

Pulmonary Rehab Unit now at SRMC

By Christie Dillmon

Beginning today, Sumner Regional Medical Center, who is partnered with Meridian Healthcare Group, based in Tallahassee, Fla., will begin offering a new pulmonary rehabilitation out-patient service. This means Wellington will become one of a limited number of sites that will offer such a service.

According to Kevin Viksten, out-patient respiratory therapist at SRMC, "Less than 15 percent of people with chronic lung disease have access to pulmonary rehabilitation. Wichita is the other location that offers the service other than Sumner."

SRMC President and CEO Robert Bean said there is already a list of several patients signed up to begin using the new service, and the hospital is very excited.



The Meridian program is formed individually for each patient. The patients come in once or twice a week and work with Meridian's therapist. The program focuses on education, and covers things like treatment options for the patient. "Results can be seen through the reduction in the number of times patients have to visit the emergency room or wind up in the hospital", Viksten said.

"Chronic lung disease is not something that improves on itself. As a matter of the fact, it gets progressively worse. Although you can not stop the disease completely, you can prevent it from progressing, which is something this new service will do for patients, said Viksten. "Patients will be able to have a higher quality of life."

Bean said part of SRMC's long-term goal is to enhance out-patient services and it's partnership with Meridian is a prime example of the service they plan to provide to the community.

For the past six years, Meridian and SRMC have offered respiratory rehabilitation for more critical care and in-patient cases, Dondero said. The addition of the out-patient rehabilitation is just the next step in an effort to offer the best care possible to patients.

Bean said SRMC has a long standing relationship with the Meridian personnel, who have worked the hospital in the past few years, and he looks forward to continued success with them.

SRMC has chosen two local physicians to be medical directors of the outpatient pulmonary program. There are Dr. Tamara Mcque and Dr. Steven Scheufler.

Meridian Healthcare Group is a nationally recognized leader in the field of pulmonary medicine. The company provides respiratory care services to over 20,000 patients daily.