that, on average, people with severe mental illness die 25 years earlier than the general population. Antipsychotic medications have become more highly associated with high rates of adverse effects. According to Equinox CEO Dorothy Cucinelli, "Patients with mental illness and substance addiction face greater health risks due to chronic diseases not well maintained. The clinic will mostly serve patients aged 55 years and older, due to their increased likelihood of health risks from heart disease and diabetes."

"Within the first six months, we hope to have multiple diagnostic sessions per week. We expect to see an increase in patients getting treatment and utilizing our specialty and intervention services here at Whitney Young Health and a decrease in patients visiting the emergency room," says Shippee. "It's rewarding to finally see a glimmer of realization around the corner. It's been a long process with the regulatory obstacles that, over time, were impeding our ability to treat the whole person in one familiar, convenient setting."

An SBHC Message from CEO, David Shippee



Whitney Young Health operates SBHCs in the Albany City School District at Giffen Memorial Elementary School, Philip Schuyler Achievement Academy and Sheridan Preparatory Academy. Currently, there are 950 students from pre-K to 6th grade enrolled across the schools. Most visits are

referrals generated by the school nurse or that are made by parents for a child with an acute illness. Comprehensive physical exams and immunization visits are also highly utilized by many of the children enrolled. Using the features within WYH's electronic medical record system in the SBHCs, children's care can be easily coordinated with their regular primary care provider, if they have a regular provider.

Our program has operated for the last seven years and over that time has attended to thousands of children from some of the most low-income families in the Capital District. NYS DOH regulations preclude WYH from attending to any family members that are not enrolled in

Mobile Dental Program. The funds will help provide restorative dental care, including fillings to elementary school children who otherwise might not receive such care.

The Seymour Fox Foundation granted \$30,000 for WYH's Mobile School-Linked Health Program. Utilizing a mobile health unit, this program will be able to treat more children with primary and preventive health services, including routine management of chronic illnesses.

"As a result of the generous support from the community, the new School-Linked Mobile Health and Mobile Dental programs flourished last year", says WYH Director of School-Linked Programs, Karla Powers. "The Mobile Dental Program provided restorative care to over thirty Lansingburgh district students and improved the practice by adding x-rays to their services. The Mobile Health Unit is certified, equipped with medical supplies and is now out on the road to provide primary care to the Lansingburgh Community."

Additional grants included \$10,000 from Bank of America to support the delivery of high quality medical, dental and behavioral health at WYH, and \$5,000 from The Community Foundation for the Greater Capital Region's Michaelson Family Fund for Reach Out and Read, a program that promotes early literacy and school readiness, and offers literacy advice through medical providers at well-child visits.

WYH accepts charitable donations to help increase access to high quality health care without regard to income.

Alliance for Better Health Care

The Alliance for Better Health Care (AFBHC) is a network of over 1,400 providers who are coming together to transform the healthcare delivery system in our region to achieve better health results for patients, to improve quality, and to reduce avoidable hospital use. The network is led by Ellis Hospital, St. Peter's Health Partners, St. Mary's Healthcare (Amsterdam), Whitney M. Young, Jr. Health Center, Hometown Health Centers, Capital Care Medical Group, and Community Care Physicians.

AFBHC was formed in response to the New York Department of Health Delivery System Reform Incentive Payment Program (DSRIP) to transform

the school that houses the SBHC. We are truly hopeful that under New York's DSRIP Medicaid waiver that this restriction is relaxed, as so many of the families attached to the children we see would benefit greatly from access to these effective, accessible venues of care.

the healthcare delivery system in the state by first focusing on the Medicaid and uninsured populations. Learn about our 11 projects, upcoming events and more, [here](#).

Whitney M. Young, Jr. Health Center 920 Lark Drive, Albany, NY 12207

Phone: (518) 465-4771 | Email: info@wmyhealth.org

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