

## NEWSLETTER

Fall 2009



# Turner House Children's Clinic

*Providing quality healthcare for Kansas City's uninsured and underserved children*

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## Gearing Up for H1N1

Turner House Children's Clinic is one of a handful of sites throughout Kansas designated as "sentinels" for weekly tracking and reporting H1N1 flu cases to the Kansas Department of Health and Environment. Two intra-nasal swabs will be done weekly on children suspected of having H1N1 and sent to the state for confirmation and reporting.

The clinic is gearing up for both the regular seasonal flu and H1N1. Hand sanitizer, tissues and wastepaper baskets are in place at multiple locations, and all areas of the clinic are sanitized on a regular basis.

Patient education materials are displayed in the clinic and distributed to families. Both seasonal and H1N1 immunizations are recommended for all children 6 months and older. Children of all ages who have asthma are at greater risk of complications, and these families are being contacted and encouraged to come in for vaccinations.

Symptoms of H1N1 are similar to symp-

toms of seasonal flu—fever, cough, sore throat, runny or stuffy nose, body aches, headache, chills and fatigue. It is important that a child not be exposed to other children who are sick and that if a child has a flu-like illness that he or she does not expose others.

For more information, visit the CDC website at [www.cdc.gov/h1n1flu](http://www.cdc.gov/h1n1flu).

**COVER YOUR NOSE** and mouth with a tissue when coughing or sneezing. Or, cough or sneeze into your upper sleeve, not your hands.

**WASH HANDS OFTEN** with soap and water or an alcohol-based hand cleaner.

**AVOID CLOSE CONTACT** with sick people.

**IF YOU OR YOUR** child has flu-like illness, stay home from work or school and limit contact with others.

**AVOID TOUCHING** your eyes, nose, or mouth.



## Healthy Steps for Young Children

Gicela was excited to be a new mother, but Andrew, her newborn, wasn't sleeping well, and she didn't know what to do. Fortunately, she was referred to the Healthy Steps for Young Children program at Turner House Children's Clinic. There she met with Maria Reyes, Healthy Steps Specialist, who helped her find a solution. Today, at 5 months, Andrew is sleeping... like a baby. Maria also talked to Gicela about feeding and reading to him.

Healthy Steps for Young Children focuses on early de-  
*Healthy Steps continued on page 2*



**Maria with Gicela and Andrew.**

## From the Executive Director



Turner House Children's Clinic is celebrating its 20th year of providing quality primary medical care to the area's uninsured and underserved children. During the last 20 years, Turner House has evolved from a part-time, totally volunteer-staffed organization into a professional and essential component of the safety net system serving children in need from Wyandotte and surrounding counties. The clinic is now serving nearly 4,000 children each year, in over 9,000 patient visits—nearly a 25% increase over patient volume in 2008.

After completing a major space expansion and increasing staff capacity by adding a full time, Spanish speaking Nurse Practitioner (see article on Stevie Wilson), we are now fully focused and engaged in a quality improvement process. This emphasis was reinforced during a recent strategic planning retreat attended by board members and staff leadership. In addition, with support of the Reach Healthcare Foundation, Qualis Health, a national quality improvement organization, is providing consulting and technical assistance to Turner House and other safety-net clinics. We are working intently to address their recommendations and developing processes to support quality improvement and our evolution into a fully functioning patient-centered medical home. Phyllis White, Director of Development, has been designated as Quality Improvement Officer.

Turner House is grateful for this guidance and assistance, as we strive to ensure that services and practices are of the highest quality possible.

Dennis R. Boody  
Executive Director

## Turner House Staff . . . Making a Difference

Turner House Children's Clinic staff members do extraordinary things every day. Occasionally, one story stands out, like this one:



A new born patient seen by lead physician, Dr. Nancy Beezley, had an elevated bilirubin level, indicating possible jaundice and related complications. During a recent evening clinic session, the test result came in very high. Dr. Beezley advised that the patient should be taken to the emergency department at Children's Mercy Hospital immediately for further testing and follow-up. However, the patient's mother had no way to get to the ED, and was limited in her English speaking ability. Amada Olivas, Medical Assistant/Front Desk Manager, stepped forward and volunteered to take the family to hospital and to interpret for them. They were there from 7:30 to 10:30 p.m.

Had this child not received immediate follow up, her condition could have resulted in brain damage, deafness, and developmental challenges.

Turner House Children's Clinic makes a positive difference the lives of thousands of children. We are grateful for our dedicated staff and the work they do every day to help make our community a healthier, better place to live and raise children.

### *Healthy Steps continued from page 1*

velopment issues in children during the first three years of life. By building nurturing relationships with families, the Healthy Steps Specialist helps parents become confident and effective in their parenting. It also encourages parents and physicians to work more closely together, creating a family-oriented healthcare setting.

Research shows that families receiving Healthy Steps services receive more timely preventive care including immunizations and were more likely to interact positively with their children.

Maria meets with families for the first time at the newborn visit, or whenever called into a visit by a clinician. Her goal is to then meet with them at each well child visit to:

- Identify strengths and concerns

- Enhance parents' understanding of child's development and parenting skills
- Monitor the child's healthy growth and development
- Engage in problem-solving with parents to determine how to best to address developmental issues
- Make necessary referrals to community resources
- Build a supportive alliance with each family

Maria provides information to parents on topics such as breastfeeding, postpartum depression, Sudden Infant Death Syndrome, Shaken Baby Syndrome, gross and fine motor development, language development, social-emotional development, discipline, nutrition, teething, safety, potty training and sleep. From January through August

2009, 186 families received this assistance.

Prior to joining Turner House Children's Clinic in January 2009, Maria was a Family Support Worker/Parent Educator with the Kansas City, Missouri School District. She is a Certified Bilingual Parent Educator, and was a volunteer Parents As Teacher Educator with the district for 12 years and a volunteer Child Development Specialist with Heart of America Family Services for 7 years.

Turner House is extremely fortunate to have Maria. "The program has helped me a lot," says Gicela. "Whenever I have a doubt, I call Maria."

The Healthy Steps program at Turner House is currently funded by BlueCross BlueShield of Kansas City and the Francis Families Foundation.



## Stephanie (Stevie) Wilson, Pediatric Nurse Practitioner

In March, Turner House Children's Clinic welcomed Stevie Wilson, PNP, to the staff, after several months as a contract provider.

Stevie was previously employed by Mercy and Truth Missions and Children's Mercy Hospital in the Kansas City area, and worked in hospitals in Virginia, Tennessee and Louisiana. She has served an adjunct faculty member of pediatric critical care in the University of Kansas BSN Program and a faculty BSN program instructor in Pediatric Theory at Graceland University. Stevie received a BS in Nursing in 1995 from the University of South Alabama-Mobile and a Masters of Science in Nursing in 2001 from University of Virginia in Charlottesville in 2001. She is bilingual in English and Spanish.

Stevie loves working with Turner House patients. Her ability to speak Spanish is invaluable, as many patient families do not speak English. While working in an emergency department, she became acutely aware of the huge need for health care for uninsured and Medicaid-insured children. "The ED was flooded with children who didn't have a primary care provider," she says. "They came for everything—rashes, lice, physicals and even medication refills."

Executive Director, Dennis Boody, has this to say: "Stevie is an important part of the ability of Turner House Children's Clinic to see the growing number of children who need affordable primary health care. We are fortunate to have found a highly qualified pediatric nurse practitioner who is bilingual and culturally competent."



## REACH Medical Home Initiative

Turner House Children's Clinic is fortunate to be a participant in the REACH Medical Home Initiative—a partnership with eight safety net providers to work toward a new model of primary care delivery, or patient-centered medical home.

In this model of care, patients receive well-coordinated services and enhanced access to a clinical team. Clinicians use decision support tools, measure their performance, engage patients' in their own care and conduct quality improvement activities to address patients' needs. The model has the potential to improve clinical quality, improve patient experience and reduce health system costs.

As a participant, the clinic is receiving technical assistance from Qualis Health (Quails), a private, nonprofit, quality improvement organization. Using national quality assurance standards as a framework, the Qualis consulting team conducted interviews

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## Volunteer spotlight

Volunteers have played a key role in the history of Turner House Children's Clinic as founders of the clinic in 1989 and providing health care to uninsured and underserved children. Today, they continue to provide health care and other vital functions. Approximately 25 pediatricians, family care physicians and nurse practitioners together contribute 20 clinic sessions per week—a value of over \$50,000 in health care. Glenda Carden, also a volunteer, calls and schedules them quarterly. Other volunteers assist with front desk registration, read to children in the waiting room, organize storage and supply areas, distribute flyers, input data, assist with mailings, and a variety of other tasks.

Volunteers are essential to the work of Turner House Children's Clinic. There's always more to be done. For more information on volunteering, contact Dennis Boody, Executive Director, 913-342-2552.



**KU Med students recently brought order to chaos in a storage area and distributed brochures to businesses.**



**Samantha (Sam) Ramm and her sister Rachel unload products from a diaper drive she organized at a local grocery store, which netted mounds of diapers, as well as financial contributions.**



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### Turner House Staff

Nancy Beezley, MD, Lead Physician  
Dennis R. Boody, Executive Director  
Rachel Duarte, Medical Assistant  
Omar Enriquez, Medical Assistant  
Olga Fernandez, Medical Assistant  
Cinthya Hernandez, LPN  
Brenda Hernandez, Interpreter  
Satish Khurana, MD  
Victoria Mendoza, Receptionist  
Amada Olivas, Medical Assistant/  
Front Desk Manager  
Maria Reyes, Healthy Steps Specialist  
Maria Rios, Receptionist  
Marina Ruiz, Medical Assistant  
Reyna Vallejo, AmeriCorps Member  
Phyllis White, Director of  
Development & Marketing  
Stevie Wilson, Pediatric Nurse  
Practitioner  
Heather Young, Office Manager  
Eunice Zuniga, Medical Assistant

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with clinic leadership and staff, performed an on-site assessment of clinic workflows and operations, and reviewed documentation provided by each clinic. A baseline assessment survey was administered, and the results were used to prepare a Gap Analysis identifying opportunities for improvements. Specific recommendations were then developed for each clinic. Assistance is being provided to Turner House Children's Clinic related to:

- Scheduling
- Performance improvement
- Exploration of practice management systems and electronic medical records
- Chronic care management
- Test tracking and follow up
- Medicaid eligibility
- Maximizing revenue

We are excited about this opportunity to receive expert assistance in our ongoing efforts to improve quality of care to the children we serve. Thank you, REACH and Qualis Health!



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