

New Hospital Equipment Tests Field of Vision

By Megan Molitor

m.molitor@thedailyunion.net

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A new piece of equipment at Geary Community Hospital will make it easier to detect where a patient is having vision problems along with screening for eye diseases.

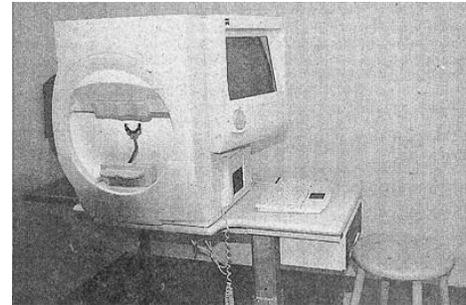
The field of vision machine was unveiled during a small reception Tuesday at GCH. Jolana Montgomery-Matney, director of the Geary Community Healthcare Foundation, said the purchase of the new equipment was made possible through a donation from a patient who wanted to make sure her well-loved doctor stayed in Junction City.

Dr. Cindy Penzler is an ophthalmologist – eye surgeon – who travels from her practice in Topeka to GCH to provide vision services in the area. When a longtime patient of hers, Annette Helland, passed away, she donated \$100,000 to the healthcare foundation to be used for eye care equipment for Penzler to ensure she felt comfortable in Junction City.

Penzler said Montgomery-Matney approached her several years ago and asked what kind of equipment she needed, but she decided to be selective and take her time deciding on something that would benefit both the hospital and community,

Since demand in the community was going up for these field of vision tests, Penzler decided on this piece of equipment, but also decided on a partnership with local optometrists Guy Reynolds and Ray Schmidt.

Instead of each optometrist having this common but expensive piece of equipment in their office, they can now refer patients to Penzler and GCH for testing, similar to other types of referrals for lab testing. The results would then be mailed back to the optometrist for further treatment.



“The hospital would bill and generate income,” said Schmidt. “We could utilize it a lot. It just makes more sense than each of us having one.”

Schmidt said the machine maps out a patient’s field of vision to see what area of their visual field has been damaged. This is especially effective in treating patients with different types of glaucoma or determining disability if a person has lost some of their vision due to a stroke. It can also screen for various visual diseases.

It looks similar to common machines that test vision in that patients must put their chin in a small shelf and stare into a viewfinder. They then push a button if they see a light a different intensities and the machine records their responses.

The machine also has norms recorded for factors like age.

Penzler said the field of vision machine has been at the hospital since May, going through testing, and it is now being used frequently.

Montgomery-Matney said Helland’s main wish was to keep Penzler in Junction City, and her own wish is to keep patients at home in the community.