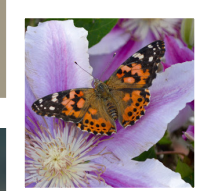
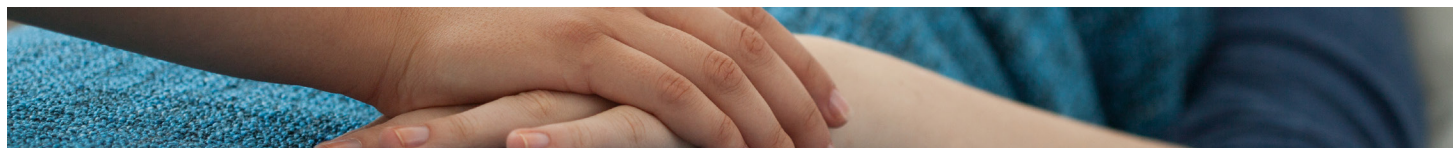
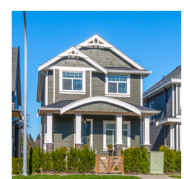
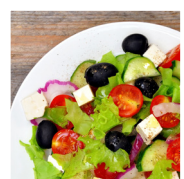


# 2017: COMMUNITY BENEFIT REPORT

Connecticut Hospital Association







# CONNECTICUT HOSPITALS:

*Building a Healthier Connecticut*

HOSPITALS ARE ALWAYS THERE WHEN WE NEED THEM — CARING FOR ALL REGARDLESS OF ABILITY TO PAY. THEIR CONTRIBUTIONS TO COMMUNITY HEALTH EXTEND FAR BEYOND THE HOSPITAL WALLS.

Connecticut hospitals are continually identifying and utilizing new and more effective ways to improve community health. They are collaborators, innovators, caregivers, and deliverers of services that people in their communities need and want.

Not only do Connecticut hospitals provide outreach and support services for cancer, sickle cell, obesity and other conditions, their staff also provide community-based care to patients, offer housing remediation for lead and other hazards, lead support groups for new moms and dads, operate school-based health centers,

go on walks with members of the community, host services of remembrance for grieving families, and promote literacy by giving books to newborns and their families. And this is just a small sampling of their efforts.

In 2015, Connecticut hospitals provided more than 12.3 million services to individuals and families at a cost to them of \$1.6 billion — that's 14.9 percent of total hospital revenue. While the dollars and cents of Connecticut hospitals' community benefit are impressive, in the pages that follow, you'll learn the human impact of these programs and services.



## Community Benefit by the Numbers

**\$740.3 MILLION**  
Unpaid government-sponsored healthcare - Medicaid

**\$583.1 MILLION**  
Unpaid government-sponsored healthcare - Medicare

**\$216.7 MILLION**  
Uncompensated care: Charity care/bad debt to provide services for those who cannot pay

**\$31.7 MILLION**  
Community services to improve the health of the community

**\$16.3 MILLION**  
Research and other programs to advance healthcare for patients and the community

**\$10.4 MILLION**  
Donations to help support community organizations

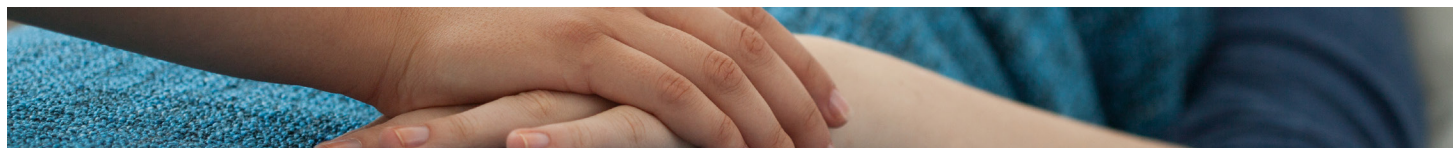
**\$7.2 MILLION**  
Community building to create stronger, healthier communities

**\$7.4 MILLION**  
Subsidized health services\* to provide care needed by the community

Total community benefit provided by Connecticut Hospitals in 2015 **\$1.6 BILLION**

\*Most subsidized health services funds are reflected in the unpaid costs of government programs numbers.





## Turning Up The HEAT On Obesity

Cuts to school curriculums that began in the 1980s have led to a generation of adults that were never taught basic nutrition or cooking skills. Americans are also busier than ever, which means that work demands,

### THE WILLIAM W. BACKUS HOSPITAL

busy schedules, and rising food costs have families turning to prepared and processed foods, increasing their risk for obesity and chronic diseases such as heart disease and diabetes.

Getting people back into their own kitchens to prepare nutritious, easy, and healthy food is the impetus behind the Healthy Eating Advocate Training (HEAT) program, a partnership between The William W. Backus Hospital and Thames Valley Council for Community Action (TVCCA).

Launched as a pilot program in 2013, the HEAT program instructs volunteers in the basic principles of healthy eating, from the elementary mechanics of nutrition to meal planning and grocery shopping. Upon completing the program, the healthy eating advocates are qualified to spread their knowledge throughout the community — equipped with accurate nutrition information and materials.

The HEAT program was created after a health needs assessment in 2010 discovered there were more than 175,000 obese and overweight adults living in the greater Norwich area. A 2015 health needs assessment also showed that obesity, diabetes, and heart disease continue to be serious health concerns in the region.

Core components of HEAT were developed from the 2015-2020

Dietary Guidelines for Americans and include basic nutrition, food safety, grocery shopping, and cooking healthfully on a budget. My Plate—an educational tool developed by the United States Department of Agriculture—is used to demonstrate how families can follow a healthy eating pattern one plate at a time.

Anyone from the community can participate in a free training to become a Healthy Eating Advocate. Professionals and clinicians in health and human services roles are especially encouraged to participate, as they have regular contact with families and individuals who are at risk for obesity and other health conditions.

In 2016, 18 people were trained during two sessions.

The program is presented by



Backus Hospital and TVCCA Dietitian Brenda Viens.

“The goal of this initiative is to empower participants and give them the tools they need to improve their own health and the health of their community,” Ms. Viens said.

## Bristol Hospital Helps Patients Breathe Easier

In 2016, Bristol Hospital’s Respiratory Department adopted a new community outreach policy. A vital part of this policy includes a support program called the

### BRISTOL HOSPITAL

Breathing Better Group, which is for those who suffer from chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD).

When the program began last April, there were only a few attendees at the monthly meetings, but that number has grown steadily since then. The December 2016 meeting included approximately 25 participants.

Bristol Hospital recognizes that one of the most difficult problems the COPD patient experiences is the feeling of isolation. Many sufferers become reclusive because it is difficult for others to realize the intense fear that accompanies the shortness of breath that occurs during COPD flare-ups.

Participants in the Breathing Better Group find comfort in meeting with others who face the same difficulties. The program also



offers information and encouragement from healthcare professionals who understand the disease. Every month, a guest speaker is featured who offers professional expertise to help participants improve their quality of life and understand the best ways to deal with their symptoms. Guest speakers have included pulmonologists, respiratory therapists, a physical therapist, a home oxygen specialist, and a dietician.

The program also includes a chair yoga session led by a certified yoga instructor. Participants enjoy a free lunch and drawings for prizes that make the meetings more conducive to social interaction.

So far, the program has received positive feedback from all participants. Bristol Hospital is looking forward to the start of a second year of helping COPD patients live more active lives and develop friendships that they wouldn’t otherwise have.

## Free Screenings Improve Health Outcomes in Greater Bridgeport

Bridgeport Hospital is a founding organization behind Greater Bridgeport’s Primary Care Action Group (PCAG). Since 2002, this coalition has focused on improving health outcomes in collaboration with St. Vincent’s Medical

### BRIDGEPORT HOSPITAL

Center, local health departments, community health centers, providers, and community organizations.

Two PCAG subcommittees, Healthy Lifestyles and Cardiovascular Disease and Diabetes, work to develop programs to decrease the impact of diet-related chronic diseases



in the community. Because of the direct relationship between healthy lifestyles and heart disease and diabetes, these groups come together to collaborate on an annual, community-based Know Your Numbers (KYN) campaign to empower residents with information about their health status and educate them on how to reduce their risk of chronic disease.

Since 2014, the KYN campaign has taken free health screenings directly to the patrons of local food pantries and soup kitchens, with the majority taking place in February for National Heart Month. KYN has grown from *continuing on next page*

just 10 screening sites in the first year to 21 sites in 2016. These screenings are made possible through the work of dedicated volunteers from Bridgeport Hospital, St. Vincent’s Medical Center, local nursing students, and other PCAG members.

A typical screening includes BMI, waist circumference, blood pressure, cholesterol, blood sugar, and A1C. In addition to receiving their screening numbers, all participants receive nutrition education, physical activity tips, and referrals to local clinics for follow-up care. In 2016, more than half of the participants were referred for follow-up care based on their screening results.

## The Know Your Numbers campaign screens patrons of local food pantries and soup kitchens.

.....  
In a region in which 16 percent of residents are considered food insecure, many people are relying on food pantries and soup kitchens. To feed those in need, these programs rely on donated food that is

often processed and high in salt and sugar. To have a greater impact on the health of the community, the KYN team has begun working with these program managers to improve the food that is offered.

Using 2015 KYN data, the Bridgeport Rescue Mission has made healthy changes to the foods it offers. Two examples: Kitchen of Hope no longer serves juices loaded with sugar, has decreased the availability of salt on the tables, and uses brown rice and whole grain pasta when available. St. John’s Community Supper is now offering more salads and serving fruit-infused water at meals.





## “Just Ask” Hospital And Supermarket Partnership

A partnership involving The Hospital of Central Connecticut, MidState Medical Center, and ShopRite supermarkets in Wallingford and Southington is connecting people across the region to healthier eating through a new program, Just Ask, which tackles nutrition-related problems on the front lines – right in the supermarket aisles.

Just Ask aims to help people choose foods with less salt and fat. Just Ask signage has been posted throughout both supermarkets. ShopRite employees assist customers with choosing healthier foods.

The Hartford HealthCare Central Region’s Community Health Needs Assessment ranks obesity as one of the region’s top health concerns, which has led to an array of community outreach efforts. In an effort to engage the community in healthy eating, ShopRite was approached and agreed to be a Just Ask grocery partner of the Hartford HealthCare’s Central Region. In partnership with the William W. Backus Hospital, the Just Ask program was also launched in ShopRite’s Norwich location earlier this year.

“The Just Ask program fits perfectly with ShopRite’s focus on helping our customers live healthier lives,” said Donald Drust Jr., owner of the Wallingford and Southington stores. “We are proud to partner with our local hospitals. We already have the healthy food options – this just helps bring more attention to them.”

ShopRite has put 130 of its own Registered Dieticians on staff in 23 locations. At the Just Ask program in Wallingford and Southington, hospital specialists will join ShopRite’s dieticians to provide information, cooking demonstrations, screenings, grocery shopping tours, and health-conscious seminars in the store’s pharmacy department.

“(The Central Region’s) mission is to improve the health of the community,” said Lynn Faria, Director of Community Relations at MidState Medical Center. “But we can’t do it alone. Partners like ShopRite are critical if we are really going to move the dial on population health, beyond the walls of our hospitals.”

The partnership with ShopRite reinforces Hartford HealthCare’s Connect to Healthier campaign, and will be promoted to patients in brochures, newsletters, ShopRite circulars, and online.

## Improving Health Outcomes Right At Home

Connecticut Children’s Medical Center not only provides state-of-the-art medical and surgical care, but also takes its commitment to improving the overall health and development of children very seriously. One of the programs that is making a measurable

### CONNECTICUT CHILDREN’S MEDICAL CENTER

impact toward that end is the Connecticut Children’s Healthy Homes Program.

Connecticut Children’s launched Healthy Homes in 2003 to address the lead and environmental hazards that too often threaten the health of children and families. The program initially focused on remediating lead hazards in homes, with the help of state and federal funding. In 2009, the program broadened its focus to address other home health hazards, including asthma triggers like mold and moisture, and to make homes safer and more energy efficient. The program provides qualified homeowners and tenants in 15 Connecticut communities with inspections and plans for the

removal of identified hazards. It also provides financial assistance for remediation, relocation assistance during construction, and education about keeping homes healthy and safe.

To date, Healthy Homes has made more than 2,300 housing units lead-safe, and 700 units safe from other health and safety hazards. The program has assessed more than 3,000 housing units and has provided education on lead paint poisoning and other home health issues to tens of thousands of people, including health providers.

Among the program’s latest



projects, in 2016, Healthy Homes partnered with the Naugatuck Valley Health District to land a

\$2.9 million grant from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development for the removal of lead paint and other home health hazards from 118 housing units. Also in 2016, Healthy Homes partnered with the City of New Britain to land a \$3.4 million grant, also from HUD, for the removal of lead and other home health hazards from 184 housing units in that city.

Healthy Homes is part of the Connecticut Children’s Office for Community Child Health, which is dedicated to promoting children’s optimal healthy development by engaging all sectors impacting

children. Those sectors include child health, family support, early care and education, housing, transportation, workforce development and employment, food and nutrition, child welfare and others.

Healthy Homes recognizes that a comprehensive housing strategy is crucial to address home health hazards. The program continues to build strong relationships with community housing agencies, residents, and state and federal partners to ensure that thorough inspections and remediation continue to take place.

## Finding Solutions To Serve The Community

For many years, Danbury Hospital operated the Seifert and Ford Family Community Health Center, a hub for healthcare in the greater Danbury and New Milford area.

Those seeking primary and specialty care, as well as access to dental, behavioral

### DANBURY HOSPITAL

health, and community medicine were always welcome, regardless of their ability to pay for services. The operational expenses of the Family Community Health Center were subsidized by the hospital.

However, demand for services from surrounding communities quickly grew and often outstripped the clinic’s capacity – particularly for specialty care. This meant longer wait times for appointments and needed care. The hospital committed itself to finding a better way.

In 2016, the hospital found a solution, embracing a more contemporary and

collaborative model by transitioning primary care services at the Seifert and Ford Family Community Health Center to the local Federally Qualified Health Center.

This medical home model, supported by a multi-year grant from Danbury Hospital, allowed for a singular entry point for primary care for the underinsured in the Danbury and New Milford communities, with greater capacity to serve local residents. The hospital then redirected the resources that were saved to enhance critically needed specialty care such as orthopedic and joint care.

By implementing this innovative model, the hospital provided more patients with access to both primary care and specialty clinics with shorter wait times. This has resulted in greater patient satisfaction. The orthopedic clinic, for example, is seeing twice the number of patients with substantially reduced wait times for an appointment.

The one thing that hasn’t changed, though, is that everyone is still welcome – regardless of their income or ability to pay.

## Supporting Cancer Care In The Community For More Than A Quarter Century

Since 1989, Day Kimball Hospital (DKH) and the community it serves have rallied together to ensure that no one in northeast Connecticut goes without cancer screening or treatment because of the cost. Originally founded by a local family in honor of a loved one lost too soon to breast cancer, today the

### DAY KIMBALL HOSPITAL

Northeast Connecticut Cancer Fund of DKH provides financial assistance to more than 200 neighbors in need each year. Since its inception, the fund has raised more than \$1 million through community donations and multiple annual fundraising events coordinated by the hospital and community members.

The fundraising events are spread throughout the year and include a 5K Walk and Run, wine tasting, classic car and motorcycle cruise, and local celebrity bartender and ice cream scooper nights.



The Walk and Run has been around as long as the fund, and has become one of the community’s most popular annual events. Indeed, the events themselves have fostered important community ties

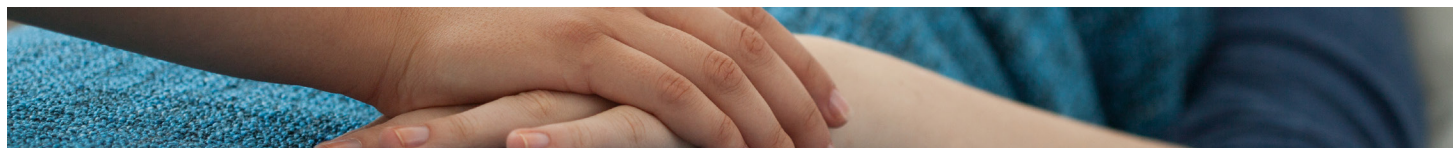
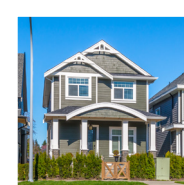
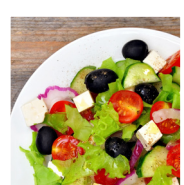
among those who have been touched by cancer, as well as those at Day Kimball who care for them. They’ve also provided a forum for community outreach about the importance of cancer screening.

Janice Jastrzebski of Danielson, Connecticut, battled breast cancer at Day Kimball Hospital’s cancer center for more than a year, and won. She credits her triumph over the disease in part to the quality and compassion of the care she received at Day Kimball.

“I’ve heard the word ‘inspiration’ used when referring to me,” Ms. Jastrzebski said. “But I am the one who’s inspired, by all of you and what you bring to Day Kimball Hospital. Now, I am making a difference. I have a bigger family, and lifetime friendships. I also have several ‘breast friends’ who are survivors like me.” Day Kimball’s cancer fund, she added, is a “Godsend.”

“We have insurance but have a \$4,000 deductible every year,” Ms. Jastrzebski explained. “I don’t know what we would have done if it weren’t for [the cancer fund] and all the help it gives to local cancer patients.”





## “My First Book” Program Promotes Bonding And Literacy

Greenwich Hospital began 2016 with a new tradition: Every newborn goes home with a copy of Nancy Tilman’s On the Night You Were Born as part of the “My First Book” program.

“Studies show reading fosters bonding between parents and their children,” said Kathy Carley-Spanier, RN, Director of Community Health at Greenwich Hospital, who spearheaded the project.

prose and paintings. Polar bears dance, geese honk in delight, and much more, as the world welcomes a new life. “So enchanted with you were the wind and the rain that they whispered the sound of your wonderful name,” the text reads.

Danielle Hootnick Kaufman received the book after giving birth to her daughter Madeleine. “We read it together when the nurse dropped it off. It’s beautiful. It’s a lovely message,” she said. “We got a bit choked up while reading it, to be honest.”

The “My First Book” program is an interdisciplinary effort with Community Health, Volunteer Services, Library Services, Women’s and Children’s, and Patient and Guest Relations.

Katherine Stemmer Frumento, director of Library Services at Greenwich Hospital, said Ms. Tilman’s classic resonated with the book selection committee members who wanted a book that appealed to people of all cultural backgrounds.

“Something special happens every day a baby is born,” said Ms. Stemmer Frumento. She expects parents will share details of their child’s birth as they read the book together.

“The program is a great way to demonstrate that we believe reading is fundamental from the day a baby is born,” she added. “It’s never too early to start reading to your kids!”

“It’s also a wonderful way to promote literacy.”

“More than 3,000 books in English and Spanish have been distributed since the program began in January,” said Patricia Basciano, RN, nurse manager for Women’s and Children’s Services. As a parting gift, nurses give the book and a t-shirt that says “I got my 1st hug at Greenwich Hospital” to families when they leave the hospital.

“The books are a big hit. We’ve had such a warm response from parents,” said Ms. Basciano.

“The program’s impact has gone beyond the hospital with grandparents and others asking local book stores and the public library to stock the book,” added Ms. Carley-Spanier.

On the Night You Were Born celebrates the uniqueness of every baby with beautiful



## When New Mothers (and Fathers) Have More Than Just The “Baby Blues”

When it comes to childbirth and new parents, society has been conditioned to expect images of joy, love, and family bliss.

However, a large percentage of new mothers feel overwhelmed or even afraid after the birth of their baby. And 20 percent of new mothers can experience something more drastic – a feeling of disconnectedness and even revulsion for their new baby. In a society in which the birth of a child is viewed as a joyous and happy occasion, mothers who do

### HARTFORD HOSPITAL

not share these feelings often feel ashamed and may attempt to hide their emotions.

This phenomenon is being recognized in medical and psychiatric circles as a condition known as peripartum mood disorders. They include problems

with mood, anxiety, or even, most concerning, postpartum psychosis. Instead of being a mark of shame, new mothers are increasingly recognizing that these feelings are symptoms of a change in their biochemistry that can be treated.

The Institute of Living (IOL), in partnership with the Hartford Hospital Woman’s Health program, last year created one of the few Peripartum Mood Disorders programs in the country, offering a wide range of services designed to help new mothers identify their condition and provide them with the care they need to reconnect with their newborns, as well as the rest of their families.

The goal of the program is to provide evaluation and treatment to women experiencing mood, thought, or anxiety problems before, during, and after pregnancies, as well as to their family members. Counseling

and other behavioral health services are increasingly being made available to fathers and partners who experience depression as a result of their spouse’s postpartum disorders, including services available through the program at IOL.

The team of caregivers within the Peripartum Mood Disorders Program includes both adult and child psychiatrists with training and experience in assessment and treatment of perinatal mood disorders. Additionally, the program team includes a social worker who does group, individual, and family therapy, as well as case management. In cases in which parents need help bonding with their children, there are openings in the IOL’s Child Guidance Clinic for parent-infant dyad therapy.

Art Guerra, APRN, Director of the Peripartum Mood Disorders program, said treatment ranges from medication to individualized and family therapy, which can make an enormous difference in restoring the relationship between new mothers and their babies, as well as the overall health of families.

“We want to work as closely and directly with new mothers and their families as possible, so we can help ease their anxieties and fears about what is happening, and let them know there is care available to them.”  
— Art Guerra

The program also works closely with Connecticut obstetricians and Connecticut Children’s Medical Center neonatologists, providing education on peripartum mood disorders and consultation, or treatment for expectant mothers or mothers who have recently given birth.

## Say “Ahhh” - Griffin Hospital Provides Free Oral, Head, And Neck Cancer Screenings

For the past five years, The Center for Cancer Care at Griffin Hospital in Derby has provided free oral, head, and neck cancer screenings to detect and help treat these diseases at an early, and more curable, stage.

Held in April in honor of the Annual Oral, Head, and Neck Cancer Awareness Week®, Griffin Hospital has conducted more than 280 free screenings since 2012. Out of those 280 screenings, 39 resulted in individuals being referred for potentially lifesaving follow-ups with specialists.

### GRIFFIN HOSPITAL

Ken Yanagisawa, MD, an Ear, Nose, and Throat (ENT) specialist and Past President of the Connecticut ENT Society, helped organize the free screenings with radiation oncologists Joseph Cardinale, MD, and Joyce Chung, MD, along with other community physicians and dentists. The screenings also provide a learning opportunity for medical and dental hygiene students.

“We started these free screenings because, unfortunately, many Americans do not recognize the symptoms of these life-threatening diseases and, by the time they are diagnosed, for some, it’s too late,” Dr. Yanagisawa said.

Oral, head, and neck cancer can occur in the nasal cavity, sinuses, lips, mouth, thyroid glands, salivary glands, throat, or larynx (voice box). According to the American Cancer Society, more than 48,300 new cases of head and neck cancers will have been diagnosed in 2016, resulting in more than 9,500 deaths.



Oral cancer screenings are recommended for every adult, but especially for tobacco and alcohol users who are traditionally at the greatest risk. However, oral cancer cases are on the rise in younger adults who do not smoke, and recent research indicates this development is due partly to an increase of the human papillomavirus (HPV) virus.

The free oral, head, and neck cancer screenings are part of Griffin Hospital’s commitment to patient-centered care and its ongoing efforts to partner with its neighbors to establish healthy communities as part of its focus on population health.

Griffin also offers free community skin cancer, blood pressure, and diabetes screenings on a regular basis, concentrating its efforts on preventive health and early detection. This helps improve outcomes and quality of life while ultimately reducing healthcare expenses by preventing or finding diseases as the earliest possible stage, when cure rates are highest.





## Johnson Memorial Hospital Sows Seeds Of Kindness

Johnson Memorial Hospital's Seeds of Kindness initiative began the way all good charitable efforts begin – with the urge to give back - all while sowing a little more beauty in the world.

The program, which was initiated by a breast cancer survivor, raises funds for the Patient Assistance Fund at the Johnson Memorial Cancer Center by growing two types of sunflowers that are harvested for cut bouquets or processed and sold at partnering retailers as wild bird food.

The initiative, which is run by the Johnson Memorial Hospital Auxiliary, grew more than 70,000 sunflowers last summer across five acres in Somers, raising more than \$12,000 in its first year for the Patient Assistance Fund. The Auxiliary, with assistance from Gordon Burson of Pine Croft Farm in Somers, grew the flowers on land loaned by the breast cancer survivor.

The money raised from the initiative will be used to alleviate some of the financial burdens, such as transportation costs, grocery, pharmacy, and fuel expenses experienced by patients undergoing cancer treatments.

The Patient Assistance Fund was formally established in 2012, but had been operating informally for years before that time. At least 55 people have received direct assistance from the fund, which has been replenished over the years through memorial donations, funds raised through hospital and auxiliary activities such as golf outings, and donations from local businesses. Johnson Memorial Hospital is part of Trinity Health - New England.

## Community Healing: Honoring Life At The Charlotte Hungerford Hospital

The Charlotte Hungerford Hospital (CHH) does a considerable amount of community outreach each year, but none of it is quite like the annual Service of Remembrance the hospital sponsors each spring. That service,

### THE CHARLOTTE HUNGERFORD HOSPITAL

which is open to the public, is aimed at helping to heal something that can be just as painful and intractable as an illness – the grief of losing a loved one.

The service, which is organized and hosted by the Supportive and Pastoral Care Committee at CHH, is held in the front circle of the hospital and features prayers,

reflective readings, music, and the recitation of the names of those people being honored. It concludes with participants releasing butterflies in tribute to their loved ones.

Although it began as a way to memorialize those who passed away at CHH in the prior year, the service now includes anyone from the community who wishes to honor a loved one.

“The Service of Remembrance is a wonderful opportunity for family and friends of those who spent their final hours at Charlotte Hungerford Hospital to join our employees in celebration and remembrance of their loved ones’ lives,” said Rev. M. John Arens, Pastoral Care Coordinator and Chairman of the Committee.



The Supportive and Pastoral Care Committee has a special mission to care for and provide support to patients and their families who are in need of comfort and assistance when experiencing severe illness or loss of loved ones.

In addition to providing care for medical needs, CHH also strives to provide personal care and services for the spiritual needs of its community, understanding that

losing a loved one is one of the most difficult and emotional events people face.

The hospital offers the services of a Pastoral Care Coordinator and two teams of volunteers, the first one dedicated to spiritual care, the second to supportive care. CHH also offers a resource and support guide containing information that is useful during difficult times.

## Manchester Memorial Hospital Responds To Opioid Crisis In Eastern Connecticut

In June 2013, as the opioid crisis began to take hold in Connecticut, the

### MANCHESTER MEMORIAL HOSPITAL

Office of Emergency Medical Services expanded the Scope of Practice for Emergency Medical Responders (EMR), Emergency Medical Technicians (EMT), and Advanced Emergency Medical Technicians (A-EMT) to include the administration of intra-nasal Naloxone (Narcan) for

patients with respiratory failure/respiratory arrest secondary to opioid use. Prior to this, Naloxone administration by any route was limited to Paramedic level providers only.

Naloxone is an opioid-antagonist that has gained national attention as a mechanism to save the lives of patients who have overdosed on opiates/opioids. Naloxone competes and has higher affinity for the receptors in the brain to which opiates bind to produce their desired effects. By competing for these

binding sites, Naloxone prevents the most common side effect of opiate/opioid overdose, which is respiratory failure/respiratory arrest.

With this significant change to the approved Scope of Practice, Manchester Memorial Hospital (MMH) sprang into action to train its sponsored EMRs and EMTs to provide this life-saving care. EMS/Trauma Coordinator at MMH, Nancy Brunet, RN, MAEd, NRP, LP, EMSI, provided two-hour-long training sessions to more than 500 individuals from police and fire departments in Bolton, Coventry, Ellington, Glastonbury, Manchester, North Coventry, South Windsor, Tolland, and Vernon.

The training sessions covered the basics of what opioids are and how they affect the brain, what happens when a person takes too high of a dose, signs and symptoms related to opiate/opioid overdose, care and treatment of these patients, and potential adverse side effects of Naloxone administration. Hands-on training of mechanical ventilation of these patients before and after Naloxone and the proper techniques to assemble and administer the medication was also included.

To date, five of the agencies that participated in the training sessions have administered Naloxone more than 100 times.

## L + M's Respite Care Unit Helps Homeless In New London

Four years ago, representatives from the Homeless Hospitality Center (HHC), Lawrence + Memorial Hospital (L+M), and Lawrence + Memorial's home health agency, the VNA of Southeastern Connecticut, collaborated to address a community problem: a significant percentage of homeless patients who were treated and released from the emergency department (ED) with discharge plans for issues that ordinarily could be managed by self-care at home – or with skilled home healthcare – kept returning to the ED with follow-up needs arising from the lack of a clean, safe, reliable setting for recuperation. Thus was born an important addition to the Center's already broad scope of services – a seven-bed respite care unit.

The unit, which has served more than 287 people since its inception, would not be possible without the support of L + M, which provides a monetary contribution

### LAWRENCE + MEMORIAL HOSPITAL

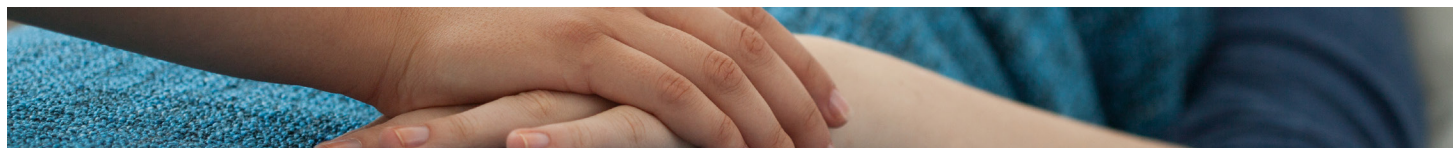
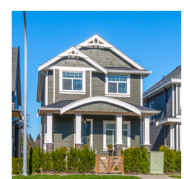
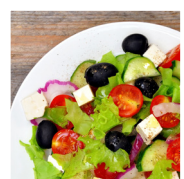
that allows the unit to operate. The unit has resulted in a more effective partnership among L + M's social workers, the HHC staff, and the hospital's ED. This improves health outcomes, allows for quicker releases from the ED, and reduces avoidable readmissions. Respite interventions also help prevent manageable illnesses from worsening.

Additionally, the respite unit better supports individuals with complex medical needs, such as a 52-year-old patient who presented at the ED with lower back and abdominal pain and was later diagnosed with clear cell renal carcinoma. Once in respite care, staff helped the patient link with a primary care provider and an oncologist, and assisted him with making appointments and managing his pain.

Finally, the respite unit allows for better care of patients with a psychiatric diagnosis after they are discharged from L + M's behavioral health unit, Pond House. A quiet, supervised location that accepts homeless people who are medically cleared but fragile both supports recovery and reduces readmissions.

And, because few respite guests have only one issue, the unit is also a resource for helping people navigate myriad post-hospital healthcare and housing challenges. With efforts from HHC staff, the VNA, an L + M social worker, and the hospital's financial support, these needed services are put in place more effectively.





## Taking The Pledge To Step It Up

MidState Medical Center, in partnership with The Hospital of Central Connecticut, is asking its community to take the pledge to

### MIDSTATE MEDICAL CENTER

“Step It Up.” The pledge coincides with the U.S. Surgeon General’s program of the same name to promote walking for all Americans of all ages, and wheeling for those with disabilities.

The hospital’s decision to offer the “Step It Up” initiative followed a 2015 health needs assessments that identified a widespread lack of physical activity and resulting obesity that can lead to heart disease, stroke, cancer, and diabetes.

To combat this, MidState teamed up with The Hospital of Central Connecticut to start a community initiative in September 2016 that would encourage local community members to take the pledge to be more active. The pledge includes committing more time to walking over a 30-day period.

The hospitals gained support for the “Step It Up” initiative from many community groups, including Activate Southington, the Choice Neighborhood program, Healthy Meriden 2020, the Cheshire Chamber Wellness Council, the Coalition for New Britain Youth, as well as health districts, health departments, and area parks and recreation departments. Faith communities and neighborhood

associations also signed on to be a part of the initiative.

A key part to the “Step It Up” initiative is publicizing different nearby walking trails for people who are interested in exploring their local community. Historical societies in some communities have contributed information on the historical elements of walking route areas to generate interest among “Step It Up” participants.

To support these local walking trails, the Hartford HealthCare Connect to Healthier website contains maps of trails and parks, as well as information on different parks and recreation departments. A social media campaign directs people to the pledge and also engages the community about fun walking tips and trails.

## Medical Explorers Program Encourages Young People

Recently, the Middlesex County branch of the NAACP approached Middlesex Hospital about providing an educational experience for two students enrolled in the local branch’s SAT

### MIDDLESEX HOSPITAL

preparation class and who had expressed an interest in the field of nursing. Thus, the Middlesex Hospital Medical Explorers Program was born.

During planning sessions with Middlesex Hospital staff, the SAT prep class instructors, and students and their parents, the group discovered that other students also had an interest in healthcare careers. They then developed a program and goals, and hospital staff members incorporated their suggestions into the program design. Staff members from various hospital departments – such as Community Benefit, the Hospitalist Department, and Family Medicine Residency – currently oversee the initiative, which is now in its inaugural year. The program’s objective is to teach critical thinking and medical problem solving, while exposing high school students to various medical professions and furthering their understanding of the healthcare system.

Each session runs for ten months, with meetings at the hospital every month. For the first half of the session, guest speakers describe their professions and what their jobs entail; what academic path was



required to enter the profession; and what key experiences and choices were important to being successful. Students spend the second half of the session reviewing a singular, medical case study that travels month to month through each discipline (starting with Paramedics, then Emergency Department, Physician Assistant, Radiology, Nursing, Laboratory, Pharmacy, etc.).

The students are given pertinent information needed for diagnosis, such as past medical history, social history, family history, vital

signs, and clinical presentation. Each speaker reviews the practical application of what interventions take place relative to their profession, which gives more clues to enable the students to determine the diagnosis and solve the case. Students are also expected to complete monthly homework assignments that are designed to help with their overall understanding of the case and the medical system.

There are five committed students enrolled in the pilot year of the Middlesex Medical Explorers Program. At the end of the program, these students will be awarded a certificate of completion during a celebratory gathering.

It is the hospital’s goal to expand enrollment in future years and further support and encourage talented, enthusiastic young people in achieving their healthcare professional goals.

## Milford Hospital Sponsors Outreach Events

Recognizing that knowledge is a powerful tool in preventing and managing risk factors for disease, each year Milford Hospital commits to offering a wide range

### MILFORD HOSPITAL

of health and wellness screenings and programming both in the hospital and in the community.

As part of this effort, Milford Hospital was the presenting sponsor of the 2016 Boomers and Beyond Health and Wellness Expo. While individuals of all ages were welcome, the day-long

event was designed to link the aging population with key service providers. These included medical professionals, social service organizations, elder law advisors, financial planners, long-term care providers, and others relevant to serving this population. More than 100 vendors offered interactive exhibits, demonstrations, and information to the attendees.

The primary goal of Milford Hospital’s sponsorship was to provide free health screenings and assessments to a potentially underserved and at-risk population, connect residents with healthcare resources close to home, and generate awareness regarding the hospital’s array of services.

More than 2,000 individuals attended the event and visited

the Milford Hospital screening and assessment area. Hospital clinical staff and community physicians conducted cholesterol, glucose, and blood pressure screenings, varicose vein screening and vascular risk assessment, allergy screening, foot health screening, sleep apnea assessment, and gastrointestinal disease assessment, among other services. Each participant received one-on-one counseling and, when appropriate, was identified for additional assessment and follow-up. In addition, hospital physicians presented seminars on a variety of health conditions relative to the aging population.

Boomers and Beyond is just one example of the broad reach of Milford Hospital’s health and wellness programming. Similar, smaller-scale events were held

throughout the community in various settings that ranged from the Senior Center to multiple workplaces within the service area. In addition, the hospital offers numerous free screening events annually. Through quarterly cholesterol, glucose, and blood pressure screenings and its annual prostate health screening, the hospital provided free services to an additional 200 unique participants.

Milford Hospital offers a multidisciplinary approach to health and wellness programming that is not limited to screenings. Nine “Dinner with the Doctor” programs were offered in 2016 and an additional seven health-related topics were presented in single or multi-session programs. More than 600 people attended one or more of these events.

## Helping People Detect Lung Cancer Earlier

Lung cancer is the leading cause of cancer death in men and in women. According to the American Cancer Society (ACS), each year more people die of lung cancer than of colon, breast, and prostate cancers combined.

Studies have shown that treatment for lung cancer is more effective and the likelihood of

### NORWALK HOSPITAL

death decreases significantly if the disease is detected early through screening. Removing cost as a barrier to access the screenings is critical to early detection and survivorship.

Until recently, there has not been an effective tool for diagnosing early stage lung cancer.



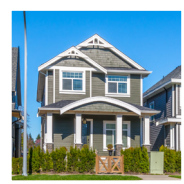
In early 2012, Norwalk Hospital became the first hospital in Connecticut to launch a low-dose CT (computed tomography) lung cancer-screening program to identify lung cancer in its earliest stages.

Since then, more than 2,000 patients have been screened through the Norwalk Hospital program and 25 seemingly healthy people without symptoms were diagnosed with lung cancer at an earlier stage than would have been detected without the screening.

These cancers would not have been detected through a standard chest X-ray.

Based on the initial success of the Norwalk Hospital low dose CT lung cancer screening program, and the continuing soft economy, the hospital continues to offer free lung cancer screenings for people who are at risk. In doing so, the hospital has eliminated cost as a barrier to give all people access to the preventive healthcare they need.





## “House of Hope” Fights Hunger With Healthy Food Drive

Starting in 2011, St. Vincent’s Medical Center and the Aquarion Water Company began collaborating on an annual project called the House of Hope Food Drive to assist organizations experiencing severe food shortages and help reduce hunger in the greater Bridgeport

### ST. VINCENT’S HEALTH SERVICES

area. A shed decorated to look like a house is located outside St. Vincent’s Medical Center, where the food is collected.

The drive, which originated as a response to the needs of the underserved in the community by helping to stock area food banks and shelters with healthy and readily accessible food, surpassed its goal in 2015. That is the year the House of Hope collected almost six tons, or 12,000 pounds, of food, which was distributed to area food banks and homeless shelters, the St. Vincent’s Family Health Center, which serves uninsured and underinsured patients, and the Port Five Naval Veterans organization. All branches of the Armed Forces belong to Port Five, which redistributes the donated food to other veterans’ organizations.

“We are very excited to be teaming with Aquarion again this year to help people in need in our community by providing healthy food options,” said St. Vincent’s Medical Center President and CEO Vince Caponi. “These options are vital in helping prevent chronic conditions such



as obesity and diabetes, with which many individuals in our region struggle.”

The House of Hope also distributed 125 turkeys from an area supermarket chain and 125 bins of food from a philanthropic organization called AI’s Angels. The initiative received significant support from the staff and visitors to St. Vincent’s Medical Center and its affiliates. Through an agreement with Big Y, the supermarket chain gave double the monetary amount donated in food.

The House of Hope Committee is now taking its mission a step further by educating both recipients and donors alike about healthy food choices. The Committee, in conjunction with local organizations Get Healthy CT and the Council of Churches of Greater Bridgeport, provides



suggestions for healthier food donations on the back of all flyers announcing the drive. The choices include low-sodium canned vegetables, soups, stews and pasta sauces, canned fruits, fish and meats, whole wheat pasta, low sugar cereals, peanut butter with no sugar or hydrogenated oils, and powdered milk, among other readily available items.

## Saint Francis Ministry Reaches Long Arms Into Community

Saint Francis Hospital and Medical Center, a member of Trinity Health - New England, takes seriously its commitment to what it calls its “Community Benefit Ministry” – which is how it came to help Johnny, a lifelong resident of the North End of Hartford who lacked both insurance and trust in the healthcare system.

### SAINT FRANCIS HOSPITAL AND MEDICAL CENTER

For years, Johnny took care of whatever health problem he had with “self-medication,” as he describes it - “Motrin, warm salt water, heating pads, and whatever seemed to help.” He was very sick when he finally came to Saint Francis at the urging of his pastor, who prodded Johnny to find out why he was bleeding from his gums, why his tongue was so discolored, and, most notably, why he didn’t have any of his usual, vibrant energy.

“I’m someone who doesn’t ask for help very often and I sure didn’t want to ask for help from a hospital that I thought would treat me like a second-class person because I didn’t have any health insurance,” Johnny said. “So, I didn’t go to the hospital. In fact, I was born at home and never went



to a hospital until this cancer diagnosis at age 56.”

When Johnny finally came to the Emergency Department at Saint Francis, he was in such bad shape that doctors admitted him, ran some tests, and quickly began a blood transfusion. When the test results came back, Johnny was diagnosed with a treatable form of leukemia. The treatment protocol, however, would include eight rounds of chemotherapy over three months – an expensive, long haul.

“I see this battle between me and cancer as similar to the fight between George Foreman and Muhammad Ali. Foreman was at the peak of his career and had won most of his fights in the second or third round. But Ali did his homework; he trained hard and he outlasted Foreman. In fact, he won in the eighth round - just like me. The eighth round of chemotherapy was the one that finished my treatment.”

By telling his story, Johnny hopes to let others know that they can get the help they need, no matter who they are.

“I live on the third floor of an apartment building in one of Hartford’s poorest neighborhoods. In fact, I chose the third floor because I believe crooks are lazy - they won’t bother coming to the third floor to rob you,” Johnny said. “When I came to Saint Francis, they treated me really well. They helped me get insurance, they assisted with my rent and utilities when I couldn’t work and, most of all, they taught me that the hospital is a part of my neighborhood, too.”

In the end, Johnny came to see the hospital as part of the community, just like his church or the corner store. Of course, he will say that he prefers not to come to the hospital as often as he goes to church, but now he sees it as a resource.

## Caring For HIV/AIDS Patients Into Old Age

For more than 20 years, Rockville General Hospital has partnered with the City of Hartford Department of Health and Human Services and other agencies to provide outpatient ambulatory HIV/AIDS healthcare services as part of the Greater Hartford Ryan White Part A Program. The grant-funded program is made possible by the Ryan White Comprehensive AIDS Resources Emergency (CARE) Act, and is administered by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS), Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA), and the HIV/AIDS Bureau (HAB). The program provides a comprehensive system of care that includes primary medical care and essential support services for people living with HIV who are uninsured or underinsured.

Rockville General Hospital’s infectious diseases specialist, Ellen Neuhaus, MD, operates the only practice in Tolland County that is supported by the grant.

### ROCKVILLE GENERAL HOSPITAL

The practice, which for years was based in Vernon and is now located in Ellington, receives funds for nursing and administrative services. Rockville General Hospital covers her salary, rent, and overhead expenses such as equipment and laundry.

“We are a small practice with the same practitioners providing all of the medical care,” said Dr. Neuhaus. “Because we are often the caregivers for patients who have additional needs, such as significant mental health and addiction issues, we also partner with other agencies.”

Those partnering agencies include AIDS CT, which provides case management services; Manchester Memorial Hospital’s behavioral health department; Hockanum Valley Community Council and Community Renewal Team, which provides mental health services; RiverEast and other addiction services; the Hartford Gay and Lesbian Coalition; and UConn’s dental clinic for dental services.

Currently, Dr. Neuhaus cares for 70 patients who have met the financial eligibility requirements of the program. Patients are referred by primary care doctors, Planned Parenthood, Ryan White case management services, the prison system, and other sources. Many of Dr. Neuhaus’s patients travel from towns outside of Tolland County, seeking care farther from home to better protect their privacy. Her patients are of all ages (from 22 to 78 years), ethnicities, genders, and sexual orientations.

“When I saw my first HIV-infected patients in this area, in 1983, there was no treatment for the disease and a vast majority of those patients died,” said Dr. Neuhaus. “Today, I’m still caring for some patients who first came to me more than 20 years ago. With proper care and medication treatment, patients can now live to old age.”





## Community Health Worker Helps Women By “Meeting Them Where They Are”

In 2016, Saint Mary’s Hospital, a member of Trinity Health - New England, added a community health worker to the staff of its Family Health Center, which is the only site in Waterbury to administer the Connecticut Breast and Cervical Cancer Early Detection Program. The position was funded by a grant from the Connecticut Department of

Ms. Eason visits with women in churches, hair salons, and other locations to reach those who are at greater risk of certain cancers and heart disease. For various reasons, these women may not have had access to healthcare services before this time. Ms. Eason’s goal is to provide them with screenings, education, and resources, and connect them with providers. “You have to meet them where they are,” said Ms. Eason, who assisted one patient who had an interest in exercise by helping her to join a gym and providing her with a new pair of sneakers.

Ms. Eason, who is also certified in tobacco cessation counseling, talks with patients about how to incorporate a healthier diet and more activity or exercise into their daily routines. “Our focus is on prevention,” she said. A cancer survivor herself, she is passionate about her potential to help others. “Who better to be an advocate for someone than a like-minded person who has been through it?” she said.

The community health worker position at Saint Mary’s is part of the hospital’s Community Benefit Ministry, which is an organized and measured approach to meeting community needs by reinvesting resources back into the community through new technologies, vital health services, and access for everyone regardless of their circumstances.

### SAINT MARY’S HOSPITAL

Public Health (DPH) and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

In this role, Darlene L. Eason is tasked with spending 24 hours each week interacting with uninsured and underinsured women in the community where they live and work. Ms. Eason is also expanding the reach of the early detection program to include screenings for diabetes and heart disease. Specifically, she is implementing the state’s WISEWOMAN program, which is designed to help women 30 to 64 years of age reduce their risk of heart disease and promote a heart-healthy lifestyle. Women who choose to participate are eligible for free screenings, including blood pressure, cholesterol, blood glucose testing, and a BMI check, and have an opportunity to sign up for free services, including gym memberships and Weight Watchers.



## Healthy Growth in Stamford Health KIDS’ FANS Program

Launched in 2009 as an after-school program, Stamford Health’s KIDS’ FANS (Fitness and Nutrition

### STAMFORD HOSPITAL

Services) promotes childhood wellness, obesity prevention, and physical activity using a hands-on curriculum that makes learning about healthy eating and regular exercise engaging and interactive.

Geared for children ages pre-K to high school, KIDS’ FANS has already successfully increased awareness of healthy foods and positively influenced dietary behaviors. Recently, the program has created opportunities for a greater number of kids.

“Today, KIDS’ FANS is a community-

wide program being taught in schools from pre-K to high school, as well as in summer camps, after-school programs, and health fairs,” noted Ilaria St. Florian, MS, RD, Manager, Stamford Health KIDS’ FANS. “In just the last two years, KIDS’ FANS has expanded from about thirteen participating sites and 300 enrolled children to 35 sites and more than 2,200 enrolled children for the 2016–2017 school year!”

In accordance with the Connecticut state-mandated health curriculum, and supported by studies that show the correlation between student health and academic achievement, KIDS’ FANS hopes to fill the gap in schools, as well as in the community, by increasing awareness and improving health behaviors of students and their

families. All programs are taught by state licensed Registered Dietitians/Nutritionists, which distinguishes KIDS’ FANS from other nutrition education programs.

In 2015, the curriculum was updated to include more nutritional themes, interactive activities, and practical tips for kids. The program was subsequently piloted in three Stamford elementary schools in the fall of 2015 and received positive reviews. As a result, it is currently being taught to third graders enrolled in Stamford’s twelve public elementary schools as part of their health curriculum (there are approximately 1,284 students currently enrolled in third grade in the public schools).

KIDS’ FANS is also partnering with local organizations to bring nutrition skills to different age groups. In conjunction with the Family Center’s school-based health clinics at Cloonan Middle School, Stamford High School, and Westhill High School, the program provides one-on-one nutrition counseling to students. At Chelsea Piers Kids and Childcare Learning Centers (CLC), the largest childcare provider in Fairfield County, KIDS’ FANS is providing nutrition education to pre-K students and their parents as a way to promote a healthy home environment.

Last March, KIDS’ FANS joined forces with the Stamford Children’s Health Collaborative to launch the first city-wide nutrition awareness initiative during National Nutrition Month. The initiative, which kicked off with a proclamation by the Mayor’s office, offers a variety of free nutrition and physical activity classes and events for children and their families throughout the month. Last summer, KIDS’ FANS worked with six summer camps, reaching more than 600 children with the program.

KIDS’ FANS also collaborates regularly with Fairgate Farm, an urban organic garden in the center of Stamford, by creating programs that promote farm-to-table eating and encouraging access to affordable, whole foods.



## UConn John Dempsey Hospital Enhancing Sickle Cell Care

UConn John Dempsey Hospital is a leader in caring for sickle cell patients across Connecticut and the region by helping them better battle the debilitating and painful inherited red blood cell disease.

Launched in 2009, UConn Health’s New England Sickle Cell Institute is the first and only dedicated center of its kind in the region. It has grown from just a dozen patients to now comprehensively

### UConn JOHN DEMPSEY HOSPITAL

servicing more than 220 patients living with sickle cell disease.

Last August, the Institute’s director, Biree Andemariam, MD, and her multidisciplinary team opened a new outpatient center for sickle cell patients in the new state-of-the-art hospital tower at UConn John Dempsey Hospital. The large patient care area with ten private acute care suites, five exam rooms, and two specialized blood transfusion rooms allows for both scheduled outpatient comprehensive care visits, as well as same-day urgent care for management of sickle cell disease exacerbations such as severe pain, dehydration, and worsening anemia.

The team’s comprehensive care approach ensures that each patient’s social work and psychotherapy needs are met. Plus, the Emergency Department

and the Hematology Inpatient Care unit are conveniently located in the same building.

“My goal is to ensure that those living with sickle cell don’t spend the majority of their lives in pain or in the hospital, and get the regular treatments they need without delay,” said Dr. Andemariam. “With better and advanced health management here, the future now looks brighter for patients living with sickle cell disease.”

There are about 1,000 adults in the state of Connecticut currently affected by the disease, and Dr. Andemariam and the Institute seek to help as many of them as possible. To that end, the Institute does continuous community outreach, in collaboration with the local chapter of the Sickle Cell Disease Association of America, to identify more adults with sickle cell disease.

The hospital has also partnered with the Red Cross to develop a new identification card program to speed sickle cell patient care during emergency situations or for emergency room visits, which helps patients navigate challenges when they are in need of pain management.

In addition, the Institute collaborates with the Connecticut Children’s Medical Center to transition seamlessly its 200 pediatric sickle cell patients to the hospital when they reach adulthood.





## Waterbury Hospital Infectious Disease Clinic Helps People Know Their HIV/AIDS Status

The Waterbury Hospital Infectious Disease Clinic (WHIC) was established in 2003 with Ryan White Part C Early Intervention Services funding. Since then, WHIC has made significant strides

### WATERBURY HOSPITAL

in building a multi-disciplinary team of clinical and administrative staff to provide high quality care to people living with HIV/AIDS (PLWHA) in the Waterbury region. Over the years, it has built strong partnerships with other community organizations in Waterbury, particularly the Waterbury Department of Public Health.

Staff from both organizations work together and utilize national days such as National Latino HIV/AIDS Awareness Day, National HIV Testing Day, and National Black HIV/AIDS Awareness Day to encourage people to know their HIV/AIDS status. On these days, staff members visit different Waterbury neighborhoods to offer free HIV/AIDS testing and counseling via the Waterbury Department of Public Health Mobile Van. People who are willing to be tested are provided with a gift card in return for their participation.



Nearly 70 people from the community were tested and received counseling during the last few events. People who tested positive were also linked to care at the Waterbury Hospital Infectious Disease Clinic.

The outreach work done by the clinic and its community partners, like the Waterbury Department of Public Health, is a vital part of helping people to know their HIV/AIDS status and reducing the number of new infections.

## Yale New Haven Hospital Offers Walk & Talk With A Doc

There is no shortage of data showing the connection between good health and physical activity. The unfortunate reality is that the providers at Yale New Haven Hospital's (YNHH) primary care

### YALE NEW HAVEN HOSPITAL

centers see many patients who are living with chronic, yet often preventable, disease. To help motivate community residents to get outside and be active, the hospital's primary care residency doctors started the Walk & Talk with a Doc initiative. Each Saturday morning, the doctors meet at defined locations and lead a walk with neighbors. The walks last for about one hour; however the results run deeper than this weekly interaction.

"It was a wonderful reminder of the power of the casual interaction



between healthcare professionals and our community," said Julie Rosenbaum, MD, Associate Professor, Yale School of Medicine, Primary Care Internal Medicine Residency. "One young woman was already very engaged in a personal exercise routine but, while chatting, I realized she did not have a primary care physician and we were able to make some recommendations to connect her to care."

The walks have been targeted to two different neighborhoods

that, according to YNHH's community health needs assessment, experience lower health outcomes than others and higher rates of self-reported chronic disease such as obesity, diabetes, and hypertension. YNHH has been trying to reach as many residents as possible through flyers in primary care centers, social media exposure, and at a grassroots level to encourage people to join the walks. YNHH works in tandem with neighborhood civic groups

and associations, non-profits, and local houses of worship.

"It has been a blessing to have doctors along with neighborhood clientele gather outside the hospital to promote better relationships within the neighborhood while walking together to create a healthy lifestyle," said Rev. Donald Morris, a local pastor and community activist.

The program began this fall and feedback from both community residents and providers has been positive. "Community members know that being healthy is about making positive choices, like walking regularly, and that doctors are non-intimidating, 'real' people who are interested in their health," said Benjamin A. Howell, MD, MPH, Chief Resident, Advocacy and Community Health. "For me, the walks have been all about these things."

## Windham Hospital Teams Up To Offer School-Based Health Centers

Thanks to a partnership between the local school system and Windham Hospital, parents of students enrolled in Windham schools—one of the most distressed school districts in Connecticut—can rest a little

### WINDHAM HOSPITAL

easier knowing their children have access to top-notch healthcare.

Under the collaboration, school-based health centers are now open inside Windham High School, Windham Middle School, and the Barrows STEM Academy. The health centers utilize a coordinated care approach, with each center staffed by a nurse practitioner (APRN)



and a licensed clinical social worker (LCSW) or licensed marriage and family therapist (LMFT) with a direct line to the hospital if necessary. The APRNs, LCSWs, and LMFTs are all Windham Hospital employees.

The health centers work closely with school nurses who, in many cases, refer students for enrollment. Once students are enrolled at the health centers, APRNs provide all levels of healthcare, from assistance with acute illnesses, like cold or flu, or chronic conditions, such as asthma. In addition, mental health services are offered on-site and include individual, group, and family counseling, as well as crisis intervention.

School-based health center coordinator Lynne Weeks, a school system employee, says the centers aren't meant to take the place of

"[The center] is a place where we can express our feelings, and we always have a place to go where we can talk to each other."

— Luzmerry Rivera

primary care providers or outside mental health clinicians; instead, all parties work together to provide a holistic approach to treating students. In order to utilize services, students must be enrolled in the program by a parent or guardian, Ms. Weeks said.

"The benefit is for the student and the family.

It's about the convenience of having services inside the school during the school day. It can be walk-in or appointment-based, and it doesn't matter what their insurance status is. All students are eligible," Ms. Weeks said.

The centers also focus heavily on prevention, and provide outreach services to address issues like childhood obesity, hypertension, diabetes, and teen pregnancy.

"It's comforting to have the centers inside our school," said Luzmerry Rivera, a senior at Windham High School who is working with the center's social worker and two other seniors on a project concentrated on building healthy family relationships. "[The center] is a place where we can express our feelings, and we always have a place to go where we can talk to each other."



## About the Connecticut Hospital Association

The Connecticut Hospital Association has been dedicated to serving Connecticut's hospitals since 1919. Through state and federal advocacy, CHA represents the interests of Connecticut's hospitals on key healthcare issues in the areas of quality and patient safety, access and coverage, workforce, community health, health equity, and hospital reimbursement.

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