**NEWS FROM THEDACARE®**

***For Immediate Release***

**May 26, 2020**

**THEDACARE ANNOUNCES FOCUS PROGRAM**

***Continuing Dedication to the Community, Empowering Students to Make Safe Choices***

NEENAH, Wis. – For more than two decades, the Trauma Center at ThedaCare Regional Medical Center-Neenah, with funding from the ThedaCare Family of Foundations and community support, has hosted a program aiming to empower students to make safe choices by shedding light on the dangers of risky driving behaviors and their often life-changing outcomes.

Leaders are proud to announce the launch of ThedaCare’s FOCUS Program, a new name for the distracted driving prevention program currently known as the P.A.R.T.Y. at the PAC.

“The new FOCUS name is meant to be more indicative of the program itself,” said Ray Georgen, MD, ThedaCare System Trauma Medical Director and one of the leaders who started the program more than 20 years ago. “It will allow us to connect a more straight-forward name that better emphasizes the initiatives important to our region.”

The FOCUS program stands for:

**F**ocus on driving

**O**thers are affected

**C**lear distractions

**U**nderstand that substances impair judgement

**S**afely reach your destination

Each year, students from dozens of school districts join together to watch the program at the Fox Cities Performing Arts Center, showing students the process of a trauma situation, what it is like to be airlifted and to need emergency surgery.

“The core of the program will always remain the same – we are here to educate, engage and save lives,” said Dr. Georgen. “The program does evolve slightly each year based on regional data and trends. If you’ve seen the program more than one time, you know it’s never exactly the same.”

The program began in 1998 as a hospital tour, focused solely on drinking and driving. In 2004, demand exceeded capacity. In 2005, the program ran at Theda Clark and at the Fox Cities P.A.C. A decade after the initial launch, it moved exclusively to the P.A.C. Over the years, the presentation has evolved as new substances, distractions and technologies emerge in the communities we serve.

ThedaCare is grateful to be part of a generous community that makes it possible to present this program every year and help teens understand the risks associated with distracted driving. Without the personal and philanthropic commitment of our community members, parents and organizations, the impact this program provides wouldn’t be possible.

“FOCUS will continue to offer education with meaningful messaging that will move people to change their behavior,” said Dr. Georgen. “Each person can save a life, positively impacting others in the community and future generations.”

The FOCUS programs are scheduled to be held at the PAC October 20 and 21, 2020.

More than 79,000 students have gone through the program since 1998. To learn more about the program and its history, [click here](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LNW_Y-zCTyY&feature=youtu.be).

If you or your company would like to sponsor the ThedaCare FOCUS Program, please contact the ThedaCare Family of Foundations at foundations@thedacare.org.

**About ThedaCare**

For more than 110 years, ThedaCare® has been committed to improving the health of the communities it serves in Northeast and Central Wisconsin. The organization delivers care to a community of more than 600,000 residents in 18 counties and employs more than 7,000 health care professionals. ThedaCare has 180 locations including seven hospitals located in Appleton, Neenah, Berlin, New London, Shawano, Waupaca and Wild Rose. ThedaCare is the first in Wisconsin to be a Mayo Clinic Care Network Member, giving our specialists the ability to consult with Mayo Clinic experts on a patient’s care. ThedaCare is a not-for-profit health care organization with a level II trauma center, comprehensive cancer treatment, stroke and cardiac programs as well as a foundation dedicated to community service.

For more information, visit [www.thedacare.org](http://www.thedacare.org) or follow ThedaCare on [Facebook](https://www.facebook.com/ThedaCare) and [Twitter](https://twitter.com/ThedaCareHealth).

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