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Pharmacy’s Partnership Improving Health in Springfield

CEDARVILLE, OHIO – In the midst of flu season, health care professionals stand on the front lines by taking care of sick patients. But being on the front lines comes with its own set of risks, and a recent partnership between the Cedarville University School of Pharmacy, Ohio Valley Surgical Hospital (OVSH) and several independent pharmacies in Springfield, Ohio, is bringing changes for health care employees.

Through a newly developed wellness initiative, employees at OVSH will have greater assistance in dealing with diabetes or other health issues through their local pharmacy, rather than the traditional office visit.

The program is being spearheaded by Marc Sweeney, Pharm.D., dean of the school of pharmacy; Aleda Chen, Pharm.D., Ph.D., vice chair and assistant professor of pharmacy practice; and Steve Eisentrager, president of OVSH and a 1986 Cedarville graduate.

“We see the wellness accountability program as a way to make our employees aware that there are more options when managing chronic disease other than the traditional office visit,” Eisentrager said. “This not only allows them to save money on health care costs, but also allows them to take more direct control of their own health.”

The new program comes on the heels of a recent report that named Springfield as the least healthy city in Ohio. Through medication adherence monitoring, diabetes education and a new app called Profero Rx Aide, Cedarville and OVSH are hoping to transform the way people take care of themselves.

While the program is currently limited to employees at OVSH, Chen hopes that its influence will be far reaching.

“Our hope is that, by beginning with a small group of patients, we can positively affect Springfield and its surrounding areas,” said Chen. “Helping to educate people and get them on the right track to monitor their health is extremely important.”

A total of six local pharmacies are involved with the pilot program, including: Madison Avenue Pharmacy, South Charleston Pharmacy, Harding Road Pharmacy and three
separate locations of Whitacre’s Pharmacy. The program consists of a series of health consultations based on patient information compiled through Profero Rx Aide, a health care app that helps streamline the patient information process.

Profero Rx Aide, which has been placed on Kindle tablets at community pharmacies, will allow OVSH employees to provide information regarding their medication-taking practices and diabetes.

Patient profiles will then be reviewed by a pharmacist, who will then counsel the patients on best practices for medication adherence. If diabetic, patients will be considered low-, medium- or high-risk based on the severity of current health risks using information obtained from the app. Pharmacists will then create a specific counseling plan for each group of patients.

“The application and risk assessment are innovative, because they provide quicker results and information that the pharmacist can use when meeting with the patient,” said Chen. “The risk assessment avoids a one-size-fits-all practice by customizing each patient’s goals.”

Chen said the partnership would not be possible without help from five professional pharmacy students, who were instrumental in helping develop the wellness program, particularly Juanita Draime (Dayton, Ohio).

Third-year professional pharmacy student McKenzie Shenk (Granger, Indiana) and fourth-year professional pharmacy students Kacey Adams (Bellefontaine, Ohio), Rebecca Widder (Rockton, Illinois) and Jon Wilkie (Auburn Hills, Michigan) were involved in helping with this partnership.

Located in southwest Ohio, Cedarville University is an accredited, Christ-centered, Baptist institution with an enrollment of 3,711 undergraduate, graduate, and online students in more than 100 areas of study. Founded in 1887, Cedarville is recognized nationally for its authentic Christian community, rigorous academic programs, strong graduation and retention rates, accredited professional and health science offerings, and leading student satisfaction ratings. For more information about the University, visit www.cedarville.edu.