

UW-Madison School of Medicine and Public Health: CenteringPregnancy adds west side location thanks to March of Dimes Grant

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Madison, Wis. -With the help of a \$15,000 community grant from the March of Dimes, UW Health's innovative CenteringPregnancy program is expanding to the West Towne clinic, **7102 Mineral Point Road**, to better serve expecting mothers who live or work on the west side of town.

The group prenatal-care efforts are intended to improve the health of moms and babies and reduce prematurity rates in Wisconsin. The groups currently meet at the UW Health Arboretum clinic (1102 S. Park Street) and now they have expanded to the West Towne Clinic.

The department of obstetrics and gynecology in the University of Wisconsin School of Medicine and Public Health began CenteringPregnancy in 2014. Women meet in a group setting for their prenatal care.

In addition to the new location, the grant money will also go towards transportation for patients who need help getting to and from appointments, baby supplies to provide incentives for attendance, further education and training for providers and more supplies for the group.

“We are excited for this grant to continue to provide group prenatal care for expecting mothers in south central Wisconsin. Women feel a sense of camaraderie going through pregnancy together, and the data show positive health outcomes such as a lower likelihood of a woman having a pre-term delivery or having a baby with low birth weight,” said Dr. Kristen Sharp, medical director of UW Health’s CenteringPregnancy. “We do have some barriers trying to get these women to the groups so this grant money will help.”

The groups usually have between eight and 12 women, all with similar due dates, so they can share experiences and support one another during pregnancy. A health-care provider does an individual checkup, including blood pressure, weight, belly measurements and heartbeat checkups at the beginning. Then a group session starts with a wide range of topics including labor and delivery, breastfeeding, nutrition, newborn care and nutrition.

The March of Dimes grant was made possible through the Anthem Blue Cross and Blue Shield Foundation.

The groups are on track to start at the West Towne Clinic in May.