

A quarterly publication featuring news on CHC's Service Expansions, Innovations, Partnerships and Special Events

DECEMBER 2014:

Help Portrait Middletown and New Britain

CHC participated in the annual **Help Portrait Movement** for the third year, offering free, professional photo shoots for less-fortunate families at its Middletown and New Britain sites. Over 50 families participated in the event.

Project Homeless Connect, Danbury

CHC's mobile dental unit provided care to a total of 35 people. CHC also provided HepC and HIV rapid testing, blood press screenings, blood sugar testing and handed out socks to those in need.

Homeless Memorial Vigil, Middletown

CHC and St. Vincent dePaul's again this year hosted a memorial vigil at the Church of the Holy Trinity in Middletown, recognizing those who lost their lives to homelessness during 2014. This year, the evening culminated with a community dinner at the soup kitchen.

Community Holiday Parties

CHC hosted community holiday parties at its sites in Middletown, Clinton, New Britain, Danbury, Bristol, and Norwalk, putting smiles on more than 800 children across the state. Each event was organized and hosted by CHC staff members, who also donated enough toys so that each child received a gift from Santa.

FEBRUARY 2015:

Give Kids A Smile Day

CHC participated in the 13th annual **Give Kids A Smile Day**, kicking off a month of service in Meriden on February 6th. Hundreds of children across the state received free cleanings, exams, sealants, fillings, fluoride treatments and dental education.

MARCH 2015:

AmeriCorps Week

CHC's HealthCorps members honored **National AmeriCorps Week**, March 9-13, with service projects focused on helping the homeless and near homelessness. Highlights of the week include hosting a Career Fair at Open Door Shelter in Norwalk and working with Habitat for Humanity to build a home in New Haven.

Mission of Mercy Western CT State University

CHC's dental staff, nurse practitioner residents and AmeriCorps members participated in this two-day, free dental care event, which is open to the general public. CHC provided a full scope of dental services and oral cancer screenings.

APRIL 2015:

Visit with the Easter Bunny

CHC's sites in Middletown and Clinton hosted events for their pediatric patients, and community children to come meet the Easter bunny, have their photo taken and participate in Spring themed arts and crafts.

Weitzman Institute's Work Reaches Across Departments and Across the Country

The staff of Community Health Center, Inc.'s (CHC's) Weitzman Institute (WI) has launched several new programs that have a major impact on improving health outcomes for the underserved patient population. These programs include a school-based behavioral health telehealth intervention, an e-Consult network for specialty care that spans New England, and a chronic pain disease management program tailored for Colorado primary care providers.

Pediatric Telehealth Program Links Providers at School-Based Health Centers with Specialists

In March, WI launched the newest **Project ECHO**® focused on pediatric and adolescent behavioral health, specifically addressing conditions such as ADHD, trauma, anxiety, and depression. This is a project the organization has been working towards since the fateful events at Sandy Hook Elementary School. This program will provide expert, multidisciplinary behavioral health feedback to clinicians providing care to pediatric and adolescent patients at CHC's primary care and school-based health centers, improving their ability to manage complex issues. This program satisfies several recommendations put forth by the Sandy Hook Commission, which calls for increased integration to make effective, clinically indicated services and evidence-based community programs available to children and adults regardless of economic status.

New England eConsult for Specialty Care Network Launched

In April, CHC launched an **eConsult** network for specialty care. eConsults are clinical consultations between a primary care provider (PCP) and a specialist conveyed electronically via a web-based, HIPAA compliant communications system developed by Safety Net Connect. This New England network came out of a 2-year randomized pilot that CHC, UConn and the Weitzman Institute recently completed for cardiology. An evaluation of the 2-year randomized pilot showed that quality of care was maintained or enhanced while simultaneously achieving substantial cost savings. Most importantly, 69% of the eConsult referrals were resolved without the need for a face-to-face visit with specialists, ultimately delivering better health care services while reducing costs.

CHC received a \$500,000 grant to create the **New England eConsult Network (NEECN)**, which currently links PCPs from Community Health Center, Inc. and Penobscot Community Health Care—Maine's largest federally qualified health center, headquartered in Bangor—to specialists from The University of Connecticut Health Center. Over the course of the coming year the network will be available to additional private and public practices with varied payer mixes and patient populations.

CHC Helps Colorado Healthcare Providers Battle Against Pain Through Telehealth Program

CHC was chosen by the Colorado Department of Health Care Policy and Financing's (HCPF) Accountable Care Collaborative (ACC) to develop and deliver the **Chronic Pain Disease Management Program**, which leverages cutting edge telehealth technologies (based on CHC's successful Project ECHO®) to assist Colorado primary care providers in treating chronic pain and reducing opioid abuse among Medicaid clients.

"This program supports the goals of Governor Hickenlooper and the Colorado Consortium for Drug Abuse Prevention by giving providers throughout the state better access to education and evidence-based strategies for preventing opioid addiction," said Susan E. Birch, MBA, BSN, RN, executive director. *"It uses health technology so primary care providers can practice at the top of their scope to make evidence-based treatment available to Medicaid clients, particularly those in rural and frontier areas with limited access to specialists."*

Participation in the program, which officially launched in late March, will give Colorado primary care providers full access to the Chronic Pain Telehealth Program via an online videoconferencing system. It will engage providers and clinical support staff with an expert, multidisciplinary team of pain experts from the Integrative Pain Center of Arizona (IPCA). The program includes three specific components—Chronic Pain Telehealth, Buprenorphine Telehealth and Pain Management Practice Transformation Learning Collaborative that assists in implementing best practices for treating chronic pain and opioid management issues.

CHC Patient's Graduate from March of Dimes' "Becoming a Mom/Comenzando Bien" Program



Community Health Center of Clinton celebrated five women who have successfully completed the March of Dimes **"Becoming a Mom/Comenzando Bien"** curriculum, during a graduation ceremony on February 17, 2015. The curriculum focused on educating Spanish-speaking women on how to have a healthy pregnancy.

This bilingual prenatal curriculum is specifically designed for use with pregnant women in a supportive group setting to learn about having a healthy pregnancy. CHC identified and recruited women from its prenatal program in Clinton to participate in eight 2-hour sessions, where they learned about prenatal care, nutrition, stress, things to avoid during pregnancy, labor and birth, postpartum care and newborn care.

During the graduation event, the moms shared stories of their experience, all agreeing that they learned more from this program than they had ever known (three of the five mothers have other children)—both through the curriculum and by sharing personal stories and experiences with the group. The women described the program as being comprehensive, easy to understand and accommodating. They also thanked the facilitator, Raquel, for making the environment so welcoming.

"March of Dimes is very proud to partner with Community Health Center, Inc. to provide pregnant women education, support and resources within their community, through the Comenzando Bien program," said Erin Jones, State Director of Program Services, March of Dimes Connecticut Chapter. **"The program aims to improve women's knowledge of pregnancy and overall birth experiences."**

State Legislators Visit School-Based Health Centers in East Haven's Momauguin School, Middletown's Woodrow Wilson Middle School

CHC hosted open house events at two of their school-based health center locations in an effort to further educate State's legislators and business leaders on the important role that school-based clinics play for the thousands of children enrolled in them.

CHC provides school-based services in 189 schools across the state, serving over 10,000 students annually with comprehensive medical, dental and behavioral health care. Expanding mental health services for students has been the focus of discussion in the wake of the 2014 Sandy Hook Elementary School shooting, making school-based health centers more important now than ever. These open house events put the spotlight on these crucial services at a time when state funding cuts loom over many programs and services, including school-based services.

During the Woodrow Wilson event, **Senator Dante Bartolomeo** applauded CHC's efforts and described school-based health centers as **'invaluable'** and **'the number one way we can reach our children'** with these much needed services.



CHC Establishes Teen Center in New Britain

The **Community Health Center of New Britain** was one of eight organizations in the country to receive a five-year \$250,000 Healthy Tomorrows grant from the Federal Maternal and Child Health Bureau and the American Academy of Pediatrics. The funding, which was received in 2013, is being used to establish and operate a teen center at YWCA New Britain, geared towards Latina teen girls, to access much needed health services while also becoming leaders and advocates for a healthy New Britain.

House of Teens (H.O.T.): A Center for Health Promotion and Youth Advocacy for New Britain Teen Girls, is the brainchild of a group of teens who saw a need for a special place designed by and for teens, where they can get the services they want and need, such as stress reduction, fitness, nutrition education, counseling, and referrals for follow-up care, as well as opportunities to develop leadership and advocacy skills. The center will serve approximately 50 teen girls per year, who will be referred by a variety of sources, including New Britain High School guidance counselors.

This project has been made possible through partnerships with New Britain High School, Spanish Speaking Center, City of New Britain, and YWCA New Britain, where the teen center is housed.



CHC Announces New Board Members and Officers for 2015



During the January 2015 meeting of CHC Board of Directors, members honored outgoing Chairman **Mark Bonney** for providing CHC with a generation of leadership by electing him Chairman Emeritus, and welcomed **Gary Reid**, Financial Analyst with Prudential Life Insurance Company, as the new Chair.

Reid, a resident of Bloomfield, and Wesleyan grad, has deep roots in Middletown and has served with Mark Bonney for many years, making him well suited for taking the helm.

Terry M. Danaher will join the Board's leadership team as Vice Chair. Terry has served on CHC's Board for 25 years and is the Chair of CHC's Clinical Issues Committee.

The Board also elected two new members from the communities served by CHC—**Deidre "De" Boone**, of Norwalk, CT, a corporate consultant providing customized social media strategies and solutions for businesses that want to create an online brand and increase sales leads from Norwalk, CT; and **Roger Kemp**, of Meriden, with a long background in municipal management, from the city of Meriden to Oakland, CA. Kemp has been recently appointed as the Practitioner in Residence, Department of Public Management, College of Business, at the University of New Haven.

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.

