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SIXTEENTH STREET COMMUNITY HEALTH CENTER

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**Sixteenth Street Community Health Center Utilizes Satellite
Technology to Ensure Fast, Secure Communications**

Center is one of first in Southeastern Wisconsin to use the high-speed technology

MILWAUKEE -- Sixteenth Street Community Health Center has recently installed technology that sends critical patient medical information between its two sites with incredible speed and advanced security.

It is the first medical establishment in Southeastern Wisconsin to incorporate the extraordinarily high-speed technology into its daily procedures. Larger local hospitals are currently testing similar technology for use at their establishments.

"It's critical for us to get patient information to the clinic quickly and securely," said John Bartkowski, president and chief executive officer at the Center. "This technology allows us to meet our patients' needs in a cost-effective manner."

The technology is called spread spectrum, and uses satellite technology to send information from the Center's new administrative offices at 1337 S. 16th Street to the Health Center, located at 1032 S. 16th Street.

While the technology itself is not new, the speed at which the information is relayed is.

"Imagine the speed at which water travels through a garden hose. Now imagine water traveling through a fire hose," said Jeff Racine, Sixteenth Street Community Health Center chief information officer. "The new spread spectrum technology works much the same way. It dramatically increases the speed at which information flows between our two locations."

Sixteenth Street/ADD ONE

Racine said without the use of this technology, a patient would have to either duplicate paperwork at each clinic, or wait a day until the records were sent between the two buildings.

"The patient's continuum of care is greatly extended with this technology," Racine said. "We have many outreach programs that are housed in either of our buildings, and this technology allows us to carry over important patient information into those programs."

Racine explained that although the information is sent through the airwaves, spread spectrum assures the security of the information sent by encrypting the messages.

It is also impervious to weather, Racine said. "It was able to send information without interruption during a recent Atlantic Coast hurricane," he said.

Bartkowski said the spread spectrum technology allows Sixteenth Street to effectively enhance the partnership with hospitals. "Spread spectrum is a tool that we use to provide better service," Bartkowski explained. "We could still operate and serve our patients without it. But with it, we can offer our patients better and faster service than other modes of information-sending would allow."

Sixteenth Street Community Health Center offers primary care services and other programs including prenatal, preventive health education classes, HIV case-management services, the WIC program and school-based health services.

In 1996, the Center recorded more than 84,000 patient visits. Nearly half of the Center's medical patients are under 12 years of age. The Center has been recognized by federal officials as a model for providing quality, cost-effective care to an underserved community.

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