

CHC OPENS SCHOOL BASED HEALTH CENTER

Community Health Center of Cape Cod has assumed operation of the School Based Health Center (SBHC) at Barnstable High School. When Cape Cod Healthcare announced that it would no longer operate the program, school officials and the Massachusetts Department of Public Health (DPH) feared the loss for both students and staff who relied on the SBHC for medical and mental health services. The DPH asked the Health Center to take on the program, and with barely an interruption in service, the program resumed in December 2009.

Working in conjunction with the school nurses, the SBHC provides treatment of acute/minor illness, health education, dental hygiene services, nutrition and exercise counseling, and mental health services.

Services are available to students (with parental approval for minors), faculty and school staff. Public school health services pro-



From left, Melonie Kelly, RN; Shane Peters, APRN-BC; Soraya Prada; and Bonnie Bullard, PhD, LMHC.

vided by the school nurses continue to be available to all students.

Students must enroll in the SBHC and it does not replace their primary care provider. Health Center Chief Executive Officer Karen Gardner explains that the SBHC staff work closely with a student's primary care provider. If a student is not connected with a primary care provider, SBHC staff can help with that as well.

The Health Center's medical and mental health providers at the

SBHC include Anna Hallemeier, MD; Nurse Practitioner Shane Peters, APRN-BC; and Bonnie Bullard, PhD and licensed mental health counselor. Other staff include Soraya Prada, Medical Associate and Certified Medical Interpreter; Megan Luizzi, Program Director, Women's Health Services; and Melonie Kelly, RN, Director of Clinical Services.

Partial funding for the program was provided by the DPH, with other funding coming from donors. Ms. Gardner notes that, given the uncertainty of the Commonwealth's budget, donations from the community will be essential to the program's long-term sustainability.

Inside This Issue

New Board Members	Pg. 2
Dental Expansion	Pg. 3
Sen. O'Leary Visits.....	Pg. 3
Suicide Awareness	Pg. 4
Knitting Group.....	Pg. 6
Capoeira!	Pg. 7
Mark Your Calendars.....	Pg. 8

CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER'S REPORT

Is it possible that Spring is almost here? I know many would characterize the last few months on Cape Cod as dreary and cold. That, however, is not the energy within Community Health Center of Cape Cod!

Since our last newsletter, we have embraced over 1500 new patients and significantly expanded programs and services. We have welcomed new primary care providers: Alice Brown, MD; Donald Angeletti, MD; Nurse Practitioners Mary Agnew and Karen Hussion; and Physician Assistant Tara Armstrong.

Based on overwhelming community demand, we increased access to behavioral health services including psychiatry, counseling, support groups, and substance

abuse and adolescent services.

Our newly established dental program connected nearly 2,500 patients who were previously unable to access dental care. You'll read more in this newsletter about our plans to expand our dental clinic, increase outreach for children and launch an internship program that will expose dental students to the community health center setting.

We opened a school based health center in Barnstable High School, Cape Cod's largest high school; expanded women's health programming; and connected nearly 1,000 individuals to health insurance.

The staff and volunteers of Community Health Center of Cape Cod work hard to reduce barriers and provide access to quality,

comprehensive health services. Our "health care home" concept of care model has contributed to serving as the primary care provider for over 10,000 patients.

Our Board of Directors has spent a great deal of time finalizing our strategic plan. Reaffirming our commitment to improving the health status of our community, this will set our course through 2013. We look forward to sharing the plan with the community later this year.

2010 marks the 45th anniversary of community health centers! We are proud to be part of the infrastructure that provides access to high quality, affordable, culturally competent care to all who need it.

Happy Spring!

Karen L. Gardner

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

President

Michael Bihari, MD

Vice President

David V. Peterson, Jr.

Treasurer

Robert X. Chandler

Clerk

Levi C. Adams

Member-at-Large

Rudolph R. Hunter

Nancy Barnett, MD

Jill Collins

Patricia Harris

John A. Margardo

Anthony Ross

Brenda Swithenbank

M. Judy Tarr, RN, MSN

Anita M. Thacker

Presidents Emeriti

Bernard E. Maney, MD

William M. McDermott, MD

SENIOR STAFF

Karen L. Gardner, Chief Executive Officer

David S. Tager, MD, Chief Medical Officer

Karen L. Bissonnette, CFRE, Chief Development Officer

Paul Chizek, Chief Financial Officer

Melonie Kelly, RN, Director of Clinical Services

Timothy Lineaweaver, LMHC, Director of Behavioral Health

Megan Luizzi, Program Director, Women's Health

John Mancini, DDS, Director of Dental Services

Joanne Mazar, Director of Human Resources

Katy O'Connell, Chief Information Officer

107 Commercial Street

Mashpee, MA 02649

www.chcofcapecod.org

508 477-7090

508 477-5990

(Development Office)

WELCOME NEW BOARD MEMBERS

The Board of Directors and President Michael Bihari, MD, have welcomed three new members to the Health Center's governing body.

Nancy Barnett, MD, and Brenda Swithenbank, both of Falmouth, and Jill Collins, of Forestdale, were recently elected to the Board. Dr. Bihari said, "We're very happy that they have agreed to join our Board. Their experience and input will add a great deal to our organization." As a Federally Qualified Health Center, at least 51 percent the Board must be comprised of patients.

Carol Dubè and Jean Stewart, RN, MSN have retired from the Board of Directors. Dr. Bihari expressed the thanks of the Board. "Our deepest thanks go out to these wonderful people. They have been instrumental in setting the Health Center's course over these last several years, and will be greatly missed!"

NEED FOR DENTAL SERVICES SPURS EXPANSION

When the Marion Jordan Center for Dental Health opened in August 2008, it was expected to be a busy place. Sure enough, demand was immediate, so much so that it was decided that dental services should be limited just to patients covered by the public programs. Even with those restrictions and adding evening hours, a year and a half later, the need far outweighs the capacity of the three-chair clinic. This places expansion of the dental program high on the Health Center's list of priorities.

The numbers tell the story. Since opening, the dental clinic has enrolled nearly 2,500 patients; performed 30,000 dental procedures; and provided 11,500 patient visits, 15 percent more than projected.

The Health Center's "health care home" model ensures that dental care is integrated with medical and behavioral health needs. This approach views the mouth as a vital part of a healthy body.

Medical and dental caregivers balance care based on the patient's full medical history. All dental patients (other than emergency patients) have a physical prior to becoming routine care dental patients. Plans are under way to institute dental screening during the Health Center's monthly diabetes clinics. Dental indicators, such as appointment availability for new and existing patients and treatment of periodontal disease, are now tracked as part of the Quality Improvement plan.

With a special emphasis on children, the dental clinic has become a top referral site for children in need from local schools, the Boys & Girls Club of Cape Cod, local pediatricians, our School Based Health Center at Barnstable High School, and other medical providers. Because of the effectiveness of sealants in preventing tooth decay, pediatric dental patients are monitored to see if they need this treatment.

The program has been so successful, it's time to look to the future. One thing is certain - demand will increase. Once again, adult dental benefits are in jeopardy of being eliminated from MassHealth coverage, which will further impede access for the underserved. Those who end up without any dental insurance will incur sliding scale fees. The loss of MassHealth reimbursement will have a significant financial impact on the Health Center and its patients. To compensate for this, privately insured medical patients of the Health Center will also be accepted. Fund raising will help close the gap.

Plans are under way for an expansion of the dental clinic that will position the program for the future. The expansion plan calls for doubling the existing capacity to six chairs, adding a dental assistant and hygienist and community outreach worker to expand the children's programs. Building on the successful collaboration

continued on page 7

PROMOTING EARLY READING

State Senator Robert O'Leary and a group of children from Kids Klub Child Care Center in Mashpee visited the Mashpee office recently to promote Reading Recovery. Reading Recovery is a nation-wide effort aimed at reducing the number of children who have difficulty learning to read and write.

Health Center physicians Anna Hallemeier, MD and Stephanie Prior, MD participate in the program by giving books to their pediatric patients to encourage them to begin reading at an early age.



Senator O'Leary and potential avid readers

VOLUNTEER SPOTLIGHT

In early 2004, the future for Falmouth Family Planning was in doubt. Faced with the loss of funding, its only paid employee worked for free until new funding could be obtained. Despite the uncertainty, its loyal corps of physician volunteers continued to provide services at weekly clinic sessions to a clientele of mostly uninsured women, who likely would not otherwise have had access to basic health and gynecological services.

Later that year, things started looking up. Falmouth Family Planning became a program of Community Health Center of Cape Cod, and family practitioner Wendy Bone, MD joined the ranks of physician volunteers. Since

then, she has been one of the program's most active supporters and dedicated volunteers.

"Her passion for women's health is clear," says Megan Luizzi, Program Director for the Health Center's Women's Health Service, which now includes the Family Planning program. "Whether it was filling in on short notice or helping us with a fund-raising event, Dr. Bone has always been there for us."

Services expanded considerably since Family Planning became a part of the Health Center. With a combination of paid staff supported by the physician volunteers, it provides gynecological exams, PAP tests, breast exams and referrals for mammograms.



In addition to these women's health services, it also provides screening and treatment for sexually transmitted diseases and HIV/AIDS, pregnancy testing and information, and education and outreach services in area high schools. A bilingual counselor/medical interpreter helps make services available to the Portuguese-speaking community. Services are available to women and men, adults and teens.

Today, Dr. Bone works mostly with the evening teen clinics. "Patient education, especially for young women, has always been close to Dr. Bone's heart," says Ms. Luizzi. "She recognizes the importance of helping young women get the education and services the need to establish healthy lifestyles."

"Family Planning has come a long way, from the early days when we worried every day that we might have to close," said Dr. Bone. "This is in no small part thanks to our dedicated staff, volunteers and advisory board. It was a tremendous team effort."

.....

AWARENESS & PREVENTION OF SUICIDE

Some call it the Cape's "hidden secret". This term refers to the above average suicide rate for the region. Of most concern are the 10 to 24-year-olds who have a rate one and a half times greater than the rest of the Commonwealth.

In the last year, important strides have been made in addressing this problem. The Cape and Islands Suicide Prevention Coalition was formed to raise awareness, identify those at risk and develop specific programs to reduce the number of suicides. The Coalition is made up of 75 interested parties, such as elected officials, state and local governments, health

and human service agencies, and suicide survivors. They have presented a number of public awareness events, the most recent of which was a program on March 15 that featured Brent Runyon, author of "The Burn Journals", a memoir of suicide survival. His talk was followed by a panel discussion with local mental health professionals including the Health Center's Director of Behavioral Health Tim Lineaweaver, who serves as Chair, Cape and Islands Suicide Prevention Coalition; and Maura Weir, Coordinator, Cape and Islands Youth Suicide Prevention Project.

In addition, the Cape and Islands
continued on page 5

MEDICAL OFFICER'S REPORT



The Health Center is known in the community for being innovative and at the forefront of contemporary medical practices. We were one of the first providers on the Cape to implement an electronic medical records system. Our "health care home" model of care is the way of the future. We are now preparing to introduce Shared Medical Visits, sometimes called group visits. These occur when a number of patients, who share a common health status or condition, meet as a group with their health team.

Here's how it works. A shared visit is much like an individual visit in that patient's particular problems are addressed, yet with observers present. During a shared visit, patients meet together for general discussion, guided by a facilitator and tailored to the specific issues and interests of the group. There will be one-on-one directed discussion and limited examination just like in individual visits, but once that is done, discussion among the group will ensue. The others on the health team, including nursing staff, behavioral health counselors and patient educators, are there to deal with prescriptions and diagnostic tests and provide education and support. Time is available for one-on-one exams by the physician if necessary. If someone needs to discuss billing or insurance issues or any other matters relating to their care at the Health Center, it can also be done during this time. Shared visits typically last between 60 and 90 minutes.

Shared visits are becoming increasingly popular from the perspective of patients and provider organizations alike. Patients are finding that all of their issues can be addressed at one time. They like the additional time they spend with the doctor. Best of all, they learn from the experiences of their fellow patients who are dealing with the same health issues. It can become a powerful support system.

Harvard Vanguard Medical Associates, which employs about 700 physicians in Massachusetts, uses Shared Medical Appointments frequently. From the organization's standpoint, it's a way of dealing with the shortage of primary care providers and improving access to care. A Shared Medical Appointment can be scheduled in a couple of weeks as opposed to the lengthy waits we are now experiencing.

That said, we recognize that it's not for everyone. Patients should know that it is entirely optional, confidential (participants sign a confidentiality pledge), they can opt for a traditional appointment at any time, and they don't have to take their clothes off in front of the group! We expect that they will work best for new patients' initial appointments, physicals and for those with conditions, such as diabetes or heart disease.

David S. Tager, MD

PREVENTION

continued from page 4

Youth Suicide Prevention Project has completed its first year. The project is a joint effort of the Health Center and the Cape and Islands Community Health Network (CHNA 27), a local coalition of health and human service providers and consumers.

The focus of the YSP Project is to

improve the community's ability to identify youth at-risk of suicide and intervene quickly. An assessment conducted from July to December 2008 identified priority populations. Their work now is aimed at prevention and post-event activities.

Both groups are reaching a national audience and have been

invited to present their work at the annual conference of the American Association of Suicidology in Orlando in April. The Association is a national and international membership of crisis center staff and volunteers, as well as researchers, mental health clinicians, public health specialists, school districts, and survivors of suicide.

DEVELOPMENT OFFICER'S REPORT

After months of cold, dreary weather, we're finally experiencing Spring on Cape Cod! It's a joy to get outside and hike through Beebe Woods, enjoy a walk at the Knob, and catch up with our friends as they return from warmer climates.

The Health Center has had quite a winter. With so many members of our community facing financial hardships, the demand for Health Center services has increased drastically. There are now over 10,000 patients enrolled and nearly 300 new patients register every month. We are working hard to keep pace with the demand through recruitment of healthcare providers for our facilities in Mashpee, Falmouth, and Bourne.

I'd like to take this opportunity to thank you for your Annual Fund gift. When you support the Health Center through our mail appeals, you are supporting our efforts to

provide direct care to all of these patients in need. We are grateful for your continued support. If you were not able to make a gift during the winter months, we hope you will support our upcoming spring appeal, which will be used to fund our primary care services that are essential to the health and well-being of so many in our community.

Our dental clinic has been particularly inundated with requests for care. We've increased hours of operation but space constraints prevent us from meeting further demand.

To increase capacity, we have embarked on a fundraising effort to expand our dental clinic from three operatories to six. In this edition of *HeartLines* you will read about the planned expansion and how it will double our capacity to care for the most vulnerable members of our population.

In order to make this expansion a reality, the Health Center will need to raise just over \$500,000. We are fortunate to live in an extraordinary community that understands the importance of good oral health to our overall well-being. According to The Cape Cod Foundation's report "Understanding Cape Cod", the most common chronic disease affecting Cape and Islands' residents is dental disease, with nearly 25% exhibiting untreated tooth decay. If you would like to support this effort or you have questions or comments, please feel free to call me at 508-477-5990.

Thank you again to all of our wonderful supporters! We are so fortunate to have such a generous community to sustain our hard work to provide primary care, mental health services and dental care to all in need regardless of their ability to pay.

Karen L. Bissonnette, CFRE

KNIT ONE, FEEL BETTER TOO!

It's not just your grandmother's hobby. Professional athletes do it to relax before a big game; top business executives do it on airplanes as they crisscross the country; the problems of the ages have been solved in knitting clubs around the world.

Dr. Oz and Web, MD tell us that the benefits of knitting are increasingly linked with promoting

a healthy life style and decreasing stress.

Health Center staff Emily Davern and Christina Buchanan have developed an opportunity for patients to take some time for themselves, learn how to knit, and enjoy the support of other women. The group discusses stress reduction and healthy coping for dealing with the pressures facing many women today – from

parenting, relationships, working, coping with illness, and caring for others.

The first eight-week session filled up quickly and another one is planned for April. Sessions take place Monday evenings from 5:30 to 7 PM at the Falmouth office. Patients who wish to register should contact Ms. Davern in Behavioral Health Services, at 508 540-2949.

HELPING IMMIGRANT FAMILIES FIGHT OBESITY

An eight-week after school enrichment program with third and fourth-graders that celebrated culture, music, dance, and food is the latest salvo in the fight to reduce obesity in Brazilian immigrant families.

In a joint undertaking of the Health Public Schools (VIPS) and East young participants learned how sports and activities practiced in tion of fruits and vegetables, sweetened beverages and time computer screen.

Brazilian Capoeira, a martial art and music, was especially liked by demir Souza captivated them with tion. This was so popular that classes have nity Center in Falmouth on Tuesday and Thursday evenings.



Center, Falmouth Volunteers in Falmouth Elementary School, 24 to increase exercise by doing Brazil, increase their consump- and decrease their use of spent in front of a television or

practice that incorporates dance the students. Instructor Clau- dance demonstrations and instruc- been set up at the Gus Canty Commu-

The session culminated with a health fair at which family and friends were invited to participate in Capoeira, healthy eating activities and games, and dental care education.

Participation throughout the program was enthusiastic and the Health Center hopes to offer another ses- sion for students who are on a wait list. Parents remarked that their children began discussing and trying new foods and were eager for the group to continue. Assistant Director of Behavioral Health and one of the facilitators Emily Davern noted that community collaborations that involve families are always rewarding. "It was great to have students so eager to join in, feel good about their contributions, and host their parents at the health fair event," she says. Lee Wotherspoon, Healthy Immigrant Families Project Coordinator, who organized each week's activities, says "I am pleased that many of the students found relevance in our lessons beyond the sessions themselves."

The program was made possible by a Health Center grant from the Blue Cross Blue Shield Foundation of Massachusetts to reduce health disparities, by promoting healthy weight. Group facilitators included VIPS volunteers Becky Blake and Marga McElroy; Health Center staff Lee Wotherspoon, Emily Davern, and MSW intern Ralph Cahoon. The Health Center's dental office manager Denise Parker-Bridges and community health worker Danielli Lemos also participated.

DENTAL

continued from page 3
with the Dental Hygiene School at Cape Cod Community College, the Health Center will also establish internship programs with Tufts University and Boston Univer- sity Schools of Dental Medicine. These valuable programs will put

the Health Center in the forefront of training the next generation of dental professionals and exposing them to the need for and rewards of community dentistry.

Health Center Chief Executive Of- ficer Karen Gardner explains that

"Given the uncertainty in health- care today, this plan enables us to address an urgent community need and gives us time to plan for the eventual configuration of all our services."



107 Commercial Street
Mashpee, MA 02649

Non-Profit Org.
US Postage
PAID
CCD&PF
Permit 3

HeartLines is published by
Community Health Center
of Cape Cod



Communications Coordinator
Anne Grebert
508 477-5990

Contributing Writers
Emily Davern
Meghan Kemp

www.chcofcapecod.org

Save the Dates!

June 12July 22October 4

*Summer
by the Sea*

Saturday, June 12, 2010
MacDougalls' Cape Cod Marine Service
on Falmouth Harbor

Featuring a Cape Cod clambake and auction,
with catering by Chef Roland

Call 508 477-5990 for information

AND MORE

On Thursday, July 22, the South Cape Artists Group will hold an art show at the Health Center.

On Monday, October 4, the Pocasset Golf Club will again host the Health Center's annual Golf Tournament. Sponsorship opportunities are available.

For more information about these events, call the Development Office at 508 477-5990.