

Heart Failure Improvement Clinic enriches lives and communities

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, 5.1 million Americans have heart failure, a chronic disease in which the heart doesn't pump blood as well as it should. Patients with heart failure often have frequent emergency room visits, hospital admissions, readmissions and high mortality rates. There is no cure for heart failure, but it is possible to extend both the quality and duration of life through disease management programs and interventions.

Marshfield Clinic's Heart Failure Improvement Clinic (HFIC) was developed to increase survival rates, reduce hospital admissions and improve quality of life. The HFIC has shown great success, reducing hospital admissions by 11.6 percent, readmissions by 4.8 percent, emergency room visits by 15.6 percent and deaths from heart failure by 41.8 percent, according to Dr. Kori Krueger, M.D., Internal Medicine provider with Marshfield Clinic Health System and the HFIC. It has also been shown that patients who participate in these types of disease management programs live longer, often 10 years or more, Dr. Krueger noted.

Marshfield Clinic currently has more than 5,000 patients diagnosed with heart failure, with about 1,600 enrolled in the program. The heart failure program at Marshfield Clinic focuses on patient education and support. The program's ultimate goal is to help patients implement healthy lifestyle changes and adhere to a treatment plan that will improve clinical outcomes and quality of life, said Dr. Krueger.

"When a Marshfield Clinic patient receives a diagnosis of heart failure, they are referred to their first consultation at the HFIC within 3-5 days," said Dr. Krueger. The program teaches participants heart failure warning signs and emphasizes a healthy diet, exercise program and medication management. Patients also learn how to monitor heart failure symptoms, when to seek medical care and how to adjust their lifestyle to manage their disease. Participants receive more frequent contact with their health care team, via telehealth and in person, and visits are customized to meet the needs of each patient. Through increased education, support and better coordinated care, heart failure patients and their families experience improved outcomes.

John Miller, a heart failure patient at Marshfield Clinic, is a prime example of the success programs like this can have. "The experience that we had through the heart failure clinic is fantastic. They can walk you through a lot of things. They've done that with me," said Miller. Watch how the Heart Failure Improvement Clinic has made a difference in Miller's life: <http://shine365.marshfieldclinic.org/heart-care/heart-failure-patient-story/>.

Security Health Plan understands the Heart Failure Improvement Clinic is critical to the health of many members and has invested approximately \$3.7 million to the program since 2014. “Not only do disease management programs like the Heart Failure Improvement Clinic help reduce more costly services like emergency room visits and hospital admissions, they also reduce care delivery costs for everyone,” said Eric Quivers, M.D., chief medical officer at Security Health Plan. By investing in disease management programs like the HFIC, Security Health Plan is helping the community it serves while keeping health care costs down.

Patients may self-refer to this program. If you have further questions or would like to schedule an appointment, please call the Heart Failure Improvement Clinic at 715-221-7300.