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JANUARY + FEBRUARY 2019

HEALTH

IN TOUCH  
WITH YOUR  
HEALTH

matters™

Healthcare  
for the **Whole Person**  
Makes Sense

Learn How Patient-Centered  
Care Plays a Vital Role





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# ONLINE ARTICLES

## Priceless Contribution to Improve Health Outcomes

Mid-America Regional Council

Community Health Workers and Promotoras de Salud (Health Promoters) help families navigate complex healthcare systems and social services. Visit [kcourhealthmatters.com](http://kcourhealthmatters.com) to see what makes these workers so valuable.



## Uncontrollable Sadness May Require Medication

By Tenille L. Lawson PharmD BCPS

Antidepressants balance chemicals in the brain that are responsible for controlling feelings of sorrow, sadness and guilt. Visit [kcourhealthmatters.com](http://kcourhealthmatters.com) to learn how medications work to reduce symptoms.

## Am I Consuming Too Much Sugar?

The American Heart Association

Understanding the types of sugar and daily recommended amount of sugar for women vs men, can prevent overconsumption that leads to obesity. Find out more at [kcourhealthmatters.com](http://kcourhealthmatters.com).



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**T**he goal for 2019 is “Own Your Health.” If there is anything worth embracing, it is this: *taking better care of your health*. We can change the course of our health by learning what negatively impacts or predisposes us to chronic preventable diseases and conditions. This includes everything from lifestyle choices to environmental hazards, family history and lack of access to quality healthcare. All are predictors of how well or unhealthy we will become.

In 2018 *Our Health Matters™* celebrated its 13th anniversary. We covered topics ranging from understanding heart disease, to sounding the alarm about the diabetes epidemic, memory loss, Alzheimer’s disease and cancer. We shared the personal story of a kidney failure patient whose doctor caught the progression in time to delay dialysis, as she prepared for a kidney transplant. Her inspiring story of faith and inner strength was encouraging for people facing a life-altering health challenge.

As we move into 2019, *Our Health Matters* will continue to focus on pathways to a better life. That’s why owning your health is so important. Throughout the year look for stories on urgent care, children’s health and wellness, the opioid crisis, healthy lungs, and kindness — which benefits good health and strengthens communities.

I hope you’re excited about the year ahead. Let’s make 2019 the year to be better informed, more proactive and healthier.

Best wishes for a happy and healthy New Year!



A handwritten signature in cursive that reads 'Ruth Ramsey'.

**Ruth Ramsey**, Publisher and CEO



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# Integrated and Coordinated Care for Recovery

## First Call Alcohol/Drug Prevention and Recovery

In the Kansas City area, there are strong networks of support for individuals with substance use disorder that spans from detox, to treatment, to recovery housing and aftercare—yet only 8% of people in the metro will access these services. Often, people do not get the treatment they need, because of their lack of readiness and motivation to change. These factors were evident in the 2016 Surgeon General’s Report on Alcohol, Drugs and Health, which states, “about 40% of individuals who know they have an alcohol or drug problem are not ready to stop using. Others simply feel they do not have a problem or a need for treatment—which may partly be a consequence of the neurobiological changes that profoundly affect the judgment, motivation, and priorities of a person with a substance use disorder.”

It is critically important for substance use disorder groups and mental health groups to integrate their services to ensure that no one slips through the gaps of a complex social services delivery system; transitions from detox to a treatment program, or from inpatient treatment into

**When a person or family member find themselves in a position where outside help is needed, knowing where to start can be a challenge. Internet searches can be fraught with paid advertisements for treatment centers which are often outside the Kansas City area and without guarantee of quality. Whether someone has insurance also plays a major role in finding available resources. A call to a 24/7 help line like United Way 211 (211 in Metro), First Call (816-361-5900) or Healing House (855-770-HOPE) is the best place to start. Responders or licensed professionals can assess each caller’s situation and make a referral that is appropriate.**

aftercare, are particularly filled with risk and need to be coordinated. During these “gaps,” people are at much greater risk of overdose. Luckily, there are several efforts working to strengthen and streamline ac-

cess to behavioral healthcare treatment and recovery resources.

One group, The Greater Kansas City Opioid Treatment Workgroup was convened by First Call in October 2016 and meets on a regular basis to discuss a model treatment in Kansas City, placing the focus on a complete continuum of care for people suffering from opioid use disorder. There are over 70 stakeholders participating in this conversation, they include people from the service delivery sector, public health, funders, elected officials, researchers, first responders and volunteers.

Other workgroups include The KC Perinatal Collaborative and Be Free. The Perinatal Collaborative is focused on mothers and babies impacted by substance use during pregnancy and early post-partum time periods. The Be Free initiative is planning a recovery community center that offers recovery support, primary and dental care, a recovery gym, and more. •

**Kansas City is moving closer towards collaborative systems of care to bridge gaps and streamline health-care delivery.**

**This comprehensive care model is complex, but the mission is not.** Synergy Services a local nonprofit opened its Homeless Youth Campus including its Youth Resiliency Center in Kansas City, Missouri in 2010 with the goal of providing a lifeline to families and individuals in crisis. Synergy envisions a world without family violence, abuse and neglect. Their mission is to strengthen the individual, their family, and community, through crisis intervention, shelter, counseling, advocacy and education.

Synergy provides comprehensive physical and mental health services to trauma survivors. Once basic needs are met, they focus on developing the skills and resilience needed to move beyond trauma to create a future free from violence. The key to Synergy's success is their ongoing commitment to help families have a better quality of life.

The Youth Campus emergency shelter and Youth Resiliency Center serves homeless, runaway and abused clients age 12-21 years old. The organization provides individuals and their families with crisis intervention, shelter, counseling, advocacy and education. When victims of violence flee their homes and have nowhere else to go, that's when Synergy Services and their partners step in. Together they provide wrap around services ranging from long-term housing and comprehensive physical and mental health services.

**Unique and integrated services for the whole person.** The centerpiece of the Youth Resiliency Center is the onsite dental, medical and mental health clinic. The clinic currently serves children/youth ages 5-21. In 2019 the clinic will be equipped to serve infants and toddlers ages 0-5 years old.

### HOW YOU CAN HELP OR GET INVOLVED?

Consider giving an unrestricted tax credit donation. In doing so, you support our ability to deliver the best possible service to meet the unique needs of those we serve.

Contact our Director of Development, Jennifer Hurst at [JHurst@SynergyServices.org](mailto:JHurst@SynergyServices.org) to request a tour and learn about our most current needs.

### MEDICAL CARE AND SERVICES

- Minor illness and injury
- Annual physical exams/sports physicals
- Chronic disease management (like asthma) Immunizations
- Nutrition counseling
- Adolescent gynecology & birth control
- Pregnancy testing & STD screening/treatment

### VISION SERVICES

- Basic exams
- Prescription glasses

### DENTAL SERVICES

- Comprehensive oral exams, x-ray and cleaning
- Sealants and crowns on primary and permanent teeth
- Extraction of primary teeth





Healthcare  
for the Whole P  
Makes S

## Patient-centered care contributes to positive patient satisfaction, compliance and health outcomes.

**A**ddressing the whole person's physical and behavioral health is essential for positive health outcomes and cost-effective care. Many people may not have access to mental health care or may prefer to visit their primary health care provider. Historically, it has been difficult for a primary care provider to offer effective, high-quality mental health care when working alone. By combining mental health services with primary care, we can increase the quality of care and ultimately, save lives.

Integrated Care combines physical, mental and behavioral care in one setting. There are many ways to integrate care, and it may go by different names such as "Collaborative Care" or "Medical Homes." This is an important model of care because:

- ✓ Primary care settings, like a doctor's office, provide about half of all mental health care for common psychiatric disorders.
- ✓ Adults with serious mental illnesses and substance use disorders also have higher rates of chronic physical illnesses and die earlier than the general population.
- ✓ People with common physical health conditions also have higher rates of mental health issues.

Providing integrated care helps patients and their providers. It blends the expertise of mental health, substance use,

and primary care clinicians with feedback from patients and their caregivers. This creates a team-based approach where mental health care and general medical care are offered in the same setting. Coordinating care in this way can help address the physical health problems of people with serious mental illnesses.

### Addressing Physical and Behavioral Health

Untreated or undertreated mental illnesses have serious consequences. People with severe mental illness often die 13 to 30 years earlier than the general population from medical conditions that could have been treated by a primary care provider.

### Children benefit from integrated care

Most children with mental health conditions are treated in a primary care setting instead of a specialized mental health setting. About half of all mental health disorders begin by age 14. Accurate diagnosis and quality care are vital in a primary care setting.

### Adults benefit from integrated care

Adults are also more likely to be seen in a primary care setting than within a mental health system. Primary care providers deliver half of the mental health



**By combining  
primary care  
and mental  
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care for common conditions such as anxiety, ADHD, depression, behavioral problems, and substance use. Yet, people with mental illnesses who are treated in a primary care setting are less likely to receive effective behavioral health care. For example, 75% of adult patients with depression see primary care providers, but only half are accurately diagnosed. When a referral is made to a mental health provider, only about half of patients follow through with making an appointment. As a result, many behavioral health problems go undetected, undertreated and/or untreated.

### **How does it work?**

Integrated Care meets all of a patient's health needs in one setting. It can be delivered in multiple ways depending on who is providing the care, what type of care is being provided, where the care is taking place, and how services are being coordinated.

The following are examples of Integrated Care programs:

### **Collaborative Care**

A team-based Collaborative Care program adds two new types of services to usual primary care: behavioral health care management and consultations with a mental health specialist.

The behavioral health care manager becomes part of the patient's treatment team and helps the primary care provider evaluate the patient's mental health and develop a treatment plan.

### **Patient-Centered Medical Home (PCMH)**

Another Integrated Care approach is the patient-centered medical home. This model involves coordinating a patient's overall health care needs at any age. Providers coordinate all aspects of preventive, acute, and chronic needs of patients using the best available evidence and appropriate technology.

The general principles of Integrated Care are setting the stage for better care for adults and children. Watch for more discussion about integrated healthcare to learn how it can benefit you and your family. •

**If you are participating in an integrated healthcare setting, *Our Health Matters* would love to hear what you like best about this approach. Email your comments to us at [info@kcourhealthmatters.com](mailto:info@kcourhealthmatters.com).**

**Source: National Institute of Mental Health, [nimh.nih.gov](http://nimh.nih.gov)  
Patient-centered Primary Care**



# The Heart of Community Healthcare

## It's no surprise KC CARE Health Center

has continued to thrive for nearly 48 years by tailoring their services to meet the changing needs of the community they serve. Since 1971, KC CARE has welcomed people who need vital healthcare services but are unable to pay. In 2015, KC CARE earned Federally Qualified Health Center (FQHC) status. They are recognized as a Patient-Centered Medical Home and accept Medicaid, Medicare and private insurance. Insurance reimbursement coupled with a sliding-scale fee system allow KC CARE to offer sustainable, mission-focused healthcare to all people.

## QUALITY CARE MATTERS

Grounded by a mission to promote health and wellness, KC CARE offers quality, affordable, integrated health services to everyone with the promise of dignity and personalized care. Core medical, dental and behavioral health services are available to people of all ages - from children to the elderly. No patient is turned away due to their inability to pay. This year, KC CARE expanded its impact by more than 45%, serving 20,000 individuals through 93,000 encounters.

## INNOVATIVE PROGRAMS

**Hepatitis C** — KC CARE treats and cures more individuals each year. Expert staff help patients determine the right treatment plan and enroll in patient assistance programs to access vital medications.

**Pediatrics** — KC CARE, in partnership with Cornerstones of Care, will open a pediatric health home in 2019 - Homeroom Health. This joint venture will provide medical, dental and behavioral health care to youth (ages 0-24), including those in and aging out of foster care.

**HIV/AIDS** — KC CARE has provided exemplary care and support services to people living with HIV/AIDS for nearly 30 years.

**PrEP and PEP** — KC CARE is committed to those at-risk of contracting HIV. Both PrEP and PEP are medication regimens that minimize an individual's likelihood of contracting HIV and empower self-management of health and wellness.

**KC CARE HEALTH CENTER welcomes donations and volunteer support.**

**For more information on ways in which you can help call 816- 753-5144.**



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# Do You Understand Your Medical Bill?

What you don't know may surprise you.

By **Patricia Elliott, M.Ed, RHIT**

Health Information Management and Coding Program Coordinator  
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**H**ave you ever wondered what the coded numbers and letters are on your doctor's bill, hospital statement or insurance bill? These codes are required in order to reimburse medical providers for services rendered. What you may not know is these codes are also used for research data for disease outbreaks, reporting the number of cases of cancer diagnoses, as well as for oversight of population health, wellness and prevention. When codes are reported to the Centers for Disease Control (CDC), that information is used to monitor and report on epidemics. When you hear about the reported number of flu cases and deaths, or reporting on recall of romaine lettuce due to salmonella, it is a result of data submitted on medical report ICD-10 codes to the CDC.

## WHAT ARE ICD-10 CODES?

The International Classification of Diseases, 10th Revision, Clinical Modification (ICD-10-CM) codes report health diagnoses. In addition to these codes there are other codes that report surgical procedures, outpatient procedures and the use of durable medical equipment. All of these codes are required to reimburse providers.

## HOW DOES THIS HELP ME AS A PATIENT?

If you have ever received medical treatment or have been discharged from a hospital, for the purpose of billing, your health records are sent to the medical coding department to

someone who has been trained and credentialed in the specialty of coding. They assign the appropriate code to each diagnosis based on your physician's documentation. Keep in mind this documentation must meet medical necessity and the billable procedures or services must match the diagnosis. It's very important that your doctor and other staff responsible for tracking your care and treatment be specific in their documentation in order for the diagnoses and procedures to be coded properly. Coding errors can occur if reported data are wrong. Inaccurate data can result in delayed reimbursement to medical providers who treated you, as well as impact funding for health research as explained earlier.

**Take time to read every doctor's and/or insurance company's Explanation of Benefits (EOB) form that you receive either electronically or in the mail.**

#### **WHAT SHOULD I LOOK FOR?**

Take time to read every doctor's and/or insurance company's Explanation of Benefits (EOB) form that you receive either

electronically or in the mail. It is important to review the EOB because it explains what you were charged, what was paid and what you as the patient will be responsible for paying. This EOB is also verification that services you were charged for were actually provided. With medical identity theft on the rise, it's important to

protect yourself. Report any suspicious billing records to your doctor and insurance company. And remember, you might not know if the billable code(s) are correct, but you will

know whether or not you received treatment on the dates of service billed. Contact your providers and insurance companies right away if you find inaccurate documentation or mistakes.

For more information about the Coding Specialist Program call 816.601.1000 or visit: [mcckc.edu/programs/-healthinfomanagementcoding/coding](http://mcckc.edu/programs/-healthinfomanagementcoding/coding).

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Our new name keeps our focus where it belongs: on the promise of a healthier tomorrow for those most in need.



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# What Does Precision Medicine Mean for Your Health?

**H**ave you heard the term “precision medicine” and wondered what it means? Precision medicine looks at and addresses unique disease risks and helps your medical provider prescribe appropriate and best treatment.

In healthcare systems, this is also called personalized medicine, which is an approach for protecting health and treating disease that considers your genes, environment and behaviors.

Treatments are tailored for you, rather than using a one-size-fits-all approach in which everyone receives the same care. But what does this mean, and how can precision medicine protect your health?

## PRECISION MEDICINE FOR PREVENTION

Some of the ways in which precision medicine works are:

**Using Family Health History:** If you have a family health history of certain diseases, you are more likely to get that disease than someone without that family history. Knowing about your family health history can help you and your doctor take steps to prevent disease or find it early. In some cases, your doctor might recommend genetic counseling to help you decide whether to have genetic testing for a disease that runs in your family.

**Screening for Diseases BEFORE You Get Sick:** Currently, all newborns in the United States are screened for certain medical conditions at birth (e.g., Sickle Cell disease, and hypothyroidism, which is underactivity of the thyroid gland), as part of newborn screening. Screening helps doctors find and treat babies early, often before they get sick. Babies with certain newborn screening conditions need specific treatments, which can include following a special diet or taking medications.

**TAILORING PREVENTION:** Most common diseases like cancer and heart disease are due to a combination of lifestyle and genetic factors. However, some people have inherited conditions that make them more likely to get a disease. These people could benefit from targeted interventions. For example, people with Lynch Syndrome are more likely to get colorectal

(colon) cancer, and people with familial hypercholesterolemia are more likely to develop heart disease at a younger age and die from the disease. Prevention steps can include screening earlier or more often, taking medications, or surgery.

## PRECISION MEDICINE FOR TREATMENT

A precision medicine approach can improve your treatment and help public health organizations track disease better:

**TAILORING TREATMENTS:** Certain treatments may work on you and not on others. For example, Ivacaftor, a drug used to treat cystic fibrosis, only works on patients whose cystic fibrosis is due to certain genetic changes. Also, some people have gene variations that make them more likely to suffer from rare side effects. Getting checked for gene variations before you take a medication can help you avoid a harmful effect.

**FINDING AND TRACKING INFECTIOUS DISEASES:** The DNA of germs can help professionals track disease outbreaks when they occur. Doctors and public health officials can more easily find out which germ caused the illness in patients when they know what to look for. Knowing exactly which germ is making a patient sick can help doctors determine the best treatment plan. Research on precision medicine will look at how this approach can improve disease prevention and treatment.

**RESEARCH PROJECTS:** The All of Us research program, led by the National Institutes of Health, plans to enroll one million or more US participants who will be followed for several years. Participants will submit information about their medical history and lifestyle. They may also have certain physical measurements taken (for example, height, weight, and blood pressure) and provide urine or blood samples. This information will be used to determine how genetic, behavioral, and environmental factors can affect health, including the likelihood of getting certain diseases and effectiveness of prevention and treatments.

On your next visit, you might ask your doctor how precision medicine can benefit you, or a member of your family. •

**Source:** [Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, cdc.gov](https://www.cdc.gov)  
[All of Us Research Program, allofus.nih.gov](https://allofus.nih.gov)



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April 2019 — 14th Anniversary Edition

## Healthy Lungs - Healthy Life

Healthy lung function is vitally important for people to live their best quality of life. In the April edition, we share insight on chronic respiratory conditions like: asthma, chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD), pulmonary fibrosis, pneumonia, and lung cancer.

Look for tips on how to improve lung health through diet, exercise and smoking cessation. Follow us as we share information on how to identify, develop a treatment plan for, and self-manage chronic conditions.

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