

HEALTH



Oklahoma State University App Center.

COURTESY PHOTO

OSU App Center creates app to identify home health hazards

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STILLWATER – The Oklahoma State University App Center has developed a mobile app for information about household health risks that professionals can share with individuals who want help in identifying indoor environmental hazards.

OSU designed the Healthy Homes Partners app for the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development or HUD, which is among the key federal agencies and national sources for information about household hazards such as mold contamination, carbon monoxide poisoning, lead exposure, asthma triggers and other risks.

Rather than a consumer guide, the Healthy Homes Partners app puts technical information and guidance in the hands of housing experts and health care providers who advise people living with dangerous health conditions.

“It allows indoor environmental health professionals to help their clients navigate common residential health hazards and identify sources, find mitigation and removal recommendations and find more information from federal agencies,”

said Dr. Michael Goldschmidt, national director of the Healthy Homes Partnership and associate teaching professor and state extension housing specialist at the University of Missouri in Columbia. “The app provides the stakeholder with specific action steps to use with their clients and a room-by-room checklist.”

Participants in app testing said the checklist is one of its most valuable features. During home visits, housing experts will use the app to advise clients while inspecting each room of the home. The app then generates a report with recommendations.

Until now, that information was only available in online or in printed publications, but updating material was slow. The mobile app makes updating the information faster. For example, the app can be revised rapidly as recommendations change for what is considered dangerous blood lead levels in children.

“We were able to take feedback from beta testing and add improvements that the partners really liked, such as the checklist,” said Jai Rajendran, head of the OSU App Center and technology and business development manager for the university’s Technology Development Center. “Working with a large

government agency like HUD was valuable for the developers because they got to know how to interact with a large client and manage a project this size.”

For OSU App Center student interns, who work as developers and designers, experience working with mobile apps of varying complexities, both with university and off-campus projects, provides valuable career training and grows the center’s abilities. “The App Center is a good resource for projects from any size organization,” said Rajendran.

Funding to develop the informational app was awarded to OSU through a competitive grant from the HUD Office of Lead Hazard Control and Healthy Homes, its Healthy Homes Partnership, and the U.S. Department of Agriculture’s National Institute of Food and Agriculture. The Healthy Homes Partnership is made up of university extension services and federal agencies.

“Based on our resources at the App Center, I knew we had a good chance of securing the grant,” said Dr. Gina Peek, OSU assistant professor and housing and consumer specialist and the grant applicant. “The App Center worked with HUD partners to develop something that many people today prefer to use to receive information.”

Making the most of your Doctor Visits — Part 2

Last week we looked at what to do prior to and during your doctor’s visit. Now let’s look at what to do after you meet with your doctor.

First, you will need to follow his or her instructions to keep your health on track. Your doctor may have you fill a prescription or make another appointment for tests, lab work, or a follow-up visit. It is important for you to follow your doctor’s instructions.

It also is important to call your doctor if you are unclear about any instructions or have more questions. Create a list of follow-up questions to ask if you: have a health problem, need to get or change a medicine, need a medical test or need to have surgery.

There are other times when you should follow up on your care and call your doctor. Call your doctor: if you experience any side effects or other problems with your medicines, if your symptoms get worse after seeing the doctor, if you receive any new prescriptions or start taking any over-the-counter medicines, to get results of any tests you’ve had or to ask about test results you do not understand. Do not assume that no news is good news.

Your questions help your doctor and health care team learn more about you. Your doctor’s answers to your questions can help



LEE HILLIARD

you make better decisions, receive a higher level of care, avoid medical harm, and feel better about your health care. Your questions can also lead to better results for your health.

Locally, Community Health Center of Northeast Oklahoma, Inc., dba Afton, Grove and Welch Community Health Centers continue to serve the area with the finest in personalized health care. For details or to schedule an appointment contact (918) 257-8029, (918) 801-7504 or (918) 788-3918 or check us out on the web at www.chcneo.com, like us on Facebook or follow us on Twitter. A sliding payment scale is available for patients based on family size and income.

Lee Hilliard, D.Min., Th.D., CAC, is the Outreach and Enrollment Specialist at the Community Health Center of Northeast Oklahoma. For local enrollment assistance with Marketplace, Insure Oklahoma or SoonerCare, please contact Lee at 918-219-4486 or lhilliard@chcneo.org.

KEEPING FAMILIES HEALTHY

Lauren Mitchell, D.O.
Board-certified
Family Medicine

Growing up in Mustang, Okla., Dr. Mitchell knew from an early age she wanted to practice medicine. She was drawn to family medicine because she wanted the opportunity to develop closer, long-term relationships with her patients.

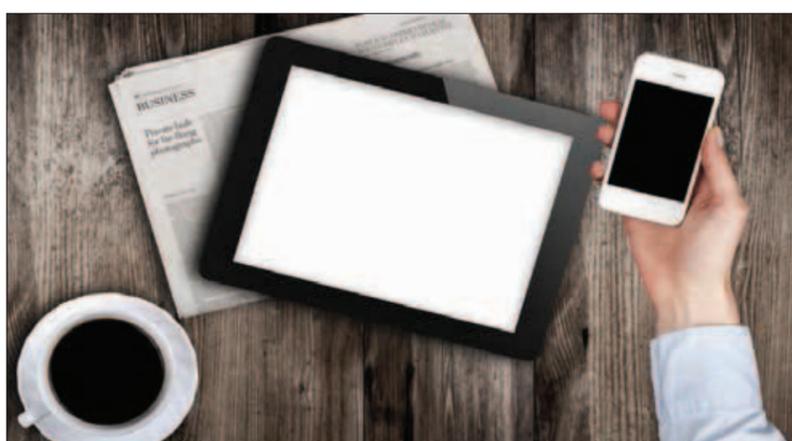
“I enjoy working with families. From newborns to geriatrics, each patient has unique needs. Whether I am educating them on how to live a healthier lifestyle, or helping them through a sudden illness, disease or injury, I am there for my patients every step of the way. It is very fulfilling to provide care through the various stages of their lives,” said Dr. Mitchell.

Dr. Mitchell earned her medical degree at Oklahoma State University College of Osteopathic Medicine in Tulsa, Okla. She completed her family medicine residency at the Durant Family Medicine Residency program.

She accepts Medicare, Medicaid and most insurance. Her office is located in the INTEGRIS Doctors Office Center at 310 Second Ave. SW, Suite 102, in Miami. Call 918-540-7814 today to schedule an appointment.

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