

Hello and greetings from Legislator Mary Jo Green, Seat 5, Pontotoc District and Committee Chair of the Health Care Committee! It is that time of year for me to wish you the merriest of Christmases and all God's blessings upon you and yours. I also wish you a happy and healthy New Year for 2009!

The Health Care committee met with Health System Administrator Bill Lance and received a report on the Health System. Unfortunately, we are continuing our search for 2 new dentists in Ada and 1 in Tishomingo. However, local dentists are working with us by filling in temporarily. We still hold our Saturday Dental Clinics for Chickasaws only every other Saturday. The toll free number to call for appointments is 1-888-512-5522. You should expect a wait of 2 months or more for a Saturday appointment.

Flu and pneumonia shots are currently available and we have enough vaccine this year for everyone to receive the shots. Please take care of this important matter by getting immunized!

We Legislators were invited to a "topping off" ceremony at the new hospital. "Topping off" is a traditional ceremony to commemorate the placement of the last steel beam in a new building. The work crew painted the last beam white and everyone in attendance got to sign the beam before it was placed into position. We were then treated to a picnic lunch provided by the primary contractor Flintco and the subcontractors. The ceremony was very exciting and we finally got to see the entire steel structure. An area of 375,000 square feet is quite a large building. The new hospital will contain cardiology equipment so that we will not have to refer our patients to outside facilities. A full range of imaging equipment will also be included in the new hospital.

Walking trails will be built around the new hospital for the use of employees and guests. We are promoting walking as an exercise especially because it has been proven

to be valuable in the treatment of diabetes. As you know, diabetes continues to be on the rise among Indian people and a good regimen of exercise not only reduces symptoms, but it also can reduce the type of treatment for patients. Some diabetes patients have been able to reduce treatment from taking shots to swallowing pills, just because those patients have been exercising!

Bill Lance reported the following statistics: for the month of October, 2008, there were 253 hospitalizations at Carl Albert Indian Health Facility. The number of outpatient visits at Carl Albert was 21,598. October Emergency Room visits were 969. October saw 294 surgeries and the Same-day Clinic saw 2,845 patients.

The Family Practice Clinic in Ada saw 1,929 patients in October. The Ardmore Clinic saw 3,112 patients and the Tishomingo Clinic saw 1,967. The Durant Clinic saw 2,782 patients and the Purcell Clinic saw 2,305 in October.

I would love to hear from you! Please contact me through my email address [mary.green@chickasaw.net](mailto:mary.green@chickasaw.net) or through the address and telephone number listed elsewhere in this and every issue of the Chickasaw Times and on the Chickasaw Nation web site. My articles are also located on the web site. Until next month, thank you.