

Giving Back by Getting Care



■ When Ed Dale and Shirley Bergert retired and moved from Connecticut to Vermont, they needed to identify a Primary Care Provider for their insurance. Having worked as poverty lawyers focused on civil work, they were familiar with the role community health centers play in supporting some of the most ill and vulnerable members of the community.

“We have health care options, and we chose CHCB,” Shirley shares. “I know there are people with private insurance who think community health centers are just for a specific demographic and they don't provide the same quality of professional care one expects to receive from a private practice. I'd like to disabuse them of that notion.”

“We are very pleased to be part of a system that responds to community needs.”

-Shirley Bergert, CHCB Patient

Shirley solely represented low-income clients and saw they were always provided quality care regardless of their financial status. “CHCs are community-oriented and have been trying to meet a community need long before the Affordable Care Act,” she recalls. When she and Ed landed in Vermont and a new neighbor recommended CHCB for primary care, it was a no-brainer.

When Shirley came down with a serious respiratory infection, the staff at our South End Health Center were able to get her in to see her provider, Courtney Walker, NP, right away. “The staff has been professional, competent and kind, and very responsive when we were unexpectedly ill. Courtney is knowledgeable and intelligent. We're her patients for life.”

FQHC FAQs

- There is a powerful alliance of 12 Federally Qualified Health Centers (FQHCs) in Vermont, with 63 sites across 14 counties. CHCB currently operates eight sites in Chittenden County and southern Grand Isle County.
- 1 in 4 Vermonters come to an FQHC – that equals 182,000 FQHC patients in the State of Vermont.
- FQHCs are associated with lower health care costs and less acute care utilization. FQHCs save \$24 billion annually, nationally.
- FQHCs' average cost runs a dollar less per patient per day compared to all physician settings, and often preventive care quality markers are higher, even with a denser population of patients with high health needs.

But for Shirley and Ed, perhaps the biggest benefit of coming to CHCB is knowing their health care dollars can be spent in a way that benefits the larger community.

“We are very pleased to be part of a system that responds to community needs,” they agree. “The quality of care is as good as you would get at a private practice.”

We're grateful to have advocates like Ed and Shirley in the community to help share our mission of quality, affordable care.

A Note from Alison

"...CHCB leads a quiet revolution in health care simply by **looking into the faces of our communities every day.**"

-Alison Calderara, CHCB CEO



■ Each morning, at CHCB's Riverside Health Center, I walk through a lively waiting room to reach my office. I see a constant diversity of Vermonters; kids climbing the playhouse, a white-haired grandmother, a tattooed young woman clutching her motorcycle helmet, a Nepali woman in native dress, and a young man in a suit and tie. It's a typical day at our largest facility in the heart of the city. It's who we are: a reflection of the communities we serve throughout our

eight sites. Even more importantly, it's a daily statement of our mission to serve the community and meet the true needs of Vermonters.

What does this mean for our patients? If you need a primary care home, you'll get a new patient appointment with a provider second-to-none. In a region grappling with access to mental health services, our psychiatry staff accepts walk-in patients every day. An opiate

crisis? Our treatment program now serves over 400 Vermonters. Led by a patient-based Board of Directors, CHCB leads a quiet revolution in health care simply by looking into the faces of our communities every day.

With thanks for your support of health care that works sensibly, sanely and cost-effectively,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Alison". The signature is fluid and cursive, matching the name of the person in the portrait above.

A Mission Across Borders

■ CHCB's mission is far-reaching, but just how far? Thanks to our Chief Medical Officer, Dr. Peter Gunther, and his wife, GoodHEALTH Nurse Practitioner Paulette Thabault, it crosses borders entirely! Twice a year for the past six years they have traveled to Nicaragua to provide medical services to the local population in San Ramon and surrounding villages through an organization called Corner of Love.

This past March, Peter and Paulette were joined by two other CHCB staff members; Laboratory Supervisor Giang Vu, and Medical Assistant Tram Lam.

"This was my very first time going on a trip like that," shared Tram. "I got the opportunity to work with a lot of villagers, from being a scribe for the doctor to sorting out clothes for the little kids."

Their work helped locals access crucial treatments for prevalent conditions including parasites, skin rashes and anemia. Other essential care items provided include bars of soap, toothbrushes and toothpaste, eyeglasses, clothes and shoes.

Teams typically set up clinics for 1-2 weeks, travelling to very rural villages that essentially have no running water, no electricity, and no roads, seeing over 100 patients each day. "The last time around I saw a little girl, probably a year-and-a-half old, and her mother had walked three miles to bring her in to be seen," said Dr. Gunther. "And she saw me, the funny-looking mustache guy, and put her arms up, started to hug me and wouldn't let go."

"It was very emotional and touching to see how friendly and appreciative the villagers were, not just to staff but to



each other," shares Giang, who has previously performed mission work in Vietnam.

"It was an amazing experience for me personally, especially because I want to go to PA school in the future," adds Tram. "The trip really solidified my interest in medicine and I would love to go again!"

Bel Aire Medical Respite Program's First Year



■ In summer 2017, CHCB, in collaboration with the Champlain Housing Trust and UVM Medical Center, opened a new homeless housing program at the Bel Aire Apartments with a focus on granting housing to individuals with acute medical needs through the Bel Aire Medical Respite Program.

"We have seven beds for medical respite for people released from the hospital who can't go back to a shelter, the street, or whatever previous situation they were in," explains Elizabeth Kanard, Medical Respite Social Worker and Program Coordinator for Bel Aire. "We also offer hospital diversion services for

"This is the first time I've had
my own room in
twelve years."

-Charlie Mooney, Bel Aire Medical Respite Guest

people to manage chronic illnesses and conditions without going to the hospital or emergency room." The Bel Aire Medical Respite Program is one of about forty-five such programs in the entire country. "It's really wonderful that we have one in Burlington."

Charlie Mooney, a medical respite guest at Bel Aire, agrees. He is currently recovering from two hospital stays, the first of which lasted 73 days and included multiple major surgeries. He was discharged, but ended up in the hospital a week later with complications. Charlie's hospital social worker knew he needed a place to fully recover and connected him with Bel Aire. Now he receives consistent recovery care, regularly

takes his medications, eats multiple daily meals and accesses an entire suite of services. "We've gotten a lot of stuff done while I've been here!" Charlie happily boasts. "I have a new phone, Medicaid insurance, and I'm in the process of getting my ID after 15 years without one. This is the first time I've had my own room in twelve years!"

Charlie is especially appreciative of the community he has found at Bel Aire. "All the staff and other guests are really good here," he says. Reflecting on the community and his experience, Charlie shares, "I've been struggling with homelessness since my dad died fifteen years ago. I haven't been able to stabilize myself as much as I did here, and I never would've been able to on my own."

Trauma-Informed Yoga for Healing our Community

■ This spring we successfully piloted a new program that aided those suffering from Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD). Trauma-Informed Yoga is a proven practice that counteracts symptoms of PTSD through mindfulness and physical activity. This increased awareness enables participants to release tension and recognize/control feelings of fear and anger, reducing the severity of their symptoms.

Funded by a grant from the Vermont Governor's Council on Physical Fitness and Sports, we offered this specialized yoga therapy at no cost to up to 10 CHCB patients. One class per week for 10 weeks, we

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symptoms.

welcomed these participants to work with a trauma-informed yoga instructor, helping them take control of a disorder that disrupts quality of life. The results were positive with participants showing significant reduction in the clinical severity of PTSD symptoms. Some participants even started engaging in yoga at other local studios to continue to

grow the support system they created by attending these classes.

As the only FQHC in the area, we know that providing innovative and integrated therapies to meet the needs of our community is a course we will take on time and time again.

Wish List

Your donations go straight to work with these specifically-needed items. Any amount helps!

Enhanced Support for Expecting Mothers **\$3,000**

In connection with our ongoing Maternal/Child Health Program, this new group brings together a community of women in similar stages of pregnancy to discuss common issues and experiences while also meeting with their provider or nurse. This creates a support system for them while also strengthening their trust and relationship with their provider. Program support is specifically needed from our nursing staff to coordinate and schedule these group sessions.

Self-Care Library for At-Risk Youth **\$250**

Health education can be dry, but the right delivery can make important information fun and easy to process! We'd like to provide a supply of fun yet educational self-care comics and 'zines for our younger patients at our Pearl Street Youth Health Center to help empower them in navigating their sexual, mental and emotional health.

Critical Heart Help for Dental Patients **\$1,500**

To quote our Dental Director, Diana Greenough, "This is one of those items you hope to never need, but if it is needed, *minutes* are important." AED units are portable devices used to treat sudden cardiac arrest and we'd love to have one easily available in our Riverside Dental Center.

High-Use Dental Items for Healthy Smiles **\$6,600**

Our Dental Center is always in need of these preventative items!

- High-Speed Hand Pieces (3) - \$735 each
- Impact Hand Pieces (3) - \$800 each
- Hygiene Hand Pieces (3) - \$665 each

Diagnostic Equipment for Kids at School-Based Health Center **\$500**

An ophthalmoscope and otoscope would greatly benefit the children at the Winooski School District School-Based Health Center, one of our newest collaborative programs. Our on-site provider would use these items to examine students for ear or sinus infections and other ailments, greatly increasing accessible and convenient care for our youngest patients and their families.

To make a donation or learn more, please contact Kim at kanderson@chcb.org or (802) 264-8193.

All Aboard the Low-Barrier Shelter MealTrain!

■ Last winter, the beds at CHCB's Low-Barrier Shelter provided a warm, safe place to sleep for a total of 184 homeless individuals over the course of the winter season. Thanks to the hospitality of the local community, guests were also able to enjoy a warm meal each night; we had 134 nutritious dinners donated overall! Meal contributions mean so much to our guests and play a critical role in providing a sense of security and togetherness to those in our care.



Would you like to donate a meal? The sign-up schedule for this winter/spring is now live at <https://mealtrain.com/q3k23l>. Want to contribute but can't cook? No problem! We can now accept monetary donations for food purchases through MealTrain as well.



Giving In-Kind Items to CHCB

■ There are items we use every day that we can take for granted, while to others who are experiencing homelessness, they can be considered luxuries that are not easily accessible or affordable.

Please consider donating the following items so that we may help the individuals we serve in our Low-Barrier Shelter and Homeless Healthcare Program:

- Men's Clothing (any size): Pants, jeans, T-Shirts, long-sleeve shirts, flannel shirts, long underwear, regular underwear, and sweaters.
- Toiletries: Deodorant, Band-Aids, tissue packs, hand sanitizer, and feminine hygiene products.
- Rain ponchos and/or other weather resistant outdoor gear for men or women.

You don't need to buy these items new if you have gently used equivalents that you would like to donate instead! Please contact Alex Allen at aallen@chcb.org or 802-264-8418 to arrange drop-offs of used or new items at either our Riverside or Safe Harbor Health Centers.



Pat Nestork, a volunteer with SCHIP's Treasure Resale Shop, regularly donates clothing items for patients in our Homeless Healthcare Program. "We're just so happy to be able to help!"



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The Community Health Centers of Burlington Newsletter

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Fiscal Year 2018 Highlights



126,506
patient visits



400
patients received
treatment for
opioid addiction



591
children received
dental care
at CHCB's
School-Based
Dental Center



13,721
visits assisted
by interpreters
to ensure
culturally
competent care



184
individuals
stayed at least
one night at
CHCB's Low-
Barrier Shelter

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All CHCB programs and services are accessible to people with disabilities. This newsletter is available in alternative formats upon request.

Notice of Privacy: The Community Health Centers of Burlington protect the health information of our patients and gift information of our donors in all of our activities including our fundraising work. If you no longer wish to receive newsletters, fundraising appeals, or event invitations from us, please contact the CHCB CR&D Department at 617 Riverside Avenue, Burlington, VT 05401, kanderson@chcb.org, or call (802) 264-8193.



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