



News Release

Contact: Amy Blaser, Vice President

Phone: 402-562-3371

Email: aebblaser@columbushosp.org

Date: February 15, 2023

Hospital announces new movement disorder clinic for Parkinson's disease

For Immediate Release

(COLUMBUS, Neb.) –Life can be challenging for a person living with Parkinson's disease. But with the proper resources and support team, there are many ways they can improve their quality of life. Columbus Community Hospital aims to achieve its goal of helping individuals diagnosed with Parkinson's maintain an active and positive lifestyle through the new Columbus Movement Disorder Clinic.

Parkinson's disease is a chronic and progressive motor disease that can cause difficulty with walking, balance, stability, speech, vision, handwriting, muscle stiffness, voice quality, swallowing and eating. Nearly 1 million people in the United States live with the disease, and the Parkinson's Foundation expects that number to rise to 1.2 million by 2030. The new movement disorder clinic brings together experts from many different care areas who specialize in diagnosing, managing and treating people with movement disorders — specifically, Parkinson's disease.

In coordination with Nebraska Medicine, the hospital's Rehab Services department will host the first clinic at the Columbus Wellness Center from 9 a.m.-3 p.m. on Thursday, March 30. Dr. Erin Smith, movement disorder specialist with Nebraska Medicine, will serve as the clinic's medical director. She will see new patients in the morning and current patients in the afternoon.

Individuals with suspected Parkinson's disease can expect to be in the clinic for approximately three hours. During this time, they will meet with Smith for an initial evaluation, followed by evaluations with physical therapists, occupational therapists, speech pathologists and dietitians. The hospital will also have nursing staff on-site to assist with the assessments.

Michell Ruskamp, clinic coordinator, first learned of the multidisciplinary team approach at a conference in October 2018. She immediately saw the benefit of bringing this type of service to the Columbus community and worked with hospital leadership to turn her idea into a reality.

"When we have this kind of clinic in Columbus, our community members don't have to travel to Omaha for the same service," Ruskamp said. "Plus, being in Columbus, I thought we were in a great location to offer this service to people living in the western half of the state."



The hospital will offer the quarterly clinic beginning on Thursday, March 30, and again on June 29, Sept. 28 and Dec. 7. A primary care provider or current neurologist will need to refer interested individuals before they can schedule an appointment with the clinic.

To learn more about the Columbus Movement Disorder Clinic, call Ruskamp at 402-562-4488, email mlruskamp@columbushosp.org or visit columbushosp.org.

###