

OUTPATIENT FEEDING THERAPY PROGRAM OUTCOMES

Mary Free Bed 

Service Dates: April 2023 - April 2024

OUR APPROACH

Our team focuses on helping infants and children improve their ability to eat. We take into account each patient's physical abilities, medical requirements and nutritional needs.

OUR MULTIDISCIPLINARY TEAM

- Occupational therapists
- Speech-language pathologists
- Registered dietitian

We assess and treat babies, kids and teens with a wide variety of diagnoses and causes for feeding disorders, including:

- Chewing and swallowing difficulty
- Developmental delay
- Selective eating, autism, ARFID
- Oral aversion
- Breast- or bottle-feeding difficulty
- Tube-feeding support or weaning

STANDARDIZATION OF CARE

Our goal is to create a therapeutic environment that is positive and nurturing, where all children can achieve favorable outcomes.

This past fiscal year, we added an evidenced-based outcomes measure to our EMR, the Feeding Impact Scale.

COLLABORATION

When appropriate, we work closely with health care providers and community resources (health departments, WIC, school administrators, etc.) to provide your child with appropriate resources. We also collaborate with our Early Development program to provide NICU stepdown care for infants with persisting feeding difficulties after an inpatient stay.

VITAL STIMULATION THERAPY

We have two speech-language pathologists certified in neuromuscular electrical stimulation (NMES), also known as vital stimulation therapy. This can be a helpful tool for treating children at risk for aspiration. The non-invasive treatment, in conjunction with exercises, promotes swallowing safety.

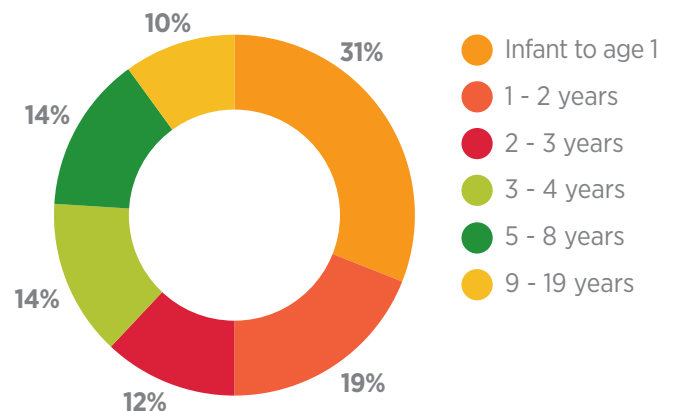


VIDEOFLUOROSCOPIC SWALLOW STUDY

Our trained therapists complete videofluoroscopic (x-ray) imaging of swallowing function in infants and children who have suspected swallowing safety concerns. This is a key tool used in identification of aspiration and is essential in diagnosis and treatment of certain swallowing disorders.

This year our team of therapists completed 192 swallow studies.

AGES OF PATIENTS SERVED



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Mary Free Bed *kids*

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GIFTS IMPACT OUR PROGRAM AND COMMUNITY

“Feeding problems during infancy and early childhood are prevalent and rising in number due to increased survival of infants with extreme prematurity and medical complexity, and a growing population of children with developmental disabilities, such as autism spectrum disorder.”

Source: Thoyre et al. “The Pediatric Eating Assessment Tool,” Journal of Pediatric Gastroenterology and Nutrition, Volume 66, Number 2, February 2018, pp 299-305

Last year, we were able to continue providing patients with registered dietitian support, thanks to a generous gift from Amway. Demand for dietitian services has increased due to the growing number of patients we are serving. Grant support is vital in order to provide these services to our patients.

Over the past fiscal year, grant funding from Amway and Comstock Rotary has allowed for the purchase of new bottles, cups, and oral motor tools. We use these in our program and also provide them to patient families to ensure safe feeding at home. As the community need for feeding therapy services continues to increase, we’ve expanded our team. Thanks to grant support, our therapists attended training in specialty areas of pediatric feeding to better serve our patients.

WHAT PEOPLE ARE SAYING

“ We’ve had feeding therapy services at different facilities in the past, and we’re impressed with your comprehensive services. We’ve never had the opportunity to talk about nutrition with therapists, and we appreciate you [Registered Dietitian + Speech-Language Pathologists] so much!

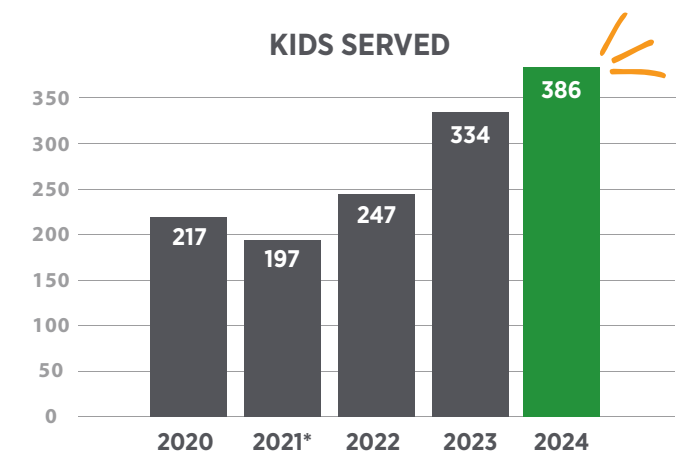
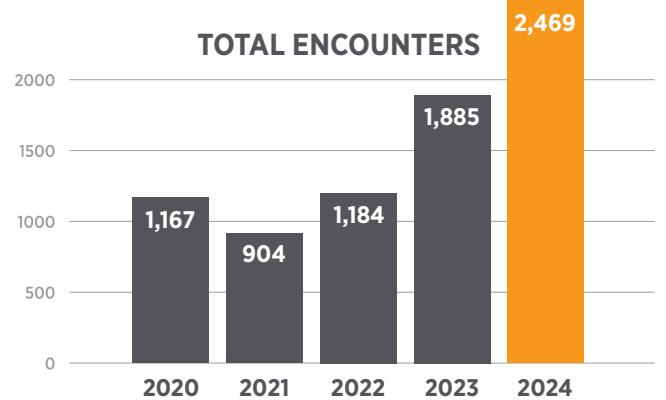
“ We can’t thank you both [Registered Dietitian + Occupational Therapy] enough for working with us and being so kind and patient.

In alignment with the Mary Free Bed mission, we’re dedicated to providing services to underserved families. Because of this, we receive minimal insurance reimbursement. Grant support is needed to provide services to these families.



This program is sponsored in part by a gift from Amway.

PATIENTS SERVED



*Visits were limited March-June 2020 due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

NOTE: From April 2023 - 2024 the Feeding Program served 386 patients, our largest number of patients to date. The graph above reflects the number of total encounters. For example, a child who visits two times a week for eight weeks would represent 16 encounters.

PATIENTS SERVED by Insurance Type*

