

## FOCUS 2020 REGIONAL HEALTHCARE COMMITTEE

The Focus 2020 Regional Healthcare Committee was assigned with evaluating healthcare projects, services, and facilities which will impact Mitchell and the region for the next 10+ years, and to develop recommendations in response to our evaluation.

The Committee members were Gina Jung, Gloria Thompson, Carol Sebert, Dr. Paul Rasmusen, Neil Putnam, Scott Houwman, Chad Glanzer, Don Peterson. The committee was Co Chaired by Lenny Stulc and Roger Musick.

The committee met with many health care professionals from an assortment of healthcare providers and educational intuitions including the following: Avera Queen of Peace, Dakota Wesleyan University, Mitchell Technical Institute, Mitchell Clinic, Stepping Stones and Dakota Counseling Institute. The committee discussed many of the national long term health care issues, but quickly decided that this project was beyond the scope and capabilities of this committee and would be better suited in more experienced hands.

### **Avera Queen of Peace:**

The committee started with a look back at healthcare in Mitchell. In the early 1900's, Mitchell had two hospitals, Methodist Hospital and St. Joseph Hospital. For many years, the two hospitals served the needs of the Mitchell region very well. Both hospitals experienced decline in patients and length of stay, reimbursement, and increases in the cost of equipment and supplies. Vision 2000 believed Mitchell would be better off with one strong hospital instead of two financially struggling organizations. **The two hospitals accepted one of the major recommendations of Vision 2000 to consolidate the two hospitals and created Queen of Peace.** That was accomplished in 1991.

Some of the changes in health care at Avera Queen of Peace that have taken place from 1992 to 2008 include:

	<b>1992</b>	<b>2008</b>
Average Hospital Stay	6 days	3.81 days
Average Maternal Stay	4 days	24 hours
% Outpatient Surgery	30 to 35%	82%

These changes, and a magnitude of others, demonstrate how health care has changed from 1992 to today, and confirm Vision 2000 recommendation of creating one strong Regional Hospital. Soon after, the consolidation of a major building project was accomplished at Queen of Peace. At the end of their first fiscal year, Avera Queen of Peace recorded more admissions than the combined admissions of St. Joseph and Methodist Hospital. Avera Queen of Peace was established as a Regional Medical Center with a growing range of health related specialties.

With just one hospital to serve the medical healthcare needs of the region, cost savings were realized and Avera Queen of Peace aggressively recruited physicians, enhanced their programs and services with an emphasis on quality and technology, and completed the addition of a

physician office building and Cancer Center in 2002. Avera Queen of Peace has invested \$28.6 million in major building construction projects and \$48.7 million in equipment from 1992 to 2008 for a total of over \$77.3 million dollars. The Avera System, including Avera Queen of Peace, is in the process of spending \$37.4 million on installation of a leading edge electronic medical records system.

The Mitchell Region of Avera system has grown into a TRULY REGIONAL HEALTH CARE SYSTEM and today includes the following:

- A. Mitchell
  - a. Avera Queen of Peace – 120 beds
  - b. Avera Brady – 84 Beds
  - c. Assisted Living – 25 Beds
  - d. Twenty clinics
    - i. 47 physicians – Active Staff
    - ii. 7 physicians employed
    - iii. 90 physicians – Consulting Staff
- B. Parkston – 23 miles from Mitchell
  - a. Avera St. Benedict – CAH – 18 Beds
  - b. Borman Manor – 40 beds
  - c. Assisted Living – 20 beds
  - d. Rural Health Clinic
    - i. 3 physicians
    - ii. 4 mid level
    - iii. Parkston
    - iv. Tripp
    - v. Lake Andes
- C. Platte – 73 miles
  - a. Platte Health Center/Avera – CAH – 15 Beds
  - b. Nursing Home – 40 Beds
  - c. Rural Health Clinic
    - i. 2 physicians
    - ii. 1 mid level
    - iii. Platte
    - iv. Geddes
- D. Wessington Springs – 51 miles
  - a. Avera Weskota Memorial Medical Center – CAH – 18 beds
  - b. Weskota Manor Avera – 40 beds
  - c. Horizon Health
    - i. 2.5 physicians
    - ii. 2 mid levels
- E. De Smet – 71 miles
  - a. Avera De Smet memorial Hospital – CAH – 18 beds
  - b. Horizon Health
    - i. 2 physicians
    - ii. 2 mid levels
- F. Rural Health Clinics
  - a. Salem
    - i. 1 mid level

- b. Howard
  - i. 1 mid level
- c. Corsica
  - i. 1 mid level
- d. Chamberlain – Joint Venture
  - i. 1 physician
  - ii. 1 mid level
  - iii. Specialty clinics

Mitchell currently does not have an Urgent Care Facility. Avera Queen of Peace has indicated it does not want to provide those services.

Recommendation #1: The Focus 2020 Regional Healthcare Committee recommends continued use of one hospital in Mitchell, as well as the development of new economically feasible medical and healthcare programs and services for the Mitchell region.

Recommendation #2: An urgent care facility in Mitchell would be a great addition to our healthcare options. We would recommend that Avera Queen of Peace and the Mitchell physicians work together to resolve this issue.

#### **Doctors:**

Another area of discussion was the average age of the doctors serving the Mitchell region of 48. We do have a number of younger doctors but approximately 50% of the doctors were over 50 years of age. This will present a constant recruiting challenge to replace the retiring doctors and to continue to expand the medical staff for both family practice and medical specialties.

Recognizing the impact that physicians, medical clinics and other healthcare agencies have on the health and economy of our citizens in our region *the committee suggests that the Mitchell Area Chamber of Commercial and Industrial Development Committee continue to support the Doctor recruitment efforts.*

Recommendation #3: The Focus 2020 Regional Healthcare Committee recommends that Avera Queen of Peace and private medical practices continue to recruit physicians as required for the Mitchell region with the FULL SUPPORT of the community. The community could help by providing support through a scholarship program, or loans for local students entering the medical field.

#### **DWU and MTI:**

The committee discussed the existing and projected increasing shortage of nurses and medical technicians that exists in the United States and South Dakota. Mitchell is fortunate in the relationship shared by Dakota Wesleyan University, Mitchell Technical Institute, and Avera Queen of Peace, especially in regards to medical and healthcare education. We have been spared the shortages in medical personnel, as the students that graduate in the programs offered at Dakota Wesleyan University and Mitchell Technical Institute, provide availability of well trained personnel as many would prefer to stay in the Mitchell region. Communities in the region also benefit by this collaborative arrangement.

Health care has become the **most important industry** in Mitchell with over 2000 health care workers and over 120 health care volunteers in the Mitchell community alone and over 1500 students at DWU and MTI with many enrolled in health care vocations.

Recommendation #4: The Regional Focus 2020 Healthcare Committee recommends ongoing cooperative efforts between DWU, MTI and Avera Queen of Peace, including new and visionary programming, expanded clinical opportunities, and creative funding strategies.

Recommendation #5: We need to promote Mitchell as an educational option to our local and regional students. A collaborative marketing plan should be developed and implemented at the high school level, as well as one to strengthen local support.

### **Wellness:**

The future of health care in the United States must migrate from fixing to preventing illness and disease if we are ever going to be able to afford the long term costs of health care. This is a common thread that runs through almost all future health care discussions. With this in mind, we should encourage the region to improve the long term wellness of its citizens through increased exercise for not only the children but also the adults.

Our committee discussed and researched issues which impact our citizens including heart disease, poor nutrition, diabetes, and osteoporosis just to name a few. A collaborative effort between the City, college, and hospital would result in increased community wellness, the recruitment of additional students to Dakota Wesleyan University, the ability to host new events in Mitchell, and the opportunity to improve the lives of the citizens through athletics, wellness and education.

Recommendation #6: The Focus 2020 Regional Healthcare Committee recommends that Avera Queen of Peace Health Services, Dakota Wesleyan University, and the City of Mitchell collaborate to explore the venture of a health and wellness facility which would benefit the citizens of Mitchell, the students at DWU, the employees of Avera Queen of Peace, and patients seeking rehabilitation services from the Mitchell region. If possible this facility should include an indoor swimming pool to improve the overall wellness.