FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
Date: September XX, 2013

Center for Innovation and Research awards grant to fund development of medication management mobile app

LANSING, Mich. – Sparrow and MSU’s Center for Innovation and Research has awarded a grant to fund the development of a mobile app that aims to tackle an issue that causes thousands of unnecessary deaths each year.

The $75,000 grant, the first from the newly created Center for Innovation and Research, was awarded to Erin Sarzynski, M.D., M.S., of Michigan State University, Department of Family Medicine, Geriatrics Division. The grant will be used to develop and test a mobile app that will streamline medication management for Patients with chronic illnesses and encourage adherence to medication regimens.

“Among Patients with chronic illness, approximately 50 percent do not take their medications as prescribed, which leads to poor Patient outcomes, decreased quality of life, and even death,” said Dr. Sarzynski. “We intend for this tool to empower Patients with chronic illnesses, like diabetes and heart disease, to play a more active role in managing their medications.”

Researchers will develop a mobile app that automatically and accurately populates Patients’ medication instructions from medication labels and provide customized dosing reminders. The app will be developed in partnership with a Michigan-based small business and piloted by local Patients.

Researchers will use the app to track the pilot group’s adherence to their drug regimens and seek feedback from the Patients and their Physicians about their experiences using the app. None of the currently available medication adherence apps are clinically tested, and all require cumbersome manual data entry.

Dr. Sarzynski is partnering with Ronald Melaragni, RPh, Director of Sparrow Pharmacy Plus and David Weismantel, MD, MS, Director of the Sparrow-MSU Family Medicine Residency Program. As collaborators, Melaragni will assist in pharmacy data management and Weismantel will assist in Patient recruitment and data analysis.

“The Center was created to focus on high-priority projects that can be rapidly developed and deployed for the benefit of our Patients,” said Interim Director of the Center, Barbara Given, Ph.D., R.N.
F.A.A.N., Michigan State University Distinguished Professor and Director of the PhD Program. “We hope this research will develop an innovative solution and prevent avoidable hospitalizations that will promote patient safety and quality of care.”

The Center for Innovation and Research, created last year, is a major joint initiative between Sparrow and MSU that aims to seek new approaches to quality, safe, and cost effective care and deliver Patient-centered, evidence-based best practices.

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Sparrow, a member of the prestigious Mayo Clinic Care Network, is mid-Michigan’s premier healthcare organization and includes hospitals in Lansing, St. Johns, Ionia and Carson City, as well as Physicians Health Plan, Sparrow Physicians Health Network, the Sparrow Medical Group and the Michigan Athletic Club. Sparrow is affiliated with Michigan State University’s three human health colleges. Through these partnerships and the dedication of our 10,000 Caregivers, Sparrow pursues a vision to be nationally recognized as a leader in quality and Patient experience. For more information, visit sparrow.org.