

# Community Engagement

MCHS – Albert Lea and Austin | January 2019

Dear Community Partner:

This email is being sent to community stakeholders in Albert Lea, Austin and surrounding areas and provides information and updates on community engagement activities of Mayo Clinic Health System (MCHS) – Albert Lea and Austin over the last month. Please share with others who may be interested. More information can be found at <https://mayoclinichealthsystem.org/albert-lea-austin-facts>.

**Coming Up – See below for details or contact a member of the Southeast Minnesota Community Engagement Team in the I-90 Corridor for more information**

Jan. 2 – SMART Transit Expanded Service between Albert Lea and Austin launches  
Jan. 15 – Community Healthcare Collaborative Information Session, Thorne Crest Senior Living Chapel (Albert Lea)  
Jan. 16 - Mower Refreshed Monthly Lunch and Learn - Worksite Wellness, Riverland Community College (Austin)  
Jan. 26 – United Way Community Connection (Albert Lea)  
Jan. 26 - Paint the Town Pink/Plunge for Pink, proceeds go to The Hormel Institute (Austin)  
Feb. 6 – Same Day Clinic (previously known as Urgent Care) opens on the 2<sup>nd</sup> floor of the clinic (Austin)  
Feb. 9 - The Big Freeze (Albert Lea)  
Feb. 13 and Mar. 6 - Austin Aspires Job Shadowing  
Feb. 24 – Mayo Career Day, Southwest Middle School (Albert Lea)  
Week of Feb. 26 – 8th Grade Career Path Classes (Albert Lea)  
April 13 – Women’s Health Symposium, Historic Hormel House (Austin)  
May 11 – Governor’s Fishing Opener (Albert Lea)

**Facilitated Dialogue**

The Facilitated Dialogue is a structured monthly meeting between MCHS and the City of Albert Lea. Members including MCHS Regional Chair Eric Crockett and MCHS – Albert Lea and Austin Administrator Kris Johnson and City of Albert Lea Administrator Chad Adams came together in December to thank Judge David Minge for his leadership of the meetings over the last year. It was agreed that Judge Minge’s service as regular facilitator is no longer needed to ensure productive and constructive meetings going forward.

The Facilitated Dialogue has helped advance initiatives and created an open environment to discuss issues of common interest. Accomplishments stemming from the work of the Facilitated Dialogue include

- Clear message on how to access health care services available in Freeborn County (mailing and magnet)
- Ambulance service from Albert Lea to Austin medical center for patients needing hospitalization at no charge to the patient
- The opening of the new Psychiatric Services Unit (PSU) in Albert Lea; the Open House featured many community partners who provide additional resources for mental health

- MCHS has added resources dedicated to community engagement in Albert Lea
- Mayo continues to invest resources in recruitment of providers and staff.

At the December meeting, Garry Hart of SMART Transit and Ellen Kehr of the Community Engagement subgroup both provided updates (see below) and the attendees were able to recognize Judge Minge for his contributions to the community. MCHS leaders and the City of Albert Lea will continue to meet on a regular basis without the assistance of a formal facilitator.



*MCHS SEMN Regional Chair Eric Crockett thanks ret. Judge David Minge*

### **Transit Shuttle Between Albert Lea and Austin**

SMART Transit is owned and operated by Cedar Valley Services and is sponsored by Minnesota Department of Transportation. On January 2, 2019, expanded service will begin between Albert Lea and Austin. Multiple trips between the two campuses of MCHS – Albert Lea and Austin will be available Monday through Friday. For more information, [check the MCHS – Get the Facts page.](#)

### **Community Healthcare Collaborative**

The Community Engagement subgroup of the Facilitated Dialogue has recommitted to the work of collaborating on behalf of the community. On Jan. 15, 2019, the group will relaunch with a new name and a new mission: community partners collaborating to improve the health and well-being of the community through awareness, education and resources.

Community Healthcare Collaborative Launch  
 Tuesday, Jan. 15, 2019  
 3:30 p.m.  
 Thorne Crest Senior Living Community Chapel

Everyone is welcome to attend and learn about the Core Team and the subgroups focused on Families, Seniors, Populations Impacted by Barriers to Healthcare Access, Mental Well-Being and Worksite Wellness.

For more information, contact Kathy Leidal at 507-377-6389.

### **MCHS – Albert Lea and Austin**

Many outpatient services are available in Albert Lea; most notably, the Emergency Department remains open to serve the community. A full list of services in Albert Lea is available at <https://mayoclinichealthsystem.org/albert-lea-austin-facts>.

Work continues in Austin to renovate and expand the Intensive Care Unit, Medical/Surgical inpatient hospitalization unit and the Family Birth Center with improved amenities. Renderings of the plans will be available to view on both campuses in the coming weeks.

## **Patient Voice Project**

The Patient Voice project, a collaboration with The Patient Revolution, attempts to better understand the challenges related to access from the patient and community perspective. Through interviews and workshop activities, one of the key insights to emerge is that the rules of the clinic and hospital can leave people feeling unseen and unheard. In January, The Patient Voice Project will embark on a series of experiments with care teams on both campuses of MCHS Albert Lea and Austin to identify some strategies to make systems more flexible and responsive to patient situations. If you seek care at the clinic in the coming months, you may encounter our experiments. We welcome your feedback and ideas as we work together to develop better systems of care. If you'd like more information you can reach out to Summer Allen, M.D. (allen.summer@mayo.edu) or Maggie Breslin (maggie@patientrevolution.org).

## **Alden and Kiester Clinics**

As we indicated in early October 2018, a number of staff changes created vacancies in two of our smaller clinics in Southeast Minnesota. We announced a plan to reduce service to one day a week from November through December, after which time there would not be a prescribing provider on site in Alden or Kiester.

We used the transition period from November through December to work with our communities of Alden and Kiester to understand residents' needs and discuss alternative solutions for care, such as the Nurse Care Line and Patient Online Services, which includes Express Care Online. After much deliberation, we have made the difficult decision to close both of these clinics as of Friday, Jan. 25, 2019. We will have staff available at the Kiester clinic on Tuesdays through Jan. 22, and at the Alden clinic on Fridays through Jan. 25, to help patients transfer their care to other locations and to provide education on other care options, such as our 24-hour nurse line and Express Care Online.

This decision was not made lightly. We listened to community concerns and looked for options to pursue. We remain committed to serving our patients and communities throughout our region. We will continue to engage in discussions to find innovative ways to meet the increasing demand of patient care close to home for rural communities.

## **Community Education and Outreach**

- Mower Refreshed, a community stakeholder group funded and managed by MCHS, published the [November/December newsletter](#) focused on the timely holiday topic of well-being through budgeting.
- Great information is available on the MCHS Hometown Health Blog. Find all the stories here <https://mayoclinichealthsystem.org/hometown-health>

## **Community Giving**

- Staff in both Albert Lea and Austin outdid themselves this past holiday season. People joined together with co-workers to support toy, food, and warm clothing drives, adopting families and ringing the bell for Salvation Army. MCHS – Albert Lea and Austin provided donations and matching funds to maximize the impact of the activities.

## **Recruitment and Retention**

Recruitment of staff members continues to be a top priority for MCHS. For a list of recent additions to the team, visit our [list of new providers](#).

We look forward to continuing to enhance the health and well-being of residents in our community. If you have any questions, please contact MCHS Southeast Minnesota Community Engagement team members [Ilaya Hopkins](#), Kathy Leidal or Sara Lee.

Sincerely,

Mark Ciota, M.D., CEO, Albert Lea and Austin  
Sumit Bhagra, M.D., Medical Director, Albert Lea and Austin  
Kristin Johnson, CPA, M.B.A., Associate Administrator, Albert Lea and Austin  
Lori Routh, R.N., Nurse Administrator, Albert Lea and Austin  
Tricia Dahl, M.B.A., Operations Administrator, Albert Lea and Austin