

## Wednesday, March 17, 2021 Horizon's Mobile Health Service helps COVID patient recover at home

Barbara Watson remembers last December well. She and her husband, Greg, had difficulty breathing and were taken to the emergency room just days apart. Both learned they had COVID-19.

While Greg stayed in the hospital to recover, Barbara returned to their Brocton, Illinois home where she was visited by Horizon Health's Mobile Integrated Healthcare (MIH) service. Comprising specially trained paramedics and a nurse practitioner, the service provided her with the care she needed to successfully recover.

"I really commend Horizon Health. They kept me out of the hospital," said Barbara, age 61. "If not for them, who knows what would have happened."

The MIH service provides in-home medical visits and wellbeing checks after a patient leaves the hospital. A specific focus of the program is on individuals with chronic and complex conditions, such as hypertension, diabetes, chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD), and congestive heart failure (CHF). With the service still in development, it was launched earlier than expected last November due to COVID-19.

Paramedic Nic Thomas, MIH coordinator, said the program is revolutionizing the way Horizon Health is able to care for its patients outside the walls of a hospital or clinic. Paramedics visit patients immediately after they leave the hospital, with follow-up visits on days 3, 5, and as needed after that.



**Amanda Talamantes, APRN, FNP**

have serious medical conditions," Nic explained. "Visiting them before a medical emergency occurs helps keep them out of the emergency room and from being readmitted to the hospital. The service also benefits patients who face transportation barriers when it comes to attending medical appointments. It's a clinic room we bring to you."

During their visits, paramedics provide a full health

assessment, which includes monitoring oxygen levels, blood pressure, and body temperature. They also draw blood for testing when needed. The service includes a family nurse practitioner, Amanda Talamantes, who has expanded her practice from nursing home visits to include in-home visits.

"Amanda was really worried about me," Barbara said. "She gave me an antibiotic, recommended oxygen,



**Nic Thomas, EMT-P**

and made sure I ate and drank something."

Barbara said she was thankful someone checked on her regularly while her husband of 40 years was in the hospital. The in-home visits were especially important as her COVID symptoms progressed and because of her preexisting health conditions, which include asthma. The MIH service also helped monitor Greg's condition when he returned home.

"It's wonderful that Horizon Health has this program," Barbara said. "I really appreciated Nic and Amanda. If they had not helped me, things may have ended differently."

**About Mobile Integrated Healthcare**  
Horizon Health's Mobile Integrated Healthcare (MIH) service is for individuals with chronic and complex conditions. Individuals are eligible

for the program with a diagnosis of hypertension, diabetes, chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD), congestive heart failure (CHF), or COVID-19. These patients must be referred to the program by healthcare personnel, such as a primary care provider, emergency physician, or care coordinator.

If you have questions, contact your primary care provider. If you need a primary care provider at Horizon Health, call 217-465-8411.

**Nic Thomas - Paramedic**

Nic is a registered nurse and paramedic. He is coordinator of the Mobile Integrated Healthcare service. Nic has seven years of experience as a paramedic and one year as a registered nurse. He has a bachelor's degree in biology with a minor in chemistry from Eastern Illinois University. He will complete his education to become a nurse practitioner this summer. His passion is pre-hospital care.

**Amanda Talamantes - Nurse Practitioner**

Amanda provides care for patients in nursing homes and provides home visits through the Mobile Integrated Healthcare service. Her experience includes working as a hospitalist and as a nurse practitioner examiner conducting in-home health risk assessments. She has worked as a house supervisor and emergency room/pre-hospital registered nurse. She was a combat medic in the US Army National Guard and has experience in correctional medicine practice.

## Douglas County Senior Resource Center offers assistance to older adults with registering, transportation for COVID-19 vaccine clinics

Still need to get your COVID-19 vaccine?

For adults 60 and older in Douglas County, we can help!

The Senior Resource Center at Family Service is committed to securing access to the COVID-19 vaccine for older adults in

Douglas County. We have staff available to assist you with scheduling your vaccination and with coordinating transportation to and from the vaccination appointment. We are in close contact with the Douglas County Public Health Department and our communi-

ty partners to receive timely updates on vaccine availability.

There is a lot of information out there about COVID-19 and the COVID-19 vaccines—not all of it is accurate. It's reasonable to have concerns and questions. We are dedicated to

sharing factual information in order to help you make a well-informed decision. We receive up-to-date COVID-19 information from the Illinois Department on Aging and the East Central Illinois Area Agency on Aging. Information sheets and the answers to commonly

asked questions are available to be discussed, picked up, or mailed to you. We want you to be armed with all of the information available in order to make the safest choices for you.

We also assist with many other issues that arise in later life. We would be

honored to work alongside you to evaluate your options and find the best solutions for you.

For information or assistance, give us a call at (217) 352-5100 and ask for a Douglas County worker. We look forward to working with you!

## Douglas County Ag in the Classroom learns about topography and farming

The characteristics of the landscape will determine the types of agriculture produced with the land. While Illinois appears to be a very flat state, Douglas County Ag in the Classroom taught students about the different topography throughout the region. Students learned about the rich flat plains of soil used for corn and soybean production and the hilly areas that support grazing cattle.

Regardless of what type of agriculture is produced on the land, farmers must take good care of the soil so they can grow the best food possible. Modern technologies allow farmers to test soil and apply only the nutrients needed for the soil. Farmers also utilize soil conservation techniques such as reduced tillage, crop rotation, and planting cover crops. These methods enrich the soil, reduce soil erosion, and help



trap leftover nutrients.

The "Shape of Illinois" activity used modeling clay which each student used to form the shape of Illinois. Then using a topographic

map, the student molded the clay to resemble the hills along the Mississippi river. Many farm products are transported on barges on the Illinois River. Students add-

ed the Illinois river, flowing down the west central part of the state. Some of the best soil in the world for growing crops like corn and soybeans is in central Illinois.

Then they glued on a corn kernel and soybean seed in productive central Illinois. Some parts of Illinois are too hilly and rocky to grow crops. Even in these areas,

though, the rich soil supports pastures for grazing animals like cattle. More dairy and beef cattle are raised in the hilly northwest corner of Illinois than anywhere else in the state. They added a cow shape to the hilly regions in the northwest corner of Illinois.

Older students then noted the neighboring states, Lake Michigan, the Mississippi river, and the northern, southern, eastern, and western boundaries of Illinois.

All students finished the project by drawing a compass rose with directions and adding a legend to explain the map.

Douglas County Ag in the Classroom is supported by Douglas County Farm Bureau, Douglas County Ag Center, and Illinois Ag in the Classroom.

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