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## **MCHC Purchases Point-of-Care Ultrasound Equipment**

**Madelia, Minn.** – Providers and nursing staff at the Madelia Community Hospital & Clinic (MCHC) are training on a new point-of-care ultrasound machine that was recently purchased with funding from the Minnesota Department of Health Rural Hospital Capital Improvement Grant Program. The grant provided over \$40,000 in funding for the equipment purchase and staff training.

The General Electric Venue 50 Ultrasound System allows providers to expand their capabilities significantly in evaluating, diagnosing and treating patients. Ultrasound is used to quickly diagnose injuries or pathologic conditions, specifically those where conventional diagnostic methods would either take too long, or would introduce greater risk to a patient. The tests can be performed right at the patient's bedside by trained MCHC staff.

“Traditionally, computed tomography (CT) scans and x-rays have been the gold standard for answering diagnostic questions in many urgent situations,” said Jeffrey Baumann, M.D., a physician at MCHC. “These tests will always be valuable tools. However, if we need to assess, for example, whether shortness of breath is due to a collapsed lung or fluid around the heart, point-of-care ultrasound can give us those answers more quickly. In trauma situations or for patients in crisis, point-of-care ultrasound can be lifesaving.”

Ultrasound uses the principles of sonar, a technology originally developed for ships at sea. During an ultrasound examination, a computer uses sound waves to create a moving picture, called a sonogram, of the tissues or organs being examined. Ultrasound examinations performed on large, stationary machines are commonly associated with obstetrics, and often provide the first image a mother sees of her unborn child. Until the early 2000's, portable ultrasound units, like those now used in point-of-care situations, had image quality that was far inferior to traditional ultrasound machines. However, with increased miniaturization of ultrasound technology, easily transportable machines that produce high-quality sonograms have become available at a fraction of the cost of previous equipment. This has allowed MCHC to expand ultrasound, and its benefits, to many key areas of the Hospital.

“Allowing point-of-care physicians to get those crucial answers right away is a huge benefit to the patient,” said Melissa Hunt, RT(R)(M)(BD)(CT), Radiology Manager at MCHC.

“Another key advantage of ultrasound is that it provides diagnostic information without exposing the patient to radiation. The goal of point-of-care ultrasound is not to replace a comprehensive sonogram workup, but to complement it by providing answers to specific questions that can make a huge difference in the care of a very ill patient.”

MCHC was awarded this grant funding through a competitive application process. The MDH Rural Hospital Capital Improvement Grant Program helps small rural hospitals undertake needed modernization projects to update, remodel or replace aging hospital facilities and equipment necessary to maintain the operation of the hospital. The total grant funding awarded to Minnesota rural hospitals through this grant was \$1.7 million in 2015.

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***Photo Caption: Dr. Michael Nelson practices with the new point-of-care ultrasound equipment during his recent training at the Madelia Community Hospital & Clinic.***

#### **About Madelia Community Hospital & Clinic**

Madelia Community Hospital & Clinic is a private, nonprofit facility staffed by a team of physicians and medical professionals that is profoundly committed to providing health care of the highest standards to Madelia and surrounding communities. As a 25-bed acute care hospital, we offer all the primary health services, such as medical/surgical, pediatric, emergency care and more. In 2011, we expanded our services to include a family medical clinic which provides adolescent health, geriatric health, men’s health, newborn health, pediatric health, preventative medicine and women’s health. Over the years, we have proactively responded to the changing demands within the health care system, which has ensured our ability to deliver up-to-date medical services, purchase advanced medical equipment, and provide complete and compassionate care to all who enter our facility.