



The Eighth Annual Weitzman Symposium attracted over 200 leaders in healthcare from around the country including policy makers and practitioners.

Community Health Center, Inc.

Community Health Center, Inc. is a private, non-profit agency. Since 1972, we have been building a world-class primary health care system, that is committed to caring for special populations, and that is focused on improving health outcomes for our patients as well as building healthy communities.



EIGHTH ANNUAL **Weitzman Symposium**

Seizing the Moment: From Expanding Access to Transforming Care

The **Eighth Annual Weitzman Symposium** was hosted by CHC's Weitzman Center for Innovation in Community Health and Primary Care on May 16. This year's topic "*Seizing the Moment: From Expanding Access to Transforming Care*" focused on transforming primary health care.

Keynote speaker **Trevor Torres**, a witty 17 year old, self-declared "diabetes evangelist" set the tone for the day with his perspective on what the "millennial generation" expects from health care and how they want to be treated. Trevor made a plea on behalf of his techno-savvy, health-conscious generation, that it would be more efficient, for both patient and provider, if questions and answers related to a chronic condition could be texted, allowing the patient to become the expert of their own care. He went on to state that "it's ok if your patient doesn't need you anymore. ...it means you win," which drew a positive reaction from the audience. Following his presentation there was a panel discussion that included some of CHC's millennial who shared their own perspectives and experiences while treating millennial patients.

The symposium went on to focus on the rapidly changing interface between primary and specialty care, with nationally-known leader and creator of **Project ECHO®** (Extension of Community Health Outcomes) **Dr. Sanjeev Aurora**. He spoke about what inspired him to create the ECHO® model of case-based, distance learning, between primary care and specialty providers, its outcomes, and how it is being replicated across the country. Dr. Aurora's presentation was followed by a live video connection of the audience to CHC's own Project ECHO® focused on managing chronic pain, which was moderated by **Dr. Bennet Davis** from the **Integrated Pain Center of Arizona** (the expert faculty for this Project ECHO Program). Dr. Davis founded IPCAZ in 2002 to pursue the mission of building the most effective model for patient centered, evidence based, quality focused, cost-conscious interdisciplinary pain/sports medicine health program.

Dr. Rob Aseltine of the **Institute of Public Health Research of the University of Connecticut**, along with CHC's Chief Medical Officer, **Dr. Nwando Olayiwola**, spoke about bridging the gap between primary and specialty care providers using **eConsults**, a project that the two organizations have been partnering on for the last two years. eConsults is a technology based, working relationship between a primary care provider and a specialist that allows CHC's patient population to access specialty care consultation without having to travel to another office and incur additional, often expensive, medical bills. The concept of eConsults first came to CHC when Dr. Mitch Katz, director of the Los Angeles County Department of Health Services, presented at the 2008 Symposium about the Healthy San Francisco program, which is the U.S.'s first municipal universal health care system.

Continued inside 



CHC Participates in Project to Improve Care Coordination for Hypertensive Patients

Community Health Center, Inc., Middlesex Hospital, the Chatham Health District, and members of the Coalition, have partnered up on a six month project to improve care coordination through blood pressure monitoring in hypertensive patients. The project is being funded by a grant awarded from the **State Department of Public Health, Heart Disease and Stroke Prevention Program;** as part of the **Affordable Care Act's Community Transformation Grant Program,** which encourages communities to identify high priority projects.

Building upon a 2011 federal HRSA-funded hypertension self-management project, CHC and Middlesex Hospital will collaborate to further develop and finalize the model/protocol and update the existing policy for care coordination and self-blood pressure monitoring. Three registered nurses from **Middlesex Hospital Homecare, Middlesex Hospital Center for Chronic Care Management** and CHC respectively, will be trained to become nurse care coordinators (NCCs). These NCCs will act as intermediaries between clinicians and patients, providing real-time disease management, medication adjustment, and care coordination. Additionally, patients will be trained to utilize monitoring equipment and record results. Self-management emphasizing patient empowerment, goal setting, and problem-solving skills will be provided.

Dr. Daren Anderson, VP/Chief Quality Officer will serve as Co-Project Director alongside **Dr. Alan Douglass**, Director, Family Medicine Residency Program at Middlesex Hospital. Their existing working relationship, identical electronic health record system, and similar model and infrastructure lay the foundation for a cohesive partnership. Additional project partners include Middlesex Hospital's Homecare, Center for Chronic Care Management, and Community Benefit departments. Chatham Health District will serve as fiduciary; provide project management, and community engagement and education.



Affordable Care Act Allows For Major Renovation of School-Based Health Center in Middletown

In December of 2011, CHC announced the receipt of grant funding provided by the Affordable Care Act to be used towards the upgrade of its school-based health centers. A portion of the funding was utilized to remodel the current setting at **Woodrow Wilson Middle School** in Middletown. On February 28, CHC hosted an open house event to reveal the newly renovated space.

The Woodrow Wilson school-based health center was first opened and licensed for care in March of 1995. Some of the major renovation highlights include a "pod model" that reflects the Community Health Center Inc.'s main sites to deliver care more efficiently, a swing room for mobile dental, upgraded medical equipment, all new millwork, new flooring and freshly painted colorful walls.

CHC's school-based health centers are committed to reducing absences, improving performance, and preventing chronic diseases in students. These goals are obtained through comprehensive primary care, including immunizations, complete physical examinations, medication management, intervention for acute chronic illnesses and long-term chronic care—with little interruption from the school day. Students without health insurance receive free services and are provided assistance in determining their eligibility for a public health insurance program, such as HUSKY.



Shown above: Middletown Mayor Dan Drew cuts the ribbon with CHC staff and Woodrow Wilson Middle school students.



Accolades for CHC Staff

CHC Nurse Receives 2013 Nightingale Award in Nursing Excellence

During National Nurses Week (May 6–12, 2013) **Natalie Bycenski, RN, MSN** was honored as a recipient of the **2013 Nightingale Award for Excellence in Nursing**.

Natalie received her master's in pediatric nursing from MGH Institute of Health Professions before joining CHC's staff. For nearly 8 years, she has been working as a primary care nurse at Community Health Center, Inc. In her role as Nurse Manager of CHC of Meriden, Natalie oversees a diverse group of medical assistants and nurses who provide primary and obstetrical care. She also trains nurse supervisors for other CHC sites. She is active in quality improvement activities; working tirelessly to identify opportunities to address care coordination, ensuring high quality care for every patient. As an expert in immunization and vaccinations, Natalie serves on CHC's immunization committee, and holds the chair position on the flu planning committee.

Natalie is described by her colleagues as embodying professionalism, and as a teacher that delivers not only good lessons, but a passion for nursing that comes from the heart.

The **Nightingale Awards for Excellence in Nursing**, Connecticut's largest statewide nursing recognition program, is a collaborative effort to celebrate outstanding nurses and elevate the nursing profession. The goals of the program are to encourage retention, inspire future nurses, focus public attention and recognize the breadth and scope of nursing practice at the local level.



Natalie Bycenski, RN, MS



Amy Gagliardi
Senior Program Manager, Prenatal

CHC's Prenatal Staff—Working to Improve Birth Outcomes, One County at a Time

Amy Gagliardi, Senior Program Manager, Prenatal, recently participated in the inaugural year of **The National Leadership Academy for the Public's Health's** (NLAPH) leadership development initiative. Connecticut's team project—*"Promoting Maternal and Infant Health in New London County"*—addressed strategies related to improving birth outcomes and prenatal care. The team, led by the CT Department of Public Health, produced **The New London Maternal-Infant Resource Guide**—a comprehensive, user-friendly document that provides contact information for maternal and child health resources within the county, including Healthy Start, WIC, Family Planning, Health Insurance, Case Management, Visiting Nurse Services, Hospital Classes and Services, Young Parent Services, Department of Social Services and more.

Raquel Espinoza, Childbirth Educator, has been accepted into the **Women's Health Leadership Institute** (WHLI) as a Community Health Worker Regional Trainee, as part of a new three-year national initiative of the **Department of Health and Human Services Office on Women's Health** (DHHS-OWH). Ms. Espinoza's project—*"Promoting Prenatal Care in Middlesex County"*—aims to educate women in Middlesex County about prenatal care services available to them at Community Health Center, Inc. and other family planning organizations and create a coalition among the organizations that will, if successful, minimize competition among care providers and make accessing necessary care easier for expectant mothers. The project places emphasis on assisting women who are on Medicaid or may be under or uninsured, and if successful, will improve birth outcomes in Middlesex County by increasing access to important prenatal care and making important information readily available to pregnant women.



Raquel Espinoza
Childbirth Educator

Kudos to the **CHC Meriden 5K: Race for Mental Health** planning committee for receiving recognition at the United Way's 2013 Annual Awards Ceremony.

Continued from cover: Eighth Annual Weitzman Symposium

From Washington, DC, **Dr. Joe Selby**, Executive Director of **Patient Centered Outcomes Research Institute** (PCORI), an organization created by the Affordable Care Act, spoke from a research and policy perspective on designing research with the patient's interest in mind. He was joined by a representative of one of the new PCORI funded projects at Brigham and Women's Hospital, **Dr. Anug Dalal**, who is also an instructor at **Harvard Medical School**. Dr. Dalal spoke to the benefits of patient-centered medical home-hospital collaborations in improving transitions in care.

Sue Birch, RN, MBA, Executive Director of the **Colorado Department of Health Care Policy and Financing** led a discussion on how state health policy initiatives are a driving force behind improved health outcomes.

CHC, Inc. thanks the **Universal Health Care Foundation of Connecticut** and **Quest Diagnostics** for their support of the 8th Annual Weitzman Symposium.



Shown above from left to right:
Melanie Wilde, Program Manager,
Mobile Dental; Pat Wildes, HealthCorps
Navigator; Jennifer Smith, Clinical
Supervisor, Nurturing Connections.



Fostering Healthier Communities

CHC and The City of Meriden Host Inaugural 5K—Race for Mental Health Over \$5,000 raised for United Way's Mental Health Services

On Saturday, May 11th, 2013, over a hundred runners converged on Hubbard Park in Meriden to race for a great cause. The inaugural **CHC Meriden 5K: Race for Mental Health** was presented by the Community Health Center, Inc. and sponsored by nine local businesses and organizations including lead sponsor **Anthem Blue Cross and Blue Shield**, the **City of Meriden Mayor's Office**, **Greater Meriden Chamber of Commerce Health Wellness Council**, **Hunter's Ambulance**, **Meriden Department of Health and Human Services**, **Meriden YMCA**, **MidState Medical Center**, **Ovation Benefits**, and **Rushford Center**. Despite the inclement weather, there were more than 150 participants for the 5K run, Health Walk, and Superhero-themed Kids Fun Run, resulting in \$5,500 raised to improve mental health care in Connecticut. The event is poised to become an annual occurrence in the greater Meriden community, with excitement already generated for next year's race.

May is Mental Health Awareness Month making the event incredibly relevant at a time when both state and national efforts are being made to address mental health, the stigmas attached to it, and improving the quality of treatment that is being delivered by caregivers. One-hundred percent of the proceeds are being distributed by the United Way of Meriden and Wallingford to local organizations dedicated to mental health care. The planning committee for the event was recognized for their efforts at the United Way's Annual Awards Ceremony.

Health Day Event Provides Free Services to Stamford's Immigrant Population

On March 25th, 2013 the **Franklin Street Community Health Center** and **Neighbors Link Stamford** co-hosted the second annual **Health Day**, an event that provides Stamford's immigrant population with much needed medical and dental services. During the day-long event, held at Neighbors Link Stamford, CHC's Mobile Dental unit provided cleanings for 41 people, 13 of which became registered CHC patients. Additionally, over 70 people had their blood pressure and blood sugar levels checked. According to the CHC staff members that were on site for the event, the positive feeling in the air was palpable as participants expressed their appreciation for the services they received. Many of the folks who received cleanings had never had a cleaning in their life.

The organizations have been collaborating over the course of the past two years to provide health care and wellness education, in a bilingual setting, through a monthly workshop series. These workshops have provided information on diabetes, STDs, nutrition, birth control, high blood pressure, and other relevant health topics to new immigrants in the Stamford area, who otherwise would not have access to such services. These workshops have highlighted the need to provide medical and dental services to the immigrant population and were the catalyst behind creating the event.

AmeriCorps Week 2013 Shines Spotlight on Community Service

Community Health Center Inc.'s HealthCorps Navigators honored National AmeriCorps Week 2013, March 9–17, with service projects focused on helping the homeless and near homeless in communities across Connecticut, including community meals and career prep fairs. The theme—**Wherever You Are, AmeriCorps Works**—paid homage to CHC's Wherever You Are (WYA) program, which provides health care at homeless shelters throughout the state.

This is the fourth class of AmeriCorps members to serve at Community Health Center, Inc. The fourteen member group—who started in September 2012—has a varied educational background, and each member has been placed in a position that relates to their interests and given a supervisor that is more than willing to train and educate the individual in the many aspects that coincide with Community Health Center, Inc. and HealthCorps. In addition to day-to-day responsibilities at CHC, the members actively volunteer their time in the local communities served by CHC.

AmeriCorps Week aims to raise awareness about the program's impact on the direction of the nation, and shines a spotlight on service to encourage more Americans to volunteer. The purpose of AmeriCorps National is to engage members in direct service and capacity-building to address unmet community needs, which closely follows CHC's mission.

Celebrating Over a Decade of Healthy Smiles and Oral Health Achievements

For over a decade, public and private organizations, including CHC, have come together to recognize an oral health awareness movement—**Give Kids A Smile Day** (GKAS). The **American Dental Association** (ADA) started GKAS in 2002 as a way for ADA members to join with others in the community to provide dental services to underserved children. Since its inception, the program has treated 10,000 patients with a total value of service equaling over four million dollars.

During the month of February, CHC's dental offices offered free cleanings, exams, sealants, fillings, fluoride treatments and dental education to a total of 281 children in need.

"CHC's goal for Give Kids A Smile day is to provide access to the full scope of dental services and connect children and families to a regular dental provider to set them on their way to a healthy smile for a lifetime," explained CHC's Chief Dental Officer, **Margaret Drozdowski Maule**, DMD, MBA. "The establishment of regular dental care as early as the age of one is an important aspect of comprehensive primary health care," she continued. "Give Kids A Smile Day is a wonderful opportunity to highlight the importance of oral health and regular dental care, as well as the delivery of the services to the children who need them."

Dr. David Hergott (pictured in the bottom picture to the right) is a private practice dentist in Meriden, and was extremely instrumental in organizing other private practice dental offices to participate in Meriden's Give Kids A Smile Day event. CHC and **Mayor Rohde** recognized his efforts by hosting a breakfast in his honor and presenting him with a commemorative plaque.

