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## Mobile Clinic Brings Health Services to Residents <sup>[1]</sup>

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**By:**

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*Above: Members of the Mobile Health Clinic team from Sparrow and the Ingham County Health Department at a recent site visit. Ted Glynn is first on the right in the front row.*

Ted Glynn remembers meeting an eight-year-old who had never received a childhood immunization. It wasn't that the child's parents were opposed to vaccinations. The child simply hadn't been vaccinated because of the barriers that kept his family from accessing health care.

Glynn met the child and his parents through the Lansing area's only Mobile Health Clinic. <sup>[2]</sup> Housed in a bus donated and renovated by Dean Transportation <sup>[3]</sup>, the mobile clinic represents a partnership between Dean, Sparrow <sup>[4]</sup> and the Ingham County Health Department <sup>[5]</sup>. Glynn is often the attending physician on the bus. He is also the Vice President of Medical Education and

## Research at Sparrow.

Since 2016, the full-sized, repurposed motor coach has rolled into neighborhood sites and centers—most in low-income areas—to offer free medical screenings, referrals, and basic services to anyone. Branded “health on wheels,” the older model bus is divided into receiving and staff areas, as well as private rooms for exams and screenings.

“It doesn’t work anymore to just provide specific episodic care in silos,” says Glynn. “Our hope is that we’re upstream in delivering care right to the doorstep of those who need it—right in the heart of their neighborhood—and to address the medical as well as the social determinants of health.”

On Wednesday, May 16, the Mobile Health Clinic will visit Edgewood Village Apartments, 6213 Towar Gardens Circle, in East Lansing. While there, a team of about ten medical professionals will offer free services to anyone who registers between 2 and 6 p.m. Free services include adult and childhood immunizations, flu shots, and screening for lead, blood pressure, body mass index, cholesterol, diabetes and behavioral health. Confidential testing and counseling for HIV is available.

Referrals to physicians, specialists and cancer prevention screenings like mammography and colonoscopy round out the mix. Mobile clinic staff also refer patients to community resources for food, clothing, shelter and other essentials, and assist with sign-up for various health insurances when needed.

As a board-certified emergency medicine professional, Glynn has worked more than twenty years in emergency medicine in Lansing and the southern U.S. A major frustration, he says, are the inequities in care across populations—and the reliance on emergency departments as a safety net for the uninsured or impoverished.

“On face value, it seems like the noble and right thing to do—to help those who don’t have the same access or enjoy what others do,” says Glynn of the Mobile Health Clinic. “From a societal standpoint, if we can help maintain a higher level of health within our community, it’s good from a workforce perspective, for the economy, and our overall health care costs.”

Funding for the Mobile Health Clinic comes through community partnerships and individual gifts made to the Sparrow Foundation [6]. While the current bus runs smoothly with a bit of TLC, Sparrow and ICHD expect delivery on a state-of-the-art mobile clinic this September thanks to the support of private donors.

The new 40-foot vehicle, Glynn says, will enable providers to serve more patients and families with an expanded staff, and to realize increased savings and benefits to the community. The wheelchair accessible unit will have two exam rooms, a waiting and registration area, and a bathroom and sink. Point-of-care lab testing, electronic communications, and secure, private access to data will also be supported.

?We?ve come full spectrum,? says Glynn. ?Three years ago, we were in the feasibility stage of ?can we do this?? We had a hypothesis, that there was a need and patients would respond. We had to crawl before we could walk.?

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[2] <http://www.sparrow.org/mobileclinic>

[3] <http://deantransportation.com/who-we-are/history>

[4] <http://www.sparrow.org/>

[5] <http://hd.ingham.org/>

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