

# SHARING PROGRESS

*How OSF HealthCare is building a lasting relationship through love and service*

## Community groups see success with Pieces Iris platform

Much like the common phrase, “It takes a village to raise a child,” OSF HealthCare has determined there’s no better way to improve the health of a community than to give that community the opportunity to be part of the solution. That is what’s happening in Streator, where OSF HealthCare has partnered with community leaders and organizations to develop a new model of health care for the city.

**“It’s our goal to not only address the physical health of individuals, but to positively shape the lifestyle choices of the entire community,” said Ken Beutke, president, OSF HealthCare Center for Health – Streator.**

As part of this ongoing effort, members of the community and health care organization are developing solutions to problems that are preventing a healthier population. Based on data provided by OSF HealthCare and the county health department, Live Well Streator, the community collaborative made up of area leaders, is focusing its efforts on the three largest issues the city faces: healthy eating, activity and opioid use disorder.

Facilitating the Live Well Streator group is Ellen Vogel, community health engagement program manager at the OSF Center for Health. Prior to this position, Vogel had participated as a community representative for the committee tasked with helping develop Streator’s new rural health care model. In January, she transitioned

to employment with OSF HealthCare, where she accepted the role of tackling the initiative full time.

“I was excited to think that I could be a part of a pilot program to help change my hometown into a healthier community,” said Vogel.

While much of the Live Well Streator work is still in its infancy, there are other ways OSF HealthCare is bringing organizations together to better serve the residents of Streator. This includes launching Pieces Iris, a cloud-based case management platform that allows the OSF Center for Health to refer patients to community-based organizations that address a variety of needs.

Vogel, whose role also consists of maintaining relationships with those using the technology, says Pieces Iris allows for ongoing communication between clinicians and social service agencies to ensure patients are connected to services to help them stay healthy. Eight community-based groups, as well as the Center for Health, have been using the software since March.



*Ellen Vogel, community health engagement program manager at OSF HealthCare Center for Health – Streator*

“We have used Pieces Iris to move from a pen and paper-based system to a digital one where we can track all of the services we have offered to a client and easily share that information with others,” said Sonjia Martin, director of client care at A Servant’s Heart, an Ottawa-based

agency that has extended its reach to the Streator community, thanks to the Pieces Iris platform. “What we have found is that the more we work together, the more we can help somebody.”

of the student services department at the high school. “Pieces Iris allows us to identify these kids who need help early, make referrals and follow up with agencies to make sure needs are met.”



Pieces Iris hasn’t been in use long, but it’s already proving to be a useful tool. Streator Township High School has been using Pieces Iris to document students using the “Bulldog Pantry,” a program that offers free access to everything from school supplies and food to cleaning materials and other household items.

“Because we, as school counselors and social workers, see these students daily, we feel we are the first line of defense to help connect people to the services they need,” said Brad Brittin, coordinator

In August, Streator High School will expand its use of Pieces Iris to encourage all families to enroll their children into the system. This will help the school better document students who may need other services.

Other organizations that are part of the platform include BEST Inc., LaSalle County Health Department, Safe Journeys (formerly known as ADV & SAS), Streator Salvation Army, Tri-County Opportunities Council and the YMCA in Streator and Ottawa.



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*Opening an outpatient facility at 111 Spring Street in 2016 was just the beginning of an expanded commitment to the Streator community by OSF HealthCare. As renovations to OSF HealthCare Center for Health – Streator continue, so does collaboration between the health care ministry and the community. We’re partnering with local leaders and organizations to offer residents better access to health and wellness resources. This article is one of a nine-part series honoring the Streator Sesquicentennial. Watch for more stories as we celebrate a community we’re proud to call home.*

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