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## Successful Community-Based Health Programs

by Melissa Eggen, Obici Healthcare Foundation Program Officer

Obici Healthcare Foundation's mission is to improve the health status of people living in our service area by focusing on the needs of the uninsured and underserved.

Aligned with the mission is our investment in access to care and prevention as strategies to improve health outcomes.

In 2017, the Foundation commissioned a health assessment of the communities in our service area. Like other communities across the country, the residents in our region are challenged with high rates of chronic disease like diabetes and heart disease, obesity and barriers to accessing care such as lack of insurance and transportation. While there are challenges to improving the health of the communities we serve, we know there are many opportunities, and many wonderful organizations, working together to improve health.

Health extends far beyond medical care. Health begins in our communities—the places where we live, play and work. The Foundation understands the connection between health and community and provides support for programs and services that promote health in a holistic way.

In 2008, Obici Healthcare Foundation provided a two-year grant to Obici Hospital for the Community Health Outreach Program (CHOP). CHOP is a home visiting program that provides supportive care for people in the community living with chronic disease such as diabetes or heart disease. This program takes into

consideration the supports that are necessary for good health after a patient leaves the hospital. CHOP nurses and educators visit the patient's home and provide services such as medication management, medical care and education about topics such as healthy eating. This home visiting model addresses one of the barriers — transportation— that we know impacts many living in our region.

Today, CHOP is supported by Sentara Obici Hospital and its community partners who also serve as sources of care.

Another example of a program supported by the Foundation to address holistic health needs is the Nurse-Family Partnership. This national model program is provided by the Western Tidewater Health Department and is a home visiting program for first-time mothers, designed to improve the lives of babies and families.

Obici Healthcare Foundation is invested in improving the health of those most in need in our communities. We know that health is rooted in our environment and, improving health for all, is a community effort.

*“Health extends far beyond medical care. Health begins in communities...”*

*A Community Health Outreach Program Registered Nurse visits with a vulnerable patient in their home.*



## Meet Melissa Eggen, the Foundation's Newest Program Officer

The Obici Healthcare Foundation welcomes its newest staff member, Melissa Eggen!

Melissa came to Obici Healthcare Foundation in November 2017 from Missouri Foundation for Health where she was a program officer focusing on maternal and child health and community health.

Her work in Missouri focused primarily on improving health outcomes of women and infants in urban and rural areas of the state by increasing community collaboration, expanding access to wraparound services and incorporating quality improvement processes into community-based work. Melissa also worked on funding initiatives related to gun violence prevention and increasing access to behavioral health in community settings such as schools.

Melissa has a B.A. in Anthropology and Japanese from the University of Kentucky and a Master of Public Health from the University of Illinois at Chicago. Prior to working in philanthropy, Melissa interned at the American Medical Association in Chicago working to build the capacity of a network of advocates across the United States working on tobacco control.

After moving to Missouri following graduate school, she worked in health education and promotion at a rural health department and then as an evaluator at Washington University in St. Louis School of Medicine.

Melissa will be working on the Foundation's grantmaking related to access to care. "I am looking forward to immersing myself in the community and learning more about the challenges and opportunities to improve health outcomes. Improving access to care is a collaboration effort that requires consideration of the environment we live in—the places we live, play and work each day. I look forward to working with organizations and community members in our service area to better understand and support opportunities for increasing access to health and healthcare."

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*Melissa Eggen, Obici Healthcare Foundation Program Officer.*

## The Community Health Outreach Program Team at Sentara Obici Hospital



The Sentara Obici Hospital Community Health Outreach Program (CHOP) team gathers in the Obici lobby of the hospital. The team is committed to preventive health measures provided by home visits for patients below the federal poverty line who are in need of at-home health care. In 2017 over 850 patients were served. The team: (sitting) Phyllis Stoneburner, RN, Vice President, Patient Care Services; Lisa Arrington, RN, Integrated Care Manager; (standing) Kim Tidwell, RN, Integrated Care Manager; Barbara Kelly-Gibbs, RN, Team Coordinator, Integrated Care Manager; Barbara Davis, RN, Integrated Care Manager; Laura Mercer, RN, Integrated Care Manager; and Crystal Bynum, Patient Services Representative.