

A healthcare professional, likely a nurse or doctor, is shown from the chest up, wearing blue scrubs and glasses. She is smiling warmly at a patient whose back is to the camera. The background is a blurred clinical setting. The image is partially covered by a blue overlay with a dotted pattern and an orange diagonal stripe.

Aledade

Prioritizing Preventive Care:

A CHC's Success with Annual
Wellness Visits

Aledade.com



Central Virginia Health Services (CVHS) first opened its doors in 1970 in Buckingham, Virginia, starting as a few clinicians seeing patients in a trailer.

Today, CVHS is the largest community health center (CHC) in Virginia with 20 locations throughout the commonwealth, serving over 48,000 patients annually.

CVHS offers a full spectrum of services to the communities they serve, including dental care, pharmacy, addiction treatment, LGBTQ+ services, prenatal care, preventive screenings and more. Over the years, they've added new departments, expanded behavioral health services, opened school-based clinics and added a Nurse Practitioner residency program.

"Our organization has grown from 1970 to what it is today because of dedicated staff that believe in our mission," Leslie Hanley, Clinical Pharmacy Manager at CVHS Buckingham, said. "We do our best to offer our services to everyone, regardless of their ability to pay. We have sites across Virginia covering a large service area, so we're able to reach a lot of different communities."

Preventive, accessible care is at the core of community health. In order to achieve the best possible patient results, Hanley has built a team of clinical pharmacists and valuable ancillary

staff member schedulers with many patient-centered goals, one of the main goals being the implementation of a solid annual wellness visit (AWV) workflow.

..... “
We have an amazing group of people that work for CVHS to help take care of our patients. Our clinical pharmacy team is no different. We've always held ourselves to a high standard of care, and that certainly includes the annual wellness visits."

— Leslie Hanley

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Through collaboration and a dedication to patient wellbeing, CVHS' AWV process has both proved successful and received recognition from other health centers.

Improved patient outcomes start with teamwork.

AWVs are critical for a number of reasons: not only are they associated with a decrease in health care spending, they also allow clinicians to connect with patients, identify barriers to care and treat conditions before they worsen.



Shelby Wears, Clinical Pharmacist at CVHS Buckingham and a member of Hanley's team, has played a key role in delivering quality AWVs for nearly 4 years.

"It doesn't just take the clinical pharmacist. It takes the whole team," Wears said. "Each of the clinical pharmacists have their own scheduler. They are solely dedicated to reaching out and finding these eligible patients."

Wears said the process starts with patient outreach to get AWVs scheduled, and a reminder call the day before their visit. Once the patient is onsite, and to ensure each patients' unique needs are being met, Wears identifies the following:

- **When the patient was last seen**
- **Most recent screening(s) completed**
- **What specialists the patient may be seeing**
- **Medications the patient is taking**
- **Any necessary immunizations to recommend**

"I make sure to keep lots of notes, just so I can capture everything and then be able to follow up with them the next year," Wears said.

On top of their many other benefits, AWVs provide a crucial opportunity for patient education. Wears said she makes sure to both answer any questions the patient has, and takes the time to explain health concerns they may not be aware of.

"I had a visit with a long-time smoker who had uncontrolled blood pressure and who was unaware that her tobacco use could contribute to her high blood pressure. She told me that if she had known that fact previously, she would have stopped smoking years ago," Wears said. "The AWV allows more time to have such conversations with patients to better understand what they already know and provide additional education to help improve their outcomes."

Once the AWV is complete, Wears recaps the main highlights of the visit and develops a focus plan going forward, acting as a resource for the patient to reach out to with any questions.

“The really great thing about our AWW process is developing a relationship with our patients,” Wears said. “They remind me of the things that I told them about, and it feels great. You start to see their improvement.”

CVHS’ AWW workflow has indeed produced positive outcomes. In a 2023 Uniform Data System (UDS) screening report that Hanley shared comparing CVHS patients who received regular AWWs versus those who did not, the results were clear.

“The UDS measures were improved for the patients who received an AWW versus those that did not,” Hanley said. “That shows that we are doing our job with getting the patient scheduled, seeing those patients and then doing the follow-up work afterwards. That follow-up work allows for care gap closures and helps lead to positive patient outcomes.”



The AWW allows more time to have such conversations with patients to better understand what they already know and provide additional education to help improve their outcomes.”

– *Shelby Wears*

For patients who received regular AWWs, the UDS measures for adult BMI & counseling, tobacco use counseling, mammograms, depression and diabetes control all exceeded CVHS’ yearly goal – further highlighting how imperative preventive, equitable care is.

“Our measures speak for themselves. It shows the value of clinical pharmacist completion of a comprehensive AWW,” Hanley said. “These are the types of results you’re going to get, and they’ve led to other facilities contacting us to learn our process and workflow.”



With an existing focus on health equity and moving to the value-based care model, CVHS joined an Aledade CHC-only ACO in 2023 for performance year 2024.

“One of the hardest barriers that our team has faced has been getting provider buy-in for AWWs,” Hanley said. “Our partnership [with Aledade] has assisted with that, because there’s a massive push to get AWWs done, and the clinical pharmacy team takes good care of the patients.”

Aledade’s actionable patient data and technology, like the Aledade App, provides CHCs with the tools they need to optimize AWW processes. The App’s unique Daily Huddle feature delivers access to integrated data, patient prioritization tools, care management and streamlined workflows.

“The Daily Huddle helps the clinicians, with the fact that it states when their AWW is due,” Wears said. “It ultimately saves them time, and that’s helping with the amount of visits we’re doing.”

As they continue to grow and expand their services, CVHS has been a voice for the importance of AWWs to communities around the nation.

An ideal future means equitable, preventive care for all.

Even though CVHS has only been an Aledade member for less than a year, their success with AWVs has sparked interest from other CHC members – and different organizations as well.

“I’ve talked to people from across the United States regarding our clinical pharmacy program, including AWVs,” Hanley said.

..... “
I’m willing to share the knowledge,
because that’s the only way we’re going
to grow this profession and help
more patients.”

– Leslie Hanley

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As their Aledade ACO participation progresses, CVHS’ goals for the future include further expansion for accessible services, increased positive patient outcomes and a continued focus on health equity.

“Aledade’s technology has continued to improve and become helpful, and it will be beneficial as we receive more payor data,” Hanley said. “Whatever is needed in the community, we want to make sure that we are addressing those needs. We’re always looking for ways to improve patient care, but also to improve advocacy for what we do.”

Participating in a CHC-only ACO not only helps maintain a focus on the unique challenges health

centers face, it also provides the opportunity for health centers to invest revenue back into their communities.

“We reinvest all of our funding back into our patients,” Hanley said. “Our partnership will help us have more access to funding so we can continue to grow and provide more services.”

As the CMS 2030 deadline for all Medicare beneficiaries under the care of a clinician to be in an accountable care relationship approaches, the move to value is critical. CVHS’ commitment to preventive care has kept patients out of the hospital, provided an opportunity for patient education and counseling, and produced positive results – a shining example of value-based outcomes.

“It’s rewarding to know that they trust us. They value our opinions,” Wears said. “What I enjoy most with my job are the interactions with the patients, getting to know them better, and figuring out who they are individually, to see how we can get them to have a better outcome.”

Aledade is proud to work alongside and support community health centers, like CVHS, who share a deep dedication to their community and the goal to provide quality care for all patients.

Explore the incredible work that CVHS is doing today: www.cvhsinc.org/



Discover how your
health center can optimize
AWV workflows and step
into success.



The background of the image is a solid blue color. Overlaid on this background is a pattern of numerous thin, dotted white lines. These lines radiate outwards from a central point, creating a starburst or sunburst effect. The lines are evenly spaced and cover the entire area of the image.

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