To strengthen mental health across Piatt County, Kirby Medical Center's comprehensive, intentional strategy leverages community partnerships, preventive programming, and wellness education. The effort spans physical activity and social engagement to school partnerships and youth programs.

Studies have shown that exercise and social interaction positively impact mental health. Kirby Medical Center's active-lifestyle campus reflects the importance of both through its 1.5-mile paved walking and running path and healthy hospital cafe. Its on-site community gyms offer water aerobics and youth fitness classes, along with coach-led programs KMC Active and KMC Move. These programs promote regular physical activity, confidence-building, and social engagement, with KMC Move addressing specific health or mobility needs of older adults while supporting their mental and emotional well-being. In addition, the hospital has:

- Partnered with local school systems to help teach health, wellness and cooking classes;
- Partnered with two communities to open gyms in community-owned buildings, with coach-led classes held regularly;
- Offered youth fitness programs in Monticello and surrounding communities.

Kirby Medical Group is also taking a proactive, community-centered approach to mental health, combining education, prevention and collaborative partnerships. Clinicians and support staff lead or participate in wellness fairs, trauma-informed care initiatives, and panels on substance use and mental health for hospital staff and community members. The medical group's youth-focused programs include:

- Partnering with local school systems to provide mental health awareness presentations for students, athletes and teachers;
- Collaborating with The Jaimie Boone Project on suicide awareness kits for teens;
- Offering mental health activities at Camp Discovery and Healthcare Pathways presentations for area high school students;
- Hosting podcasts to increase mental health awareness in the community.

A strong workforce of mental health clinicians is essential for caring for community members with mental and behavioral healthcare needs. To build up this workforce, the medical group collaborates with the University of Illinois School of Social Work on internships and career mentoring for students. It also helps lead programs about mental health and career paths for social workers during an immersive week-long experience aimed at incoming high school seniors. Additionally, the hospital has partnered with area school districts to offer 30 students per quarter hands-on learning about health careers and clinician-led learning experiences.

Kirby Medical Center says its wide-ranging efforts are part of an "intentional and impactful strategy to strengthen behavioral health, foster resilience and enhance overall community well-being across our rural service area."

COMPdata Informatics

Insurance Solutions

IPC Group Purchasing

Midwest Alliance for Patient Safety
