

The logo for the Connecticut Hospital Association (CHA) consists of the letters 'CHA' in a bold, white, serif font, set against a white square background.

CONNECTICUT
HOSPITAL
ASSOCIATION

The title '2019 COMMUNITY BENEFIT REPORT' is displayed on the right side of the cover. '2019' is in a large, bold, orange sans-serif font. 'COMMUNITY BENEFIT REPORT' is in a smaller, grey, all-caps sans-serif font. The text is framed by a thick orange L-shaped graphic element.

Connecticut Hospital Association
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CONNECTICUT HOSPITALS AND HEALTH SYSTEMS

Leading Healthcare Into The Future

For Connecticut's hospitals and health systems, their mission entails more than providing essential medical care. Through Community Benefit programs, hospitals and health systems embrace their responsibility to improve the health of the people and communities they serve by working in partnership inside and outside their hospitals to build a healthier Connecticut.



Hospitals collaborate with community partners to deliver outreach and support programs that address critical health needs for expectant mothers, patients with asthma, cancer, substance use, behavioral health disorders, and heart disease, in settings that are close to home. Connecticut's healthcare providers are continually identifying and leveraging new and more effective ways to improve community health. They are the collaborators, innovators, caregivers, and providers of services that their communities need and want.

Often, those requirements are not medical in nature.

Today, hospitals and health systems are identifying resources and services that focus on addressing the social determinants of health and improving health equity. Working alongside community-based organizations, healthcare providers are helping the homeless find jobs and housing, securing healthy food options for families, and coordinating transportation to medical appointments.

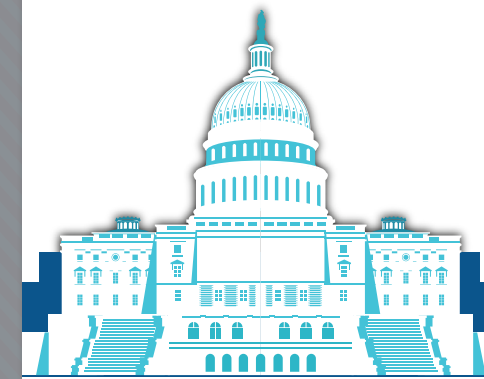
In 2017, Connecticut hospitals provided more than 12.4 million services to individuals and families at a cost of \$1.7 billion – that's 15 percent of total hospital revenue. The economic impact is impressive, but the real impact is to the health of the patients and communities who benefit from the programs and services featured in the pages that follow.



**COMMUNITY BENEFIT BY THE NUMBERS:
\$1.7 BILLION IN SERVICES**

\$679 Million
Unpaid government-sponsored healthcare (Medicaid)*

\$763 Million
Unpaid government-sponsored healthcare (Medicare)*



\$13 Million
Donations to help support community organizations



\$196 Million
Uncompensated care: Charity care/bad debt to provide services for those who cannot pay

\$26 Million
Community services to improve the health of the community



\$12 Million
Research and other programs to advance healthcare for patients and the community



\$7 Million
Community building to create stronger, healthier communities



\$7 Million
Subsidized health services* to provide care needed by the community

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

Breaking Down Barriers to Care to Improve Health

THE WILLIAM W. BACKUS HOSPITAL HARTFORD HEALTHCARE

Seeking to prevent unnecessary hospital admissions and readmissions, The William W. Backus Hospital created a Preventive Medicine Team (PMT) that is helping people be healthier, happier, and stay out of the hospital whenever possible.

The PMT is designed to support patients who are frequently admitted to the hospital by creating a registry of at-risk patients; utilizing direct hospital interventions; creating individualized transitional care guides that address medical and social determinants of health; and tracking how the initiative impacts the goals of the national healthcare Triple Aim, which includes patient experience of care, resource utilization, and overall health of the population.

Interventions are tailored to the patient and may include:

- Intensive medication review and bedside medication counseling
- Healthcare coordination with all providers involved in the patient's care
- Identification of any adverse social determinants of health, such as financial or behavioral challenges
- Screenings for anxiety and depression

- Supportive counseling and health coaching
- Referrals to community resources

Initial results have been remarkable and the team believes successful transitions of care will heighten the patient experience, improve patient care, and lower avoidable medical costs. The first cohort of patients reported an improvement in quality of life related to their healthcare. In addition, there was a 73 percent reduction in the total inpatient/observation encounters and a 43 percent reduction in length of stay.

To be considered for the registry, a patient must have had three or more inpatient or observation admissions to a Hartford HealthCare (HHC) acute care hospital in the previous six months. The team also considers referrals from hospitalists and other HHC partners for admitted patients at Backus Hospital with high risk for readmission and complex social issues.

Once placed on the registry, the team completes a comprehensive assessment to identify clinical, behavioral, social, and/or logistical issues that may contribute to frequent admissions and challenge a successful transition from the hospital setting to home.

After completing the assessment, the team collaborates with hospital-based caregivers and the patient's family, primary care provider, and any other specialists, community providers, homecare agencies, and pharmacies involved in the patient's care. A Transitional Care Guide is created and embedded in the patient's medical record so Backus Hospital clinical staff can take a consistent approach to registry patients coming into any HHC facility for care.

Once discharged, the team participates in each patient's transition to home with phone calls, home visits, and coordination with medical and community providers. The team meets regularly with other care coordinators to discuss mutual patients.

Community Need Fuels Bristol Hospital's Outreach Efforts

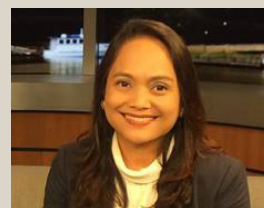
BRISTOL HOSPITAL

Focusing its community outreach efforts on senior care and behavioral health/substance use, Bristol Hospital and Health Care Group launched a series of free programs in 2018 to provide education and resources to the community.

Senior care and behavioral health/substance use were identified as priorities for Bristol Hospital in its recent Community Health Needs Assessment, which evaluated the health needs of individuals living in and around Bristol. Bristol Hospital used the findings to prioritize public health issues and develop a community health implementation plan focused on meeting community needs.

A seven part *Mental Health and Substance Recovery Series*, sponsored by the Bristol Hospital Counseling Center, was hosted by Michael Miarecki, LCSW. Each month, he focused on a different subject ranging from depression and anxiety to LGBTQ issues and substance use.

"The goal of the behavioral health education series was to have a discussion to decrease stigma, provide a resource for those seeking help, and participate in an open dialogue of questions with a



Margarita Reyes, MD, leads Bristol Hospital's geriatric medicine program and offers free dementia educational programs.

behavioral health provider," said Mr. Miarecki.

Margarita Reyes, MD, who leads the Bristol Hospital Multi-Specialty Group's geriatric medicine program, hosted the *Dementia – What We Know Now and What Lies Ahead* program for patients, caregivers, healthcare providers, and the general public.

"We covered a wide range of topics on dementia including the basics of disease, medications, planning, quality of life, and difficult behaviors," said Dr. Reyes. "Since we began these sessions a few years ago, they have been very well attended, and that encourages our team to continue with these sessions on this cognitive disorder, which affects 10 percent of the population over age 65."

One of the key promotional tactics for both educational programs included a series of live, in-studio interviews on FOX61 in which Dr. Reyes and Mr. Miarecki previewed each of their respective presentations and offered wellness information for the community.

Hospitals in Bridgeport Partnering to Impact the Health of Community Members

BRIDGEPORT HOSPITAL YALE NEW HAVEN HEALTH

Since 2014, more than 2,220 needy residents have undergone free health screenings and received referrals for follow-up care thanks to the efforts of Bridgeport Hospital, St. Vincent's Medical Center, and their community partners in the *Know Your Numbers* (KYN) initiative.

Bridgeport Hospital and St. Vincent's Medical Center are the lead hospitals for Greater Bridgeport's Primary Care Action Group (PCAG), which focuses on improving health outcomes through collaboration with local health departments, community health centers, providers, and other partners. The KYN initiative was one outcome of this collaboration. Launched in February 2014, KYN brings free health screenings directly to the underserved population at local food pantries.

The two hospitals contribute a combined \$20,000 annually toward KYN and together dedicate three full-time staff members to the program. In addition to these staff members, approximately a dozen volunteers – including



hospital staff and nursing students – help at each screening.

Of the nearly 600 people screened in the past year, 120 were referred to a Community Health Worker (CHW) to coordinate follow-up care and referrals to community resources for assistance with housing, utility bills, clothing, and other needs. KYN health screenings include Body Mass Index measurements, waist circumference, blood pressure, cholesterol, blood sugar, and, when indicated, HbA1C for diabetics. Participants also receive individual counseling, nutrition education, and physical activity tips.

What began as a way to educate the community about knowing their health numbers has evolved to a multifaceted

approach to improve the health of food pantry clients. One of the first enhancements to KYN was implementing Supporting Wellness at Pantries (SWAP) in six food pantries starting in 2016. Developed by St. Joseph's University and the UConn Rudd Center for Food Policy and Obesity, SWAP is a nutritional color coded system that enables pantry managers to label and group food using an easy to understand color-coded system that helps participants choose healthier items.

Another enhancement has been the integration of CHWs in 2018 to connect participants to follow-up medical care and/or other resources. One client with high blood pressure indicated that she was almost out of medication and had trouble getting an appointment with her primary care provider. The CHW booked an appointment for her, and she was able to get her medication.

Using lessons learned over the past five years, the partnership is currently working with colleagues at Yale New Haven Hospital and other New Haven area partners to replicate this program there. The goal is for these two sites to serve as a model for other hospitals.

Promoting Healthy Lifestyles for all Ages

THE HOSPITAL OF CENTRAL CONNECTICUT AND MIDSTATE MEDICAL CENTER HARTFORD HEALTHCARE

The Healthy Family FunFest, a collaboration between The Hospital of Central Connecticut and the Southington-Cheshire Family YMCA, is celebrating a decade of providing health information, screenings, and resources to improve the overall health of families.

The day-long health fair, which is free to the community, has now expanded to include MidState Medical Center, the Hartford HealthCare Center for Healthy Aging, additional Hartford HealthCare partners, and community organizations such as the Lions Club, the Southington Library, the Connecticut Commission on Disabilities, and the Early Childhood Collaboration of Southington. Since its inception in 2009, nearly 30,000 people have taken advantage of all that the Healthy Family FunFest has to offer.

The February event offers something for

every member of the family, including health screenings and information on a variety of medical topics and treatments. There are car safety seat checks, fire truck climbs for kids, the Hartford Hospital mobile mammography screening van, and visits from LIFE STAR.

"A large part of what we do is attract organizations to be at the FunFest so guests can learn more and try more," said Erika Stinson, Communications and Planning Director for Hartford HealthCare's Community Network, who leads the yearly FunFest organizing efforts. "Our goal is to have every family try or learn something new each time they attend."

The success of the FunFest prompted Hartford HealthCare partners to offer other health programs throughout the year. Ongoing community health-related activities include



community education on a variety of topics, outreach services, including diabetes prevention and cancer treatment, as well as email newsletters with valuable health information and online tips for healthy living.

Promoting Healthy Nutrition and Physical Activity From Birth

CONNECTICUT CHILDREN'S MEDICAL CENTER

As part of its effort to reduce childhood obesity, the Kohl's *Start Childhood Off Right* (SCOR) program hosts monthly wellness events for families to raise awareness about the importance of healthy eating and physical activity.

Such events include yoga, hula hooping, story-telling, and other activities to get families excited about encouraging children to lead healthy and active lifestyles. Since the program's inception, monthly wellness events have reached more than 600 families.

"I have a three-year-old toddler and keeping him social is on the top of my priority list. I felt it was an opportunity for him to interact with other children his age," said one parent, a mother who attended a recent *Dinner and a Story* event hosted by SCOR at the Hartford Public Library. "Practicing with the hula hoop showed the kids how to have fun while exercising. I was amazed that the children were introduced to Indian cuisine for their dinner."

Funded by a grant from Kohl's, the SCOR program launched in 2017 based on needs identified in Connecticut Children's Medical Center's most recent Community Health Needs Assessment to decrease the prevalence and comorbidity of childhood obesity.

Childhood obesity has tripled in the past 30 years and disproportionately affects low income, Black, and Latino children. Obese children are at increased risk for chronic health problems, including heart disease, diabetes, joint problems, asthma, and behavioral health disorders.

In addition to hosting monthly wellness events, SCOR is also working to create a comprehensive



system of support for families. The program's goal is to decrease obesity in Hartford children by five percent by promoting healthy nutrition and physical activity from birth to age two. By starting children off on a healthy path, the hope is that these habits will continue throughout childhood and into adulthood.

Other features of SCOR's outreach include:

- Convening a Childhood Wellness Alliance, a collaborative of 26 community partners who are mobilized to combat childhood obesity;
- Educating pediatric providers to counsel Hartford families on healthy nutrition and activity, and provide referrals to community resources for at-risk 0-2-year-olds;
- Training community outreach workers to counsel and support families with 0-2-year-olds to utilize consistent healthy growth messaging; and
- Referring at-risk families to the Child Development Infoline to connect them to community resources.

SCOR is one of 15 programs that make up Connecticut Children's Office for Community Child Health, which is dedicated to strengthening families to promote children's optimal health, development, and well-being.

Danbury Hospital Collaborates to Connect the Homeless to Needed Care and Services

DANBURY HOSPITAL WESTERN CONNECTICUT HEALTH NETWORK

In October 2018, Danbury and New Milford hospitals launched the second annual Mission Health Day in collaboration with Western Connecticut State University, as well as many community partners.



The purpose of Mission Health Day is to bring much needed healthcare directly to the most vulnerable members of the community — those individuals who aren't able to access the services they need and, as a result, often suffer in silence. The goal continues to be to build relationships that encourage and enable these individuals to connect to vital healthcare services.

The 2018 Mission Health Day was a resounding success. Hundreds of staff, physician, and community volunteers worked together to provide more than 450 area residents with much needed health screenings and wellness services. For many people, connecting to needed medical resources can seem like a healthcare maze; it can be challenging and confusing to find the necessary support services. This work of improving access to care is especially important for those whose need is greatest. This collaborative effort proved once again that a community working together can make a powerful and meaningful difference when serving the greater good.

Accomplishing these goals required a collective mindset and year-long coordinated effort among healthcare providers, first responders, support agencies, and others — all of whom worked together to provide:

- Primary care screenings for more than 150 people and, for a few, transport to Danbury Hospital for emergency care
- Dental health checks
- HIV testing and flu, tetanus, and hepatitis vaccinations for hundreds of attendees
- Cancer screenings and mammography referrals
- Podiatry screenings
- Behavioral health and substance use screening and referrals

Clients also received a warm meal, winter clothing, and personal care items.

Mission Health Day is an example of community action at its finest — people working together to help improve the lives of those most in need.

Memory Café Creates Community for People With Dementia-Related Illnesses

DAY KIMBALL HEALTHCARE

One of the most difficult parts of advancing neurocognitive disorders such as Alzheimer's disease and related dementias is the isolation felt by the individual with the disease and their care partner. Day Kimball Healthcare (DKH) at Home, a service division of Day Kimball Healthcare, is helping to shoulder some of the burden with the creation of a program that provides stimulation and socialization in a safe environment.

Four years ago, DKH at Home's Memory Care Activity Program opened its doors in response to the increasing prevalence of individuals affected by dementia. In 2017, the program opened in a dedicated space and was renamed "The Memory Lane Café." The Cafe is open four days a week and is intended to provide stimulation and socialization in a safe environment for individuals with Alzheimer's and related dementias, as well as respite time for their caregivers. The emotional, physical, and financial challenges facing families can be overwhelming.

The Café's Activities Coordinator, Charla Beattie, brings to work her personal experience of living through Alzheimer's with her dad. "I understand how difficult it is trying to manage this illness," Ms. Beattie said at a ribbon cutting ceremony for the program's new location. "I like to think my dad would have benefitted from the social connections here at the Memory Lane Café." Ms. Beattie and the rest of the team bring their skills, compassion, and advocacy to the program to help clients achieve the highest quality of life and support.

DKH at Home's Memory Lane Café program has helped more than 40 families living with Alzheimer's and related dementias by fostering a community of support for those impacted by this disease.

Programs like those offered at the Café are particularly helpful in the early



stages of dementia, and often include supervised hands-on activities such as music and art, which may help to delay cognitive decline. DKH at Home's care team brings its "every day is a holiday" belief to their daily activities, which foster reminiscing, creativity, and interaction. From sing-alongs to birthday commemorations and everything in between, the celebrations never end at the Cafe.

According to the Alzheimer's Association, an estimated 77,000 Connecticut residents are living with Alzheimer's disease, and they are cared for by 178,000 caregivers who provided 203 million hours of unpaid care in 2017.

Circle of Care Supports Cancer Patients and Families

GREENWICH HOSPITAL YALE NEW HAVEN HEALTH

Greenwich Hospital takes a compassionate, holistic approach to caring for its patients. The hospital's caregivers know that there are many factors that affect a person's health and recovery, and they don't all involve medicine.

When a 29-year-old cancer patient at Smilow Cancer Hospital's Greenwich Hospital Campus needed assistance with an unanticipated and costly medical emergency, the multidisciplinary cancer care team was quick to respond.

This patient, who had been battling lung cancer for five years, was well known to the oncology team. In her role as oncology nurse navigator, Lynn Carbino, RN, had guided the patient and her family throughout her multiple cancer treatments. Natalia Blanco, Patient



Robert Aslanian, DDS, and Lynn Carbino, RN, were part of the oncology team that assisted a patient with an unexpected medical procedure.

and Guest Relations Outpatient Coordinator and Certified Medical Interpreter, was often at the patient's side, providing Spanish interpretation and emotional support. Jocelyn Walls, LCSW, provided assistance with identifying potential community and financial resources.

During a conversation with the patient, Ms. Blanco learned she desperately needed to have her wisdom teeth removed, but the patient and her family could not afford the oral surgery procedure.

After explaining the emergency to the patient's care team, they responded quickly to find resources for the patient. The team reached out to Robert Aslanian, DDS, and explained the case to the oral surgeon. Compassionately, Dr. Aslanian agreed to perform the surgery pro bono, rearranged his schedule, and performed the procedure within days.

With the collaborative support of the Greenwich Hospital oncology team and Dr. Aslanian's generosity, this patient's needs were promptly met in an exceptional way.

Griffin Hospital and United Way Grow Good Health in the Valley

GRIFFIN HOSPITAL

Healthy eating has literally taken root at Griffin Hospital thanks to a new community garden that opened at the hospital last summer.

Located on the hospital grounds at the intersection of Division Street and Seymour Avenue in Derby, the 2,000 square foot Griffin Hospital Community Garden is part of the Valley United Way's *Grow Your Own* initiative, which brings fresh produce to residents who need assistance getting healthy food. The garden features 12 raised beds to grow a variety of vegetables and herbs, including broccoli, peppers, tomatoes, lettuce, chard, collards, onions, eggplant, thyme, basil, and parsley. During the summer months, free healthy cooking programs were hosted at the garden.

Griffin Hospital's Community Garden is the tenth in the *Grow Your Own* program. With gardens in Derby, Ansonia, Seymour, and Oxford, *Grow Your Own* is designed to engage and help food insecure Valley residents obtain healthy fruits and vegetables to supplement what they are currently getting from local food pantries – as well as to encourage neighborhood residents to start their own gardens and improve their eating habits, helping alleviate one of the biggest social obstacles to good health.

The project is a community effort with support from local businesses and the American Heart



Valley United Way volunteer Stacy Lawless and Griffin Hospital President and CEO Patrick Charnel celebrate the opening of the Griffin Community Gardens.

Association. Valley United Way volunteers fill the beds and tend to the plants.

The garden is a symbol of Griffin Hospital's belief that hospitals should lead the transformation of the U.S. healthcare delivery system by shifting the industry's focus away from being a reactive sick care provider to being a population health manager that addresses the underlying causes of disease and acute episodes resulting from poorly managed chronic illness. By helping residents add more fruits and vegetables to their diet and improve their nutrition, Griffin Hospital can help prevent or control many chronic diseases in both children and adults –

putting them on a path to better health and well-being.

Despite tremendous efforts by many individuals and organizations, there is still an unmet need for food assistance in the Lower Naugatuck Valley. According to the 2016 Valley Community Index, many residents cannot afford food for themselves or their families, and lack of food causes more health issues than just malnutrition. The 12 percent of adults who reported experiencing food insecurity also suffered from a significantly lower level of well-being. For example, more than 30 percent of food insecure adults reported feeling depressed.

The effects of food insecurity are especially hard on children, as many children of families in low-income households risk developing chronic health issues such as diabetes, hypertension, and obesity as a result of an inexpensive high-sodium, carbohydrate-rich diet. According to the Index, more than 60 percent of Ansonia's children and over 50 percent of Derby's qualify for free and reduced price meals assistance.

In addition to addressing the nutritional needs of the community, the Griffin Hospital Community Garden features a welcoming patio designed with chairs and benches for residents to enjoy the peaceful outdoor atmosphere and to participate in nutrition and healthy lifestyle educational programs being held in the garden.

Hartford HealthCare Helps After Hurricane Maria

HARTFORD HEALTHCARE

In the early autumn of 2017, after Hurricane Maria devastated Puerto Rico, Jenine Glatzer-Wicks, a benefits specialist in the Hartford HealthCare (HHC) Employee Service Center, asked in her department huddle what so many HHC employees were wondering: How can we help?

This single disastrous event inspired hope – and the formation of Hartford HealthCARES, an employee-led initiative that allows Hartford HealthCare and its generous staff to respond to emergencies

and disasters as needs arise. Hurricane Maria relief efforts became the first beneficiary of this new program.

After raising \$25,000, Hartford HealthCare looked to a long-time community partner – the Hispanic Health Council in Hartford – to help distribute the funds where they would be used most effectively.

"We asked the Council how we could help improve the health of our displaced neighbors," said Jeffrey A. Flaks, President and Chief Operating Officer of Hartford HealthCare. "They told us that without warm, clean, safe homes, nobody can be healthy."

Hartford HealthCare and its employees contributed enough money to buy a new emergency generator for a small, rural hospital in the mountains of Puerto Rico. The hospital, Castañer General, continues to serve as a lifeline for its rural community of farmers and migrant workers.

The donation to the Hispanic Health Council also helped to address the needs of people who fled to Connecticut when their homes in Puerto Rico were destroyed. Many sought refuge in towns including Hartford, New Britain, and Meriden, which have vibrant Puerto Rican communities. Hartford HealthCare, too, has a big presence in these communities. The

Hartford Hospital: New Jobs Transform Lives and Neighborhoods

HARTFORD HOSPITAL HARTFORD HEALTHCARE

The positive impact of Hartford Hospital goes well beyond the walls of its buildings. In addition to providing essential medical care to its patients, the inner city hospital works to strengthen its community. Some of the most impactful help is provided one person or one neighborhood at a time.

Hartford Hospital recruits neighbors from the City of Hartford all the time, and its program has placed 14 Hartford residents in jobs on campus so far, including a homeless nursing student and two residents who moved from Puerto Rico after Hurricane Maria.

Barry Kriesberg, Hartford Hospital's Vice President of Operations, was reading the newspaper in the summer of 2018 when he came across a story about a homeless college student in the capital city. He learned the young woman had been sleeping wherever she could and often going hungry while taking certified nurse aid courses at a local community college.

Heartbroken for her plight and misfortune, Mr. Kriesberg reached out to several colleagues to see what Hartford Hospital could do.

Within hours, Vicie Brooks, a nurse and community outreach coordinator, reached the student by phone and invited her to visit Hartford Hospital. Heather Quinn and Marlene Harris helped schedule a job shadow opportunity and interview while the student was on campus. The young woman started her new job at Hartford



Hartford Hospital's Cheryl Ficara, Vice President, Patient Care Services; Heather Quinn, Administrative Assistant; Marlene Harris, RN, Nurse Educator; Vicie Brooks, RN, Community Outreach Coordinator; and Barry Kriesberg, Vice President, Operations were recognized for their efforts to provide an opportunity to a struggling nursing student.

Hospital in the fall. The opportunity offered her a chance to put her education to good use and work toward a more stable future.

Through Hartford Hospital's partnership with the Southside Institutions Neighborhood Alliance, Jose Melendez and Elsie Ingles were able to find employment at the hospital after the two moved from Puerto Rico to Hartford after Hurricane Maria.

Career navigator Elsa Huertas helped Mr. Melendez and Ms. Ingles update their resumes and explore career opportunities at Hartford Hospital. She also worked with them to identify potential references and practice interviewing skills.

In the spring of 2018, both were able to find jobs—in the healthcare field and close to home. Mr. Melendez started a new job in Food and Nutrition Services, and Ms. Ingles began two new roles as a patient care assistant and a patient administrative assistant.

Healthier Communities Fund Focuses on the Social Determinants of Health

THE CHARLOTTE HUNGERFORD HOSPITAL HARTFORD HEALTHCARE

With \$2.5 million in seed money from Hartford HealthCare, and with assistance from the Northwest Connecticut Community Foundation, The Charlotte Hungerford Hospital launched the Greater Torrington Building Healthier Communities Fund to focus on education, health and healthcare access, neighborhood and the environment, and economic stability and growth.

To fulfill its mission, a donor-advised committee with regional representation from Hartford HealthCare and The Charlotte Hungerford Hospital, along with public, community, and business representatives, has been formed. The Committee meets monthly to recommend distributions of income and/or principal from the Fund for any purpose consistent with the Fund's designation. The

Foundation will govern the investment and spending policies.

The funds will be distributed to applicants from the region in hopes of achieving growth in the areas of jobs and wages, measured by unemployment rate and median income and in municipal net grand lists. The Healthier Communities Fund will also look to make a meaningful difference in addressing the social determinants of health as measured by a composite of educational attainment, employment status, access to health services, recreational and leisure-time activities, housing status, and measures of public safety and community aesthetics.

"The greater Torrington and Winsted areas stand at the threshold of a new economic era. Building on its current community assets, its challenges must be viewed as its opportunities. We believe strongly that the region's social and economic conditions will be positively influenced through the use of this fund, and in ways that can be sustained and experienced over time," said

Brian Mattiello, The Charlotte Hungerford Hospital, Vice President of Strategy and Community Development.

The Fund Committee began setting its priorities by consulting a recent health assessment and the regional economic strategic plan, and collecting data and information available through public forums and reports. The Committee is now in the process of defining areas of need in the community and, once selected, plans to tie any funding strategies to particular metrics or milestones as a definition of success.

The Fund's purpose is to "enhance the economic and community well-being of the greater Torrington region." It is focused on jobs and social determinants of health such as access to healthcare, housing, and recreational opportunities. The Fund's establishment coincides with the one-year milestone of the affiliation of The Charlotte Hungerford Hospital with Hartford HealthCare.

Bundles of Generosity for Cancer Patients

JOHNSON MEMORIAL HOSPITAL
TRINITY HEALTH
OF NEW ENGLAND

Launched as a means to bring beauty into the world by giving back to the community, Johnson Memorial Hospital Auxiliary's one-of-a-kind Seeds of Kindness program has raised roughly \$13,000 annually since its introduction in 2016.

Through the hard work of the hospital Auxiliary and volunteers, tens of thousands of sunflowers are harvested, bundled, and sold at local Geissler's Supermarkets and other partnering retailers to raise money for the Johnson Memorial Cancer Center Patient Assistance Fund.

Each year, an estimated 70,000 sunflowers are harvested from land in the northeastern part of the state, which is loaned to the cause by a local breast cancer survivor. The sunflowers are grown with assistance from Gordon Burson of Pine Croft Farm in Somers, Connecticut.

The Johnson Memorial Cancer Center Patient Assistance Fund was formally established in 2012, although it had been operating informally for years before that. The fund assists patients who have minimal income or inadequate insurance and need help with everyday expenses such as groceries, utilities, housing, medications, transportation, and other urgent needs. Clinical social workers



manage and disburse the funds. There are no administrative costs associated with the fund, allowing 100 percent of the money raised to go toward patient and family support at a time when they are already taxed physically and emotionally. Since its inception, the Patient Assistance

Fund has helped dozens of patients by providing them with direct financial assistance. In addition to the monies raised through the Seeds of Kindness program, memorial donations and contributions from local businesses have been among the primary sources of funding.

Grant Supports Urban Agricultural Efforts

LAWRENCE + MEMORIAL HOSPITAL
YALE NEW HAVEN HEALTH

To improve the health of its community, Lawrence + Memorial Hospital invested in FRESH (Food, Resources, Education, Security, Health) New London to expand the not-for-profit organization's urban agricultural efforts and community gardens to bolster the city's supply of healthy foods.

The hospital's 2016 Community Health Needs Assessment identified food security as a major concern, especially among people earning less than \$30,000 a year.

This finding prompted the hospital to commit \$50,000 to FRESH New London, said Patrick L. Green, President and CEO of L+M Hospital. The grant will help support a task force of stakeholders and New London residents in developing a strategic plan aimed at growing as much food as possible throughout the city.

"We see a need – an urgent need – for access to healthy food," Mr. Green said. "Supporting healthy lifestyles, including

reducing the contributing factors of diabetes, is one of the community health improvement priorities of our organization and our partner organizations.

"FRESH New London uses food to connect the community," Mr. Green said. "They encourage stewardship, inspire leadership, and incite change. Because of their track record of success, the group is well positioned to lead the effort to create a five-year urban agricultural master plan to include the creation of an urban greenhouse."

Alicia McAvay, Executive Director of FRESH New London, noted that 47 families are already growing food in the middle plots of the community garden. "We're growing

Manchester Hospital's Lactation Program Provides Support at Home

MANCHESTER MEMORIAL HOSPITAL
EASTERN CONNECTICUT
HEALTH NETWORK

Recognizing the long-term benefits of breastfeeding for both mother and baby, Manchester Memorial Hospital's Family Birthing Center implemented a unique mother-to-mother Peer Mentor Program that connects breastfeeding moms in the community with newly delivered mothers to encourage successful breastfeeding.

The lactation team at Manchester Memorial Hospital developed the program as an adjunct to the information provided during the hospital's prenatal breastfeeding class. Volunteer mothers, who themselves have breastfed babies and have had breastfeeding support training, serve as contact resources for new mothers. The volunteers connect via phone or e-mail with the new mothers to see if they are experiencing breastfeeding issues or have questions about their breastfeeding experiences. Should a challenging breastfeeding issue arise, the new moms are referred to professional lactation care specialists at Manchester Memorial Hospital for further guidance.

The lactation program at Manchester Memorial Hospital is recognized as a valuable contribution to the community services offered to residents of Manchester



and the surrounding areas. Hospital staff, referring physicians, and new families have found the lactation services provided by the program to be a vital component for successful lactation.

The daily inpatient breastfeeding support program is designed to assist mothers of well infants and infants in the Neonatal Intensive Care Unit (NICU) to collaborate with nursing staff on infant feeding strategies. After discharge, the hospital provides outpatient consults with hands-on assistance that includes individualized feeding plans and follow-up as well as daily follow up calls. Breast pumps are free of charge to mothers in the NICU and also to any breastfeeding mother who is readmitted to other units.

During the "Hospitals Celebrate World Breastfeeding Week" in August 2018, the Perinatal Education Department and staff

of the Family Birthing Center at Manchester Memorial Hospital held events focused on a "Foundation of Life" theme, highlighting the links among good nutrition, food security, and breastfeeding. The Center displayed educational posters and patients were provided special education based on the theme.

In addition to programs in the hospital, Manchester Memorial Hospital also offers programs in the community like the New Mothers' Group, designed to help new mothers with infants up to 6 months old adjust to parenting. It provides a supportive environment to explore different parenting options, have questions answered regarding infant feeding and behaviors, and meet other new mothers in the area. The group meets weekly and is free to mothers regardless of place of delivery.



thousands of pounds of food, with the help of youth, community volunteers, and hundreds of residents in New London every single year," she said.

"With the investment of L+M Hospital," Ms. McAvay said, "we're very excited to expand urban agriculture throughout the city, and, most importantly, bring more New London residents into the process of creating a community-run food system that works for everybody."

FRESH New London's future plans call for large-scale urban agriculture projects, including the potential for a community-run greenhouse. At the same time, the group is also looking at urban orchards, more community gardens, and small snack beds that can be harvested by individual families," said Ms. McAvay.

"Our role goes beyond just hospital care," Mr. Green said of L+M's commitment to the project. "In our partnership with the city, we are creating a healthier community. We believe that providing access to quality healthcare, advancing careers in the health field, and promoting health and wellness leads to a stronger and healthier community."

The Benefits of a Community Garden

MIDDLESEX HEALTH

In Middlesex County, many children and families go to bed hungry. Middlesex Health, in partnership with community organizations, is doing something about it. In an effort to encourage healthy eating and tackle the issue of food insecurity, Middlesex Health started a community garden in 2014. The garden provides fresh produce to community members in need.

Today, the community garden program helps 220 people from more than 60 families annually. Each growing season, more than 4,000 pounds of produce is given to participating families free of charge. The amount of food received depends on the size of the family.

The effort is a true community collaborative: Middlesex Health provides staff members from its Family Advocacy Maternal Child Health Program to administer the program; the Women's Initiative of Middlesex United Way provided a \$1,000 grant to purchase seeds and assist with tilling the land; the

Middletown United Fathers volunteer to harvest the fruits and vegetables; and teens from the Middlesex Chamber of Commerce also help in the garden.

Families must apply to participate in the community garden program. To be eligible, they must receive services through Middlesex Health's Family Advocacy Programs for young children, such as Early Head Start, Child First, Nurturing Families, Parent Support Services, or WIC.

Once accepted into the community garden program, families are able to pick up fruits and vegetables every Tuesday, from July through October. They also have access to information sessions and cooking demonstrations. This year, a special end-of-season event was held, which included a healthy vegetable cooking demonstration by chef Mark Shadle, owner of G-Zen in Branford. There were also ample activities for children.

Middlesex Health knows it is important to teach children and their families the benefits of healthy eating. Studies show that children are more likely to eat different kinds of food when they



see where it comes from and how it is prepared. Sweet potato fries and kale can quickly become household staples.

Milford Hospital Raises Health Awareness in its Community

MILFORD HOSPITAL

There's a great deal of truth in the age-old adage "prevention is the best medicine." When it comes to preventive measures and keeping the community healthy, Milford Hospital offers education, resources, and access to preventive screenings.

Data obtained for the hospital's Community Health Needs Assessment was instrumental in guiding its health and wellness programming. Substance use, issues related to the rapidly aging population, and chronic health conditions were identified as critical health issues and key areas of concern. Through collaboration with local businesses, community organizations, municipal departments, and a variety of providers and specialists, the hospital has enhanced and expanded its health awareness and educational efforts in the community where patients live, work, and seek resources.

To address prescription drug and opioid use, Milford Hospital collaborates with local partners to deliver education to both its healthcare professionals and the community at large. The programming has included a community forum and two professional health education programs addressing alternatives in pain management, trends in opioid use, and tools and strategies for screening and treatment.

Health screenings are offered both at the hospital and in the community. Quarterly *Know Your Numbers* heart-health screenings were offered on-site and attended by 180 people who obtained blood pressure, blood glucose, and non-fasting total cholesterol (with HDL and ratio) tests. Similar free screenings were also conducted for more than 250 people at the local senior center, health clubs, and a variety of health and wellness fairs. Immediate results were available, enabling participants to benefit from on-site physicians, nurses, and health

educators who explained results and addressed next steps.

Milford Hospital also conducts monthly health-related presentations via a popular *Dinner with the Doctor* program. In FY 2018, more than 400 participants attended sessions that focused on diabetes, heart health, hernia, orthopedics, emergency medicine, stress reduction, and more. Screenings and programs were conducted by either a physician or subject matter expert.

The hospital also provided health and wellness programming to the aging population in the surrounding community. Older people face a variety of health and other challenges that impact their well-being. To address their needs, for the third year, Milford Hospital sponsored *Boomers and Beyond*, a Health and Wellness Expo. More than 2,000 individuals attended the event. Milford Hospital clinicians and medical staff provided free cholesterol, glucose, blood pressure, foot health and orthopedic screenings and assessments.

Fighting the Opioid Crisis in the Emergency Department

NORWALK HOSPITAL

WESTERN CONNECTICUT HEALTH NETWORK

Looking for new methods to combat the opioid crisis, Norwalk Hospital's Bauer Emergency Care Center staff, in collaboration with other hospital clinical departments, established the Alternative to Opiates Care Plan — a collaborative, multimodal pain management strategy to reduce opioid ordering in the emergency department (ED) setting.

Connecticut suffers from a well-documented opioid abuse issue. It has been building for some time but hit crisis proportions in recent years. The state saw a steady increase in use and abuse, with drug-related deaths increasing 25.6 percent from 2014 to 2015 and an additional rise of 24 percent from 2015 to 2016. In 2017 and 2018, deaths continued to occur. Despite intensive efforts, even the state coroner's office professed that their staff was challenged to keep up with the related autopsies and they were seriously backlogged due to opioid-related deaths.



The Norwalk Hospital team educated staff on the use of alternative therapies. Using data analytics, Norwalk Hospital realized a substantial decrease in the use of opiates in the ED by 27 percent (based on 2016-2017 monthly average usage). Looking directly at monthly actual usage, Norwalk Hospital achieved a 45 percent decrease in opioid orders in the Bauer Emergency Care Center in one year.

The initiative is ongoing and Norwalk Hospital's commitment to addressing the opioid issue is unwavering. Together, with other innovative programming and community partners working in alignment — such as the Community Care Team — the hospital is making a positive difference for greater Norwalk.

Life-Saving Kits Given to Battle Overdoses

ROCKVILLE GENERAL HOSPITAL

EASTERN CONNECTICUT HEALTH NETWORK

In an effort to help combat the ongoing opioid crisis, Rockville General Hospital recently made a \$10,000 investment to help patients tackle opioid addiction by providing life-saving medication to those most at risk for overdose and death.

Emergency Department (ED) personnel at Manchester Memorial Hospital and Rockville General Hospital have been providing Narcan kits to patients who were treated in the Emergency Department for opioid overdose since the program's inception in November 2018.

"Upon discharge, patients and family members can be given a kit that includes Narcan and a nasal atomizer, training on how to dispense the medication, and instructions on what to do afterward," said Robert Carroll, MD, Chairman and Senior Medical Director, Department of Emergency Medicine, ECHN.

Narcan has been used in Emergency Departments and by EMS personnel for years; however, through this new program,



it can be dispensed from ECHN EDs for home use by patients most at risk and their family members.

When a patient overdoses on any opiate/opioid, the drug causes their breathing to slow dramatically or stop. If breathing stops, the patient will die within a matter of minutes. Narcan is the brand name of a medication (naloxone) that is used to reverse this type of overdose because it can quickly restore normal respiration to a person whose

breathing has slowed or stopped as a result of overdosing.

Rockville General Hospital also works with the Manchester Police Department and community members with the Heroin/Opioid Prevention and Education Initiative (HOPE). One of the main goals of the Initiative is to provide a safe means for individuals to seek treatment for addiction without fear of prosecution. Treatment-in-lieu-of-arrest may be offered to people suffering from opioid addiction. Rockville General Hospital also works with the Connecticut Community for Addition Recovery to provide recovery coaches in the Emergency Departments not only for HOPE participants, but for anyone with substance use disorders.

The National Institute of Drug Abuse reports that Connecticut is among the top 10 states with the highest rate of opioid-related overdose deaths. In 2017, there were 1,038 opioid related deaths in Connecticut. Of those, 677 deaths involved fentanyl, a very powerful opioid that is being mixed with heroin to increase its potency. In Manchester, there were 19 deaths attributed to opioid overdose.

"Distribution of Narcan is a simple way to provide lifesaving intervention to those most at risk," said Dr. Carroll.

Saint Francis Hospital Succeeding in Smoking Prevention Efforts

SAINT FRANCIS HOSPITAL
TRINITY HEALTH
OF NEW ENGLAND

On a momentous October day, the City of Hartford became the first municipality in Connecticut to raise the legal age to purchase tobacco products from 18 to 21 years old. Saint Francis Hospital's Curtis D. Robinson Center for Health Equity proudly played a significant role in the milestone measure.

Every day, the Curtis D. Robinson Center for Health Equity advances health equity in the communities it serves through engagement, research, education, and advocacy. A partnership between the Center and the national Campaign for Tobacco-Free Kids enabled a group of young girls to take part in an educational initiative focused on preventing young people from cigarette smoking. The initiative was guided and funded by the Curtis D. Robinson Center and utilized the Tobacco-Free Kids curriculum. The students learned



about healthy habits including not smoking. They then took what they learned and put it into practice, speaking before the Health and Human Services Committee and the Hartford City Council, urging for passage of the measure to raise the legal age to purchase tobacco products.

Motivated in part by the students' words and passion, the City Council passed the measure unanimously. In addition to raising the legal tobacco age within the city, the measure prohibits the sale of e-cigarettes to anyone under the age of 21.

The Center's success is a key step toward tackling what the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention calls the largest preventable

cause of death and disease across the United States—cigarette smoking. National data from the Campaign for Tobacco-Free Kids show that roughly 95 percent of adult smokers began smoking before the age of 21. The organization reports kids are most susceptible to go from being experimental smokers to regular, daily smokers when they are between the ages of 18 and 21.

Advocating for measures like the one that changes the legal age to purchase tobacco is one of the many ways that Saint Francis Hospital makes a lasting impact on the future and health of the individuals and families in Connecticut.

Waterbury Wears Pink for Saint Mary's Hospital Foundation's Breast Screening Fund

SAINT MARY'S HOSPITAL
TRINITY HEALTH
OF NEW ENGLAND

A Waterbury parochial school's breast cancer awareness fundraiser has grown into a city-wide event benefitting Saint Mary's Hospital Foundation Breast Cancer Screening Fund to the sum of nearly \$120,000 over the past four years.

The Breast Cancer Screening Fund provides breast-screening tests to more than 150 women annually in the greater Waterbury area. These are patients who would otherwise not have access to important breast cancer screening tests because they are either uninsured or underinsured. Screenings are available to patients through physicians or clinical referrals. In addition, earlier this year, Saint Mary's Hospital opened its new Center for Breast Imaging. The Center was made possible because of the generous support of the hospital's foundation, which contributed \$800,000 to help purchase new equipment including a 3D mammography with tomography unit.

The Pink Out fundraiser was created in 2014 by St. Mary Magdalen School running club coach and breast cancer survivor Melissa Martin and her husband, Waterbury Fire Chief Dave Martin. The couple directed the donations to the Saint Mary's Hospital Foundation's Breast Screening Fund so that more women could benefit from early detection, which can mean the difference between life and death when it



comes to a breast cancer diagnosis.

The Pink Out campaign inspired Waterbury firefighters to begin their own fundraiser for the Breast Cancer Screening Fund by launching a t-shirt fundraiser. They are designing, printing, and selling pink t-shirts to benefit the Fund.

Sacred Heart High School in Waterbury, where Mrs. Martin is a teacher, also jumped on board. Before long, most of the Waterbury Schools – public, private, and parochial, as well as the Waterbury Police Department and municipal

employees – signed on to participate in the campaign.

On National Mammography Day in October, the city of Waterbury participated in the city-wide Pink Out Day, encouraging employees to don pink for the day in support of breast cancer awareness.

Saint Mary's Foundation is still collecting donations from the event and is hoping to provide screenings for up to 100 more patients in the coming year.

St. Vincent's Gets Cooking with Farmers Market

ST. VINCENT'S MEDICAL CENTER

Not only does St. Vincent's Medical Center in Bridgeport operate a popular Farmers Market in front of its main entrance, but in the last couple of years, it has offered monthly cooking demonstrations by a professional chef to teach customers how to cook the produce they purchase.

This past season, which runs from the beginning of July through October, Farmers Market customers learned how to cook a healthy meals with their fresh fruits and vegetables. Chef Raquel Rivera-Pablo, of A Pinch of Salt, demonstrated a host of simple cooking techniques with affordable food, and shared culinary secrets and tips. Chef Rivera-Pablo brought her philosophy of "bringing food for all," shared free samples, and answered questions during the four cooking classes.

"The goal is to show that healthy eating need not be difficult or expensive," said Bill Hoey, Vice President and Chief Mission Integration Officer at St. Vincent's. The cooking demonstrations were developed by St. Vincent's and the Bridgeport Farmers Market Collaborative (BFMC), of which St. Vincent's is a member.

"The point of having a farmer's market and the cooking presentations at the hospital is to help improve public health by encouraging better nutrition," said Mr. Hoey. "Access to healthy food is a huge issue and the idea is to help people access it." The Farmers Market is one way that St. Vincent's has responded to the federally mandated Community Health Needs Assessment that identified obesity and a high incidence of diabetes and cardiac disease as major challenges in the greater Bridgeport area.

But it also aligns with the mission of St. Vincent's to serve those who are poor and vulnerable. Through BFMC funding, the market is able to double the value of Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) coupons, so for every \$1 of SNAP benefits people spend at the market, recipients get \$2 worth of food. St. Vincent's Market



is easily accessible by public transportation and has also provided a healthy and popular option for St. Vincent's employees, volunteers, and visitors.

St. Vincent's Medical Center Foundation has also funded \$5,000 in complimentary Bridgeport Bucks to be distributed at specific sites of care to women who are at risk for developing or being treated for heart disease. Patients receive \$10 in coupons, which can be used at any of the seven Bridgeport farmers markets.



Students Inspired to Pursue Healthcare Careers at Stamford Health

Stamford High School seniors are gaining first-hand healthcare experience through a program, now in its third year, which provides hands-on experience working in the cardiac catheterization (cath) lab at Stamford Health's Heart & Vascular Institute (HVI).

Over the course of the six-week program, second semester high school students learn about sterile operating room rules and attire, how to set a sterile tray, and the procedure for room turnover from technologists, nurses, coordinators and materials coordinators. The students also contribute directly by completing other tasks that are vital to patient care such as providing patient transports, stocking labs and supply rooms, and shadowing with a physician or a nurse practitioner.

The goal of the on-site experience is for students to gain real-world knowledge of cardiology, anatomy

STAMFORD HEALTH

and vital signs, and understand what it's like to work in a patient-centered environment. Students can apply for the opportunity through the Stamford Health internship program or through the City of Stamford Mayor's Youth Employment Program (MYEP).

Each student's willingness to ask and answer questions, observe, and advance their skills is not only beneficial for the HVI, but also for the student's personal and professional growth. The Stamford High School seniors are so engaged in the internship at the HVI that they often return to become volunteers after completing the course. One student, who graduated and is now in nursing school herself, comes back to volunteer in the HVI when she is home on break.



Trinity Health Of New England Inspires Thousands to Live Healthier

Asking staff and community members to say "no" to soda, sweets, and cigarettes for the 61 days between November 1 and December 31, Trinity Health Of New England launched the New England 61 Day Challenge™ in 2018.

In its inaugural year, the New England 61 Day Challenge™ focused on two major, yet preventable causes of death – cigarette smoking and obesity. The challenge was designed to help individuals get a jump start on establishing healthy habits before the New Year.

More than 3,000 individuals across New England took the pledge to create healthier lifestyle habits. Additionally, nearly 40 community organizations, business, schools, churches, and state offices have partnered with Trinity Health Of New England to help ensure the challenge was robust and made a difference in as many community members' lives as possible.

Throughout the challenge, Trinity Health Of New England offered a multitude of educational sessions on smoking cessation, healthy eating, how to increase physical activity, and how to manage stress. Additionally, those who took the online pledge received daily health tips to help educate and inspire their journey to better health.

TRINITY HEALTH OF NEW ENGLAND

Each Trinity Health Of New England hospital - Saint Francis Hospital, Mount Sinai Rehabilitation Hospital, Johnson Memorial Hospital, Saint Mary's Hospital, and Mercy Medical Center in Springfield, Massachusetts – participated in the Challenge.

"The intention of the challenge was to inspire mindfulness when it comes to what our patients and our community members put into their bodies," said Reginald Eadie, MD, President and Chief Executive Officer of Trinity Health Of New England. "We are extremely proud and excited to have been able to stand hand-in-hand with our communities as they took the journey toward making choices today that will reflect the lives they want for themselves tomorrow.

"Regardless of your race, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, age, socioeconomic status, or health history, as a community, and as individuals, we cannot afford to live a life in which our health is not a priority," said Dr. Eadie. "As a leading, regional healthcare organization, we understand that small steps, like eating more vegetables or big steps like quitting smoking may require help, which is why we are working to inspire, remind, and educate individuals on how to make better choices, ultimately allowing them to establish a lifestyle that will lead to long lasting health."



UConn Opens Milk Depot for Newborns

UConn JOHN DEMPSEY HOSPITAL UConn HEALTH

UConn John Dempsey Hospital has opened a milk depot for breast milk donations for newborns in need.

"Our new milk depot at UConn John Dempsey Hospital is benefitting our tiniest patients in NICUs across Connecticut and the Northeast, including our own, the Connecticut Children's Medical Center NICU (Neonatal Intensive Care Unit) here at UConn Health," said Marisa Merlo, lactation consultant for UConn Health's Department of Obstetrics and Gynecology.

The milk depot is the fifth in Connecticut to join Mothers' Milk Bank Northeast, a not-for-profit community milk bank accredited by the Human Milk Banking Association of North America, which distributes donated, pasteurized human milk throughout the Northeast to babies in fragile health. Women interested in donating their breast milk can contact Mothers' Milk Bank Northeast to apply for eligibility and screening. Donations from eligible women are safeguarded in the milk depot's freezer. The frozen milk is then shipped to Mothers' Milk Bank Northeast for pasteurization processing and distribution to their network of NICUs.

Not all mothers of newborns can produce milk or a sufficient milk supply. Mothers with premature

newborns, especially, can experience difficulty producing or pumping enough breast milk while their baby is in the NICU. Donor milk is a more beneficial substitute for fragile newborns than formula. Breast milk can benefit a baby's overall survival, and it can improve their health, growth and development, and immunity.

"The milk depot at UConn Health is making it more accessible, easier, and stress-free for women to donate their breast milk to help other women and their babies," said Natalee Martin, Associate Director of Development for UConn Health. She donated her breast milk for three months after her daughter turned one.

The milk depot at UConn Health was founded and made possible with initial generous donations from Ms. Merlo, Ms. Martin, Christopher Morosky, MD, Associate Professor, Obstetrics and Gynecology at UConn Health, and Carrie Ferrindino, nurse manager of Maternal Child Health.

"The Milk Depot at UConn John Dempsey Hospital is a wonderful opportunity to provide to our community," said Ms. Ferrindino. "Our goal at UConn Health is to do everything in our power to promote and support healthy moms and babies."

A little over two months after opening, over 3,500 ounces of donated breast milk had already shipped.

"The number of newborns this will reach is immeasurable," added Ms. Merlo.



Waterbury Hospital Helps Those in Need

WATERBURY HOSPITAL

Waterbury Hospital, Waterbury HEALTH affiliates, and employees helped people affected by Hurricane Maria during a campaign that included several fundraisers that benefited families who relocated from Puerto Rico to Connecticut, and resulted in two large medical donations to the island.

The greater Waterbury area is home to a large Puerto Rican community whose families were affected by devastating hurricanes in late 2017. Just days after Hurricane Maria in October 2017, Waterbury Hospital sent a donation of more than 1,000 pounds of medicine and supplies to the island. A similar donation from Waterbury HEALTH followed a few months later. Donations were made through the Puerto Rico Se Levanta (Puerto Rico Rises) Connecticut Chapter.

In the months following, Waterbury HEALTH and its employees held several fundraisers including a special edition T-shirt sale and a Valentine’s Day raffle to help Puerto Rican families relocating into the area. Waterbury Hospital held a Puerto Rico Day in its Café with authentic island food, with a portion of the proceeds going to the Puerto Rico fundraisers.

Money raised through the different fundraisers - and a match by Waterbury HEALTH - were then donated to five area not-for-profit organizations: Waterbury Health Access Program, the Hispanic Coalition of Greater Waterbury, the Literacy Volunteers of Greater Waterbury, Acts 4 Ministries, and God Provides Ministries. These organizations helped dozens of newly arrived families with basic needs like housing, clothes, food, and services including learning English, enrolling in school, and enrolling in a health plan.

For its efforts with the Puerto Rico donation and fundraisers, Waterbury HEALTH was honored by Madre Latina Inc., with an Excellence in Leadership award.

Each year, Waterbury HEALTH supports more than 100 local organizations through donations and employee volunteering.

Center Allows Seniors to Age Gracefully – And Healthfully

WINDHAM HOSPITAL
HARTFORD HEALTHCARE

With an aging population facing a multitude of health and behavioral health concerns, the Center for Healthy Aging at Windham Hospital serves as a valuable resource to help seniors in Eastern Connecticut maintain the highest possible quality of life as they get older.

The Center for Aging, one of 10 operated by Hartford HealthCare, opened in 2015, and offers free resources and assessments to make it easier for seniors, their loved ones, and caregivers to access essential information and services to attain an optimal quality of life. The Center provides interdisciplinary needs assessments; referral services; and healthcare, exercise, and supporting services such as behavioral health services provided by Natchaug Hospital’s Older Adult Program.

In 2018, the Center for Healthy Aging at Windham Hospital made 1,038 community referrals, with the most common referrals being to Eastern Connecticut Area Agency on Aging, which connects clients to grants for home care and respite care, and to local senior centers. The Center also conducted 166 Dementia Specialist/Resource Coordinator assessments—a comprehensive, ability-focused interview done via telephone in the Center or in the patient’s home to determine any gaps in their overall care.

“The assessment is a way to present recommendations for the person or caregiver when they are not sure what they need, qualify for, or what is available,” said Joseph Zuzel, the Resource Coordinator at the Center for Healthy Aging at Windham Hospital.

Last year, the Center facilitated 324 transitional care nursing visits through the



Kelli Barbone, ATC/LAT, left, a certified athletic trainer, works with a patient at the Hartford HealthCare Center for Healthy Aging at Windham Hospital.

certified homecare services, with the goal of keeping people healthy and safe in their home.

“The nurse provides health education, assists with connecting the patient to community resources, and helps the patient communicate with their physician, case manager, or other members of their healthcare team,” said Mr. Zuzel.

If the patient doesn’t meet the criteria for homecare, the transitional care nurse will continue to call for a 30-day period or longer, if needed, to ensure the patient is safe and managing their care.

The Center also organized 63 free community events for seniors in 2018, including a veterans coffee hour, a *Healthy Brain Series*, a dementia support group and a *Live Well* chronic disease management series.

Get Healthy CT Walk & Talk with a Doc

YALE NEW HAVEN HOSPITAL
YALE NEW HAVEN HEALTH

Get Healthy CT Walk & Talk with a Doc is a weekly opportunity that brings community members together with healthcare providers from Yale New Haven Hospital (YNHH) to share health-related information while doing a healthy activity – walking.

The walk series was born out of YNHH’s Community Health Needs Assessment (CHNA), which indicated that people in many communities did not regularly engage in physical activity because they felt the outdoor areas near their homes were unsafe, or that exercise was not an easily-accessible option. A group of primary care residents at YNHH saw a novel opportunity to engage patients in their own communities by forming a walking group. The partnership then grew to include *Get Healthy CT* (GHCT), a collaboration that was also created as a result of the CHNA, and is dedicated to promoting healthy lifestyles by removing the barriers to healthy eating and physical activity. GHCT was formed in greater Bridgeport in 2010, and has expanded to include a chapter in New Haven, as well as coordinated efforts in Greenwich.

The *Get Healthy CT Walk & Talk with a Doc* program uses a section of the Farmington Canal Heritage Trail in New Haven. The often under-utilized asset is perfectly suited to exercise, and crosses through the middle Newhallville, one of the most economically challenged neighborhoods in the city. The pastor of the New Freedom Missionary Baptist Church, which



is adjacent to the trail, provides the church’s parking lot as a meeting place.

The group walks for about an hour each Saturday morning and YNHH physicians lead a *Medical Minute* with either a prepared topic or in response to questions from the walkers, including subjects such as blood pressure, obesity, the importance of vaccinations, and sexual health. The walking group ranges between 12 and 20 in number, with a wide range of age and ability.

The group walks for about an hour each Saturday morning and YNHH physicians lead a *Medical Minute* with either a prepared topic or in response to questions from the walkers

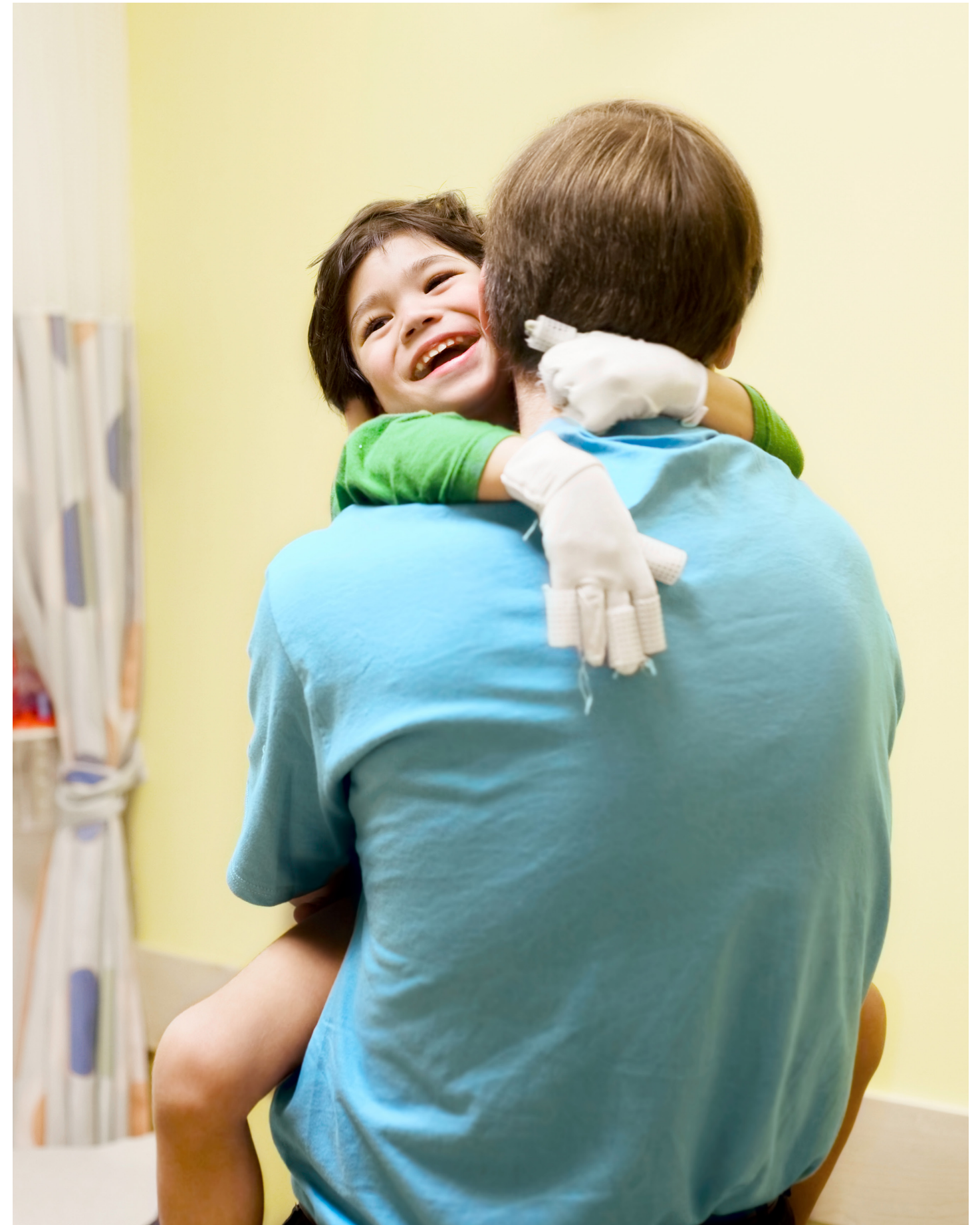
Since 2016, the walks have provided a free, healthy opportunity to bring the community together. The goal is to engage members from this, and any other community, around physical activity. An added value is the opportunity to expose physicians, especially those in residency, to the community in which their patients live. The *Get Healthy CT Walk & Talk with a Doc* series demonstrates how organizations can collaborate to improve the health and vitality of the communities they serve.



WHAT LEGISLATORS CAN DO IN 2019

1. Protect the agreement regarding taxes paid by hospitals and Medicaid payments to hospitals, and settle past disputes.
2. Partner with hospitals to develop new opportunities that benefit patients, communities, hospitals, and the state.
3. Bring Connecticut's Medicaid rates in line with the national average.
4. Invest in hospitals and healthcare to grow Connecticut's economy.
5. Protect access to patient care in light of potential changes to healthcare on the national level.
6. Support a Certificate of Need (CON) process that treats hospitals fairly and on an equal basis with other providers and other entities.
7. Do not pass legislation that imposes additional regulatory burdens on hospitals.
8. Support behavioral health and substance use treatment and prevention programs that emphasize an integrated approach to patient care, such as Community Care Teams.
9. Fund proven drug and alcohol abuse treatment programs, such as recovery coaches.
10. Related to behavioral health and substance use services, match facilities and available resources, such as short-term, intermediate, and long-term beds, with patient need.

Note: The hospital and health system economic analysis is based on the statewide multipliers from the Regional Input-Output Modeling System (RIMS II), developed by the Bureau of Economic Analysis of the U.S. Department of Commerce. It uses data from the hospital health system FY 2017 audited financial statements. RIMS II provides an accounting of "inputs" purchased and "outputs" sold by an industry in the state. The spending of one industry will have several rounds of ripple influence throughout the state economy – this is known as the multiplier effect. RIMS II regional multipliers measure both the direct and indirect impact on the state economy from a specific industry. The number of jobs is based on individuals employed by the hospital health systems, as recorded through IRS Form W-3. Hospital services data are from ChimeData FY2017 and Office of Health Strategy, Health Systems Planning Unit.





About the Connecticut Hospital Association

The Connecticut Hospital Association has been dedicated to serving Connecticut's hospitals and health systems since 1919. Through state and federal advocacy, CHA represents the interests of Connecticut's hospitals and health systems 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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