

RIVER FALLS, ELLSWORTH & SPRING VALLEY MEDICAL CLINICS

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River Falls, Ellsworth and Spring Valley Medical Clinics Recognized by CDC and Million Hearts as 2013 Hypertension Control Champions

Today, Health & Human Service's Million Hearts initiative recognizes nine public and private practices and health systems across the country for success in achieving excellent rates of high blood pressure control.

Nearly 1 in 3 American adults has hypertension, also known as high blood pressure. Fewer than half of those have it under control and are at risk of having heart disease or stroke, two of the leading causes of death and disability for Americans. The Million Hearts Hypertension Control Challenge is designed to identify practices, clinicians, and health systems that have worked with their patients to successfully reduce high blood pressure and improve heart health. CDC co-leads the Million Hearts initiative with the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services.

"These practices have set up systems that work for patients and for providers. They use evidence-based guidelines and protocols, team-based care, electronic reminders to track patients' progress, and recognize high-performing staff," said CDC Director Tom Frieden, M.D., M.P.H. "By following their lead, we can help millions more Americans with high blood pressure get control. Controlling blood pressure saves lives and prevents disability from avoidable heart attacks and strokes."

"We commit ourselves daily to extraordinary patient care and feel honored to be recognized nationally for the second year in a row," said Chris Tashjian, MD, a physician owner with the River Falls Medical Clinic who practices primarily in Ellsworth, WI.

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The 2013 Million Hearts Hypertension Control Champions, who together care for more than 8.3 million adult patients, are

- Broadway Internal Medicine PC; Queens, N.Y.
- Cheshire Medical Center/Dartmouth-Hitchcock Keene; Keene, N.H.
- Jen Brull, M.D.; Plainville, Kan.
- Nilesh Patel, M.D.; King of Prussia, Pa.
- Pawhuska Indian Health Center (U.S. Indian Health Service); Pawhuska, Okla.
- The Permanente Medical Group; San Francisco
- River Falls Medical Clinic; River Falls, Wis.
- ThedaCare Inc.; Appleton, Wis.
- Veterans Health Administration (U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs)

The Hypertension Control Champions, representing small and large, urban and rural, and private and federal health practices and systems achieved control rates ranging from 73 percent to more than 90 percent by using a variety of proven approaches. Following are some of these approaches:

- Making high blood pressure control a priority at every visit;
- Using evidence-based guidelines and protocols;
- Working as a team—physicians, nurses, nurse practitioners, pharmacists, care coordinators, and patients—to achieve blood pressure control;
- Using health information technology to track blood pressure readings over time, cue team members to talk about blood pressure with patients, and adjust medications in a timely way to safely achieve control;
- Staying engaged with patients by offering free blood pressure checks, in-home nurse visits, and medication checks by pharmacists; and
- Publicly recognizing or using financial incentives to reward high-performing clinicians or teams.

“Congratulations to this year’s winners for their high performance and for sharing lessons learned so that other practices, systems, and communities can benefit,” said Janet Wright, M.D., executive director of Million Hearts.

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The Champions were selected after demonstrating that they had helped their patients achieve control by using either the National Quality Forum (NQF)-endorsed 0018 (controlling blood pressure) measure or a similar measure that could be validated. The NQF 0018 measure captures the percentage of patients 18-85 years of age who had a diagnosis of hypertension and whose blood pressure was adequately controlled (<140/90) during the measurement year, excluding patients with end-stage renal disease, patients who were pregnant, or those admitted to a non-acute inpatient setting during the measurement year.

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For more information about the 2013 Hypertension Control Challenge and the 2013 Champions, visit

http://millionhearts.hhs.gov/newsevents/hypertension_control_champions.html.

For information about previous Champions:

<http://millionhearts.hhs.gov/resources/videos.html>.

CDC developed the Hypertension Control Challenge as part of its longstanding efforts to identify prevention strategies that help detect high blood pressure, connect patients to care, and achieve control.

Million Hearts is a national, public-private initiative that aims to prevent one million heart attacks and strokes by 2017. For more information about the initiative and to access resources, visit <http://millionhearts.hhs.gov>.

ABOUT RIVER FALLS, ELLSWORTH AND SPRING VALLEY MEDICAL CLINICS

Services at The River Falls, Ellsworth and Spring Valley Medical Clinics include: Family Medicine to treat the majority of health concerns for all ages including uncomplicated obstetrical care; Internal Medicine; Pediatrics; Psychiatry; OB/GYN; General Surgery; as well as visiting specialists in cardiology, neurology, neurosurgery, otolaryngology (ear, nose and throat), oncology/hematology, orthopedics, plastic surgery, podiatry and urology. Our medical staff also includes Physicians Assistants, Nurse Practitioners and Certified Diabetes Educators.