

A Publication of the Story Medical Foundation

# Inspired

Winter  
2023



# Pledge Protects Patients



An Affiliate of  UnityPoint Health



At an October 19th press conference, Iowa Attorney General Brenna Bird and Story County Medical Center proudly announced their participation in the Billion Pill Pledge program, launched in conjunction with Goldfinch Health.

# Billion Pill Pledge Priority is Protecting Patients

Surgery has long been known as a gateway to long-term opioid painkiller use and dependence. Studies show approximately 9% of surgery patients who have never used an opioid become long-term users of opioids after being legally prescribed opioids after a surgery.

In an effort to curb the abuse of opioids, Story Medical has joined the Billion Pill Pledge. The program, launched by Iowa Attorney General Brenna Bird in conjunction with Goldfinch Health, has a mission to reduce leftover opioids after surgery in the United States by 1 billion pills each year, thereby preventing those pills from being diverted to unauthorized use.

Through the Billion Pill Pledge program, Story Medical has enhanced its surgery protocols and optimized pain management around surgery. These industry-leading approaches are designed to enhance patients' preparation for surgery, better manage any surgery-related pain, and minimize opioid use both before and after surgery.



*The surgical services team, pictured here with Erin Nelson, DPM (third from left), has played a critical role in implementing the Billion Pill Pledge at Story Medical.*

As a part of this program, patients receive a "Prepared for Surgery" care package prior to surgery. This box includes a number of items key to optimizing a patient's surgery experience, including an opioid disposal bottle, pre-surgery drink, ice packs and more.

Nurses from Goldfinch Health are supporting patients during the critical period before and after surgery to help increase the use of opioid-minimizing surgery protocols.

"The support provided by Goldfinch Health is critical to our success in optimizing patient care, especially when our resources are stretched," says Cathy Haley, RN, Director of Outpatient Clinic & Surgical Services at Story Medical. "This program means our patients have access to the resources they need to confidently prepare for and successfully recover from surgery."

Goldfinch Health is an Iowa City-based company dedicated to enhancing surgical outcomes, improving the surgery experience for patients, and reducing opioid use.

For more information about the Billion Pill Pledge, visit [www.billionpillpledge.com](http://www.billionpillpledge.com)



## Foundation Awards Funds for ABG Training Arm

The Story Medical Center Foundation recently allocated funds for an Arterial Blood Gas (ABG) training arm, with the aim of enhancing the quality of healthcare in the community while ensuring that healthcare professionals are well-prepared to provide critical diagnostic tests.

"The new arterial puncture arm is vital in providing realistic training to our team," says Jerrod McCormick, CRT, CPFT, RRT, ACCS -Respiratory Therapy Supervisor. "This training tool mirrors real-life situations allowing staff to have the confidence to be able to obtain the diagnostic information necessary to care for our acute/chronic respiratory failure patients at Story Medical."

Advanced ABG training benefits staff, but that's not all. Patients will receive more accurate diagnoses quicker, giving the overall standard of care a significant boost.

The ABG test is a critical diagnostic tool used to assess a

patient's pH, metabolic function, and respiratory condition. It provides essential data on co-oximetry, lactate levels, electrolyte balance, and various other parameters. The information gathered through this test is indispensable for delivering timely and effective patient care, and preventing unnecessary delays in treatment.

The new training tool closely replicates the actual process of performing and collecting arterial blood gas samples, allowing healthcare professionals to hone their skills in a safe and controlled environment. The ABG test is particularly important for critically ill patients, as it provides real-time data on their oxygenation and acid-base status.

"It is indispensable in emergency departments, intensive care units, and operating rooms," McCormick says. "The information it provides can make the difference between life and death."

## Foundation Update



An overhead photo of the new Story Medical Senior Care under construction adjacent to the medical center.

## Senior Care is Taking Shape

As we head into the winter months, progress on the new Story Medical Senior Care is moving along at a rapid pace. Seemingly overnight, the facility went from site preparation to the new frame popping up, as seen in the photo above.

When complete in late 2024, the 59,000-square-foot facility will include:

- 60 spacious, private rooms
- Memory care support
- Home-like, inviting porch entries
- Family gathering spaces
- Enclosed gardens for each Household
- Therapy room

The new Senior Care facility will enhance overall efficiency of Story County Medical Center by combining Nevada operations onto one campus, allowing for shared services to be easily leveraged to support Senior Care, hospital and clinics.

The current site of Story Medical Senior Care, which has been a fixture in central Nevada for nearly seven decades, is being looked at by a developer to convert into housing to support Nevada's growing workforce.

As presented, the plan calls for the creation of 60 apartments with attention paid to the historical significance of the building.

**To make a gift in support of the new Story Medical Senior Care, call Liz Zuercher at (515) 382-7728.**

**To learn more about supporting staff training and education through the Story Medical Foundation, call Liz Zuercher at (515) 382-7728.**

640 S. 19th Street  
Nevada, IA 50201

## Empowering Communities for Mental Health Resilience

In a significant stride toward enhancing mental health awareness and response capabilities, the Delta Dental of Iowa Foundation has awarded a \$25,000 grant to the Story Medical Center Foundation. The goal is to expand mental health education and training initiatives within Story County, fostering a more resilient and empathetic community.

This grant is part of the Delta Dental of Iowa Foundation's Community of Health Grant programs, strategically designed to kindle innovation, strengthen nonprofit organizations, and initiate comprehensive health initiatives. The funds will play a pivotal role in expanding the reach of mental health education and support services.

"Delta Dental of Iowa and our Foundation are committed to partnering with organizations that share our goal to create healthier communities by strengthening the health and smiles of all Iowans," says Suzanne Heckenlaible, executive director of the Delta Dental of Iowa Foundation. "We are proud to invest in the Story County Medical Center Foundation's efforts to increase community awareness and understanding of mental health challenges as well as increase the number of community members able to recognize the symptoms, and respond with appropriate support and connection to resources when needed."

Liz Zuercher, Coordinator of the Story Medical Center Foundation, emphasized the critical role of mental health education in building a resilient community, stating, "We believe that investing in mental health education is crucial for building a resilient and empathetic community." She says she envisions a community empowered to address mental health challenges effectively through the training of Mental Health First Aid instructors.

The grant will facilitate the training of instructors, equipping them with the skills to conduct Mental Health First Aid sessions. This approach empowers community members to recognize and respond to mental health crises efficiently and effectively. The goal is to establish a sustainable network of trainers from diverse backgrounds who will contribute significantly to the expansion of mental health education in Story County, particularly in rural areas.

Mental Health First Aid, likened to CPR for mental health, imparts knowledge of risk factors, warning signs, and strategies for assisting individuals in both crisis and non-crisis situations. Certified instructors, accredited by the National Council for Mental Health Wellbeing, undergo training endorsed by the U.S.

Department of Health and Human Services and the Iowa Department of Health and Human Services.

Certified instructors form the backbone of the program, teaching community members to recognize and respond to mental health and substance use-related crises.

They are integral in tailoring discussions, providing a list of resources, and supporting learners throughout the process. With a national curriculum as their guide, instructors are empowered to teach Mental Health First Aid to diverse audiences within their communities.

The generous \$25,000 grant from the Delta Dental of Iowa Foundation will cover the expenses associated with training ten instructors. This includes registration fees, training materials, and any necessary travel expenses. This strategic investment is poised to create a lasting impact, fostering a community where mental health education is not just a program but an integral part of building a resilient and supportive society.

