



2020



# COMMUNITY BENEFIT REPORT

JANUARY 2020



CONNECTICUT  
HOSPITAL  
ASSOCIATION





## CONNECTICUT HOSPITALS AND HEALTH SYSTEMS BUILDING A HEALTHIER CONNECTICUT



**CONNECTICUT HOSPITALS AND HEALTH SYSTEMS** provide nationally recognized care – and much more. Increasingly, their work takes them beyond the hospital walls to improve the health of those who live in their communities.

Through community benefit programs that encompass a wide range of services, hospitals and health systems respond to the critical needs of patients and communities. Housing, food insecurity, transportation, and employment continue to be areas of unmet need that hospitals are addressing individually and collaboratively through CHA. To build a healthier Connecticut, hospitals are committed to enhancing collaboration among providers and community-based organizations to address the social determinants of health, improve health equity, and reduce disparities that lead to poor clinical outcomes.

In 2018, Connecticut hospitals provided more than 12.7 million services to individuals and families at a cost of \$1.9 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

**\$763 MILLION**

Unpaid government-sponsored  
healthcare - Medicaid

**\$816 MILLION**

Unpaid government-sponsored  
healthcare - Medicare

**\$225 MILLION**

Uncompensated care: Charity care/bad  
debt to provide services for those who  
cannot pay



**\$23 MILLION**

Community services to improve the  
health of the community



**\$11 MILLION**

Research and other programs to advance  
healthcare for patients and the community

**\$17  
MILLION**  
Donations to help  
support community  
organizations



**\$7  
MILLION**  
Community  
building to create  
stronger, healthier  
communities



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

TOTAL COMMUNITY BENEFIT **\$1.9 BILLION**

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



## RX for Health Program Provides Fresh Produce to Fight Childhood Obesity

THE WILLIAM W. BACKUS HOSPITAL  
HARTFORD HEALTHCARE

Thanks to a partnership with the Norwich ShopRite and United Community and Family Services (UCFS), The William W. Backus Hospital's successful *RX for Health* program to help fight childhood obesity is now available during the winter months.

Nine years ago, staff at the hospital identified obesity as a top health concern as part of its Community Health Needs Assessment and launched the *RX for Health* program

to help families in need put fresh produce, herbs, eggs, and whole grain bread on the table. Under the program, participants receive "prescriptions" from local pediatricians that are redeemable for fresh vegetables and other healthy items offered at the downtown Norwich farmers market. Participants receive up to \$125 in free healthy food each season.

Because there is less availability of fresh produce during the



winter months, Backus, UCFS, and ShopRite launched a five-month pilot that allows participants to redeem prescriptions by presenting them at the ShopRite pharmacy and receiving a \$25 voucher each month during the winter. Participants are also given a folder with healthy eating information and recipes when they submit their prescription.

"UCFS is such a good partner and has been very dedicated to the success of the program during the summer months. We knew that with their support, this could work in the winter too," said Lisa Hageman, RN, MSN, Manager of the Backus Preventive Medicine Initiative. "Programs such as this strengthen our community partnerships and deliver on one of the main objectives in the Hartford HealthCare Community Health Implementation Plan (CHIP)—promoting a healthy diet."

Thirty five families who participated in the summer *Rx for*

*Health* program are also taking part in the winter program.

UCFS Care Coordinator Patty Passmore says the program is a great team effort. "For participants, they're trying to do what's best for their child. When they see that it's Backus and ShopRite—two very visible organizations in the Norwich community—it just clicks for them," said Ms. Passmore.

Data from program surveys show that the summer *RX* program has increased the number of days of the week that the children receive a daily fruit and vegetable by nearly 20 percent.

One of the program participants, a caregiver for her 14-year-old grandson, praises the program, "It's so helpful for us to buy healthy foods. The program is wonderful, just wonderful."

The *RX for Health* program is supported by the Backus Healthy Community Campaign.

## Bridgeport Hospital Tackles Food Insecurity

BRIDGEPORT HOSPITAL  
YALE NEW HAVEN HEALTH

To help fight the rise in food insecurity impacting the greater Bridgeport community, Bridgeport Hospital has teamed up with the Connecticut Food Bank to serve as a site for a monthly mobile food pantry. According to the Connecticut Food Bank, nearly half a million Connecticut residents struggle with hunger. The most recent Community Health Needs Assessment findings revealed that 28 percent of Bridgeport residents reported that they are food insecure and do not always have enough food to feed their families. For those 28 percent of people, 68 percent indicated that this happened to them either every month or most months during the past year.

Bridgeport Hospital is committed to improving the health of its community and a mobile food pantry was a great fit with this goal. The Connecticut Food Bank Mobile Pantry addresses access and transportation barriers that make it difficult for people who are food insecure to access the healthy food they need by bringing the food to them.

In May 2019, the Connecticut Food Bank added Bridgeport Hospital as a mobile pantry distribution site. Every third Tuesday of the month, participants line up as early as 4:00 p.m. in all kinds of weather waiting for the 5:00 p.m. opening of the food pantry – when it distributes free, nutritious food to anyone in need. There are no eligibility requirements to receive food from the mobile pantry. The mobile pantry is intentionally set up as a client choice program, where participants are encouraged to select the food items they want from the food that is available. The food options differ depending on the season and availability, but always include seasonal fresh produce, dairy items, grains, and proteins.

"Bridgeport Hospital and our staff members have embraced the



opportunity provided by the mobile food pantry to help improve the health and well-being of our local community. We will always welcome the chance to work with the Connecticut Food Bank and others to help care for those in need in our area," said Anne Diamond, President, Bridgeport Hospital.

In the first eight months of operation, 1,215 local families have been served by the monthly mobile food pantry that comes to the hospital. So far, 105 hospital staff members have volunteered at the food pantry, and there is a waiting list of hospital volunteers who want to participate in the program.

The number of families served each month continues to grow as word spreads about the program. Serving such a large number of families would not be possible without the dedication and hard work of the hospital volunteers.

Bridgeport Hospital recognizes the connection between healthy food access and healthy communities. The hospital will continue to partner with the Connecticut Food Bank as a monthly mobile food pantry site as one of its many efforts to help local residents gain access to the food they need to support their health and well-being.

## Bristol Health Finds New Ways to Address Behavioral Health Concerns

BRISTOL HEALTH

Staff and leadership from Bristol Health's Counseling Center continue to be called on by local officials to address behavioral health and substance use in the greater Bristol area.

"Substance use, behavioral health, and suicide are once again the top priorities in our 2019 Community Health Needs Assessment," said Rebecca Colasanto, LCSW, Systems Director of Behavioral Health. "Two-thirds of survey participants identified these issues by a wide margin when compared to other health concerns in our area."

Ms. Colasanto and Bristol Health Counseling Center Operations Manager Lisa Coates, LCSW, serve on numerous committees and have implemented programs focused on addressing these concerns. Their expertise has garnered attention from state leaders as well; over the summer, Connecticut Speaker of the House Joe Aresimowicz appointed Ms. Colasanto to the state's Behavioral Health Partnership Oversight Council.

On the local level, Ms. Coates is one of the Bristol Health representatives on Mayor Ellen Zoppo-Sassu's Opioid Task Force. Ms. Coates also facilitates the Community Care Team, which meets bi-weekly to address options for patients who frequent Bristol Health's Emergency Center.



"Like the Mayor's Opioid Task Force, collaboration is vital to addressing and finding solutions to these problems," Ms. Coates said.

The Counseling Center staff also worked with the city, which received a grant for free community programs that address suicide prevention and naloxone training. Since 2018, the Counseling Center team has coordinated suicide prevention training for the community and all new Bristol Health employees.

Ms. Coates and leadership from the Bristol Health Emergency Center also have taken the lead on an initiative called COBRA—City of Bristol Recovery Alliance—which

is a partnership among Bristol Health, the Bristol Mayor's Office, the Bristol Police Department, Wheeler Clinic, and Community Mental Health Affiliates.

As part of COBRA, a person in possession of or using an illegal substance can choose treatment instead of arrest. With police officer discretion, the participant will be transferred to Bristol Health's Emergency Center and evaluated for treatment options.

"My hope for this program is to reduce the number of deaths by overdose in our city," Ms. Coates said. "We are losing people at dramatic rates and we need to do something dramatically different to fight this problem."



## Volunteer Program Helps Families With Home Rehabilitation

THE HOSPITAL OF  
CENTRAL CONNECTICUT  
HARTFORD HEALTHCARE

Staff members from The Hospital of Central Connecticut and Hartford HealthCare Rehabilitation Network joined the team from Rebuilding Together New Britain to help a local family in need.

Early in 2019, the staff, some of whom were joined by their family and friends, volunteered to help restore a local home by painting, gardening, installing safety railings on stairs, and assisting in many other repairs that needed to be done at the house. The team also raised more than \$400 to help support the project.

“It was a great experience,” said Monica Duque, a member of the Hartford HealthCare team who volunteered for the day. “We painted the homeowner’s basement, installed a hand railing, and did some yard work. Everyone had a great time.”

Founded in 1992, Rebuilding Together New Britain’s mission is to



help local low income homeowners rebuild and maintain their homes through volunteer work groups like the one from Hartford HealthCare. Repairs include anything from gardening, painting, and landscaping to fixing bad plumbing, crumbling foundations, and installing walkways.

“Our daily job is to rehabilitate people,” Ms. Duque added. “It was nice to give back to the community and spend time rehabilitating a local family’s home.”

## Enhancing Care Coordination for Children in Behavioral Health Crisis

CONNECTICUT CHILDREN’S

Like many hospitals across the country, Connecticut Children’s has seen an unprecedented increase in utilization of its Emergency Department (ED) for children in behavioral health crisis. To better serve this population, Connecticut Children’s launched a Behavioral Health Transitions Clinic in January 2019 to provide immediate care for children and help them successfully transition into community behavioral health services.

The Behavioral Health Transitions Clinic currently operates 20 hours per week. It ensures rapid support for children and families who previously had limited options since Emergency Departments typically do not offer behavioral health services, and community providers and programs often have wait lists as long as two-to-six months.

The initial appointment in the Behavioral Health Transitions Clinic typically occurs within seven days of discharge. During this appointment, a family meets with a psychiatric provider, a licensed clinical social worker, and a care coordinator who, along with the family, determine a care plan for the child. The psychiatric provider can immediately prescribe medication for the child, if needed. The social worker conducts individual and family therapy sessions, and participates in additional care planning meetings. Both provide

ongoing care until the family establishes permanent care with behavioral health resources in the community. A care coordinator from Connecticut Children’s Center for Care Coordination ensures that a child’s services are coordinated across health, behavioral health, and school settings, and continues to work with the family as long as they need support.

Prior to launching the Behavioral Health Transitions Clinic, it was common for children to wait days to weeks in the ED before providers could safely discharge them home with a referral to a behavioral health provider. Due to long waits to see psychiatric providers in the community, some children required inpatient admission for medication management.

During the first nine months of operation, providers referred 115 children to the Behavioral Health Transitions Clinic. Of those referrals, caregivers connected 39 percent to community services, while another 24 percent were active in the clinic. The balance were awaiting their first appointment, had not returned for follow-up care, or declined care. Of those who connected to community services, the average transition time to establish those connections was 37 days, far sooner than the wait time families experienced prior to establishing the Behavioral Health Transitions Clinic.

Going forward, the Behavioral Health Transitions Clinic plans to extend its hours of operation to provide greater access to care for patients and families.

## Caring for the Caregiver at Danbury Hospital

DANBURY HOSPITAL  
NUVANCE HEALTH

Whether caring for a parent, spouse, child, sibling, or another person, odds are everyone has struggled physically, emotionally, or spiritually at one time or another in that role. Recognizing that healthy self-care is an important part of the ability to care for someone else, the Goldstone Caregiver Center at Danbury Hospital provides support in a variety of ways – all free of charge.

The Goldstone Caregiver Center is available



to those who are the primary source of providing care for a family member or friend. The Goldstone Caregiver Center amenities include a comfortable place to rest, reflect,

and recharge with quiet rooms for respite or private conversation. In addition, there’s a kitchenette, computer workstations for internet or e-mail access, copier, telephones and fax, and access to a library specializing in resources for caregivers.

Services at The Goldstone Caregiver Center are also available to hospital staff and include professional counseling from a licensed clinical social worker, volunteer caregiver coaches trained to support families, support groups, educational programs, and end-of-life support. Chair yoga, meditation, free lectures by mental health experts, and Tai Chi are all offered as a community service.

## Warmth and Wellness Drive Collects Personal Care Items for Those in Need

DAY KIMBALL HOSPITAL

Day Kimball Healthcare (DKH) is going beyond the walls of its buildings to improve the health and well-being of those in northeast Connecticut by addressing social determinants that negatively impact community members. Some of the most impactful help is provided one person at a time.

DKH’s mission is centered on healthcare, but good health begins with caring for the whole person, ensuring their needs for things like basic warmth and personal care are met.

In the frigid winters of the Quiet Corner, some of DKH’s neighbors do not have the basic necessities to stay warm and well. To help, DKH implemented a Warmth & Wellness Drive during the 2017 holiday season to collect personal care items as well as new blankets, mittens, hats, and more – the kinds of things that can mean so much to the individuals and families who struggle during the winter season. This holiday drive has become an annual tradition for those in need.

DKH staff and the community drop donations at designated Warmth & Wellness holiday trees located at various DKH sites. Items collected include hundreds of toothbrushes and related dental hygiene products; body wash, soap, shampoo, deodorant, and hand sanitizer; toilet paper and feminine products; face cloths and hand towels; laundry detergent and wet wipes; pillows, sheets, blankets, and sleeping bags; and pajamas, socks, hats, and mittens for children and adults. “These donations make a big difference for individuals and families in our community when they need it most. This spirit of generosity and thoughtfulness is at the heart of all we do at DKH and throughout the Northeast Connecticut community,” said Kristen Willis, DKH Director of Development.



Donations are distributed through Thompson Ecumenical Empowerment Group (TEEG), Interfaith Human Services’ food pantry, the DKH Family Advocacy Center, and DKH’s own outpatient services including Diagnostic Imaging and Behavioral Health.

“Personal care items are an essential, but unfunded need,” said Anne Miller, Executive Director, TEEG. “We are grateful to be able to set some warm clothing and socks aside for those in our community who are struggling with homelessness. Not only will these personal care items be helpful to those struggling with housing stability, but they will also serve to stretch family budgets.”

Northeast Connecticut is widely known for its generosity and willingness to take care of others. The Quiet Corner is a special place where the connection to and support of institutions, agencies, and traditions are the threads that hold the community together. The overwhelming support and grassroots efforts of this community are a significant component for how DKH has been able to continue to fulfill its mission for 125 years.



## Greenwich Hospital's Teddy Bear Clinic Puts A Friendly Face on Medicine

GREENWICH HOSPITAL  
YALE NEW HAVEN HEALTH

For the past two decades, thousands of children have brought Winnie the Pooh, super heroes, stuffed animals, baby dolls, and more to be treated by the doctors, nurses, and other healthcare professionals at Greenwich Hospital's free annual Teddy Bear Clinic.

This fun, interactive day of learning is designed to help children, parents, and grandparents become familiar with medical care in a family-friendly environment to reduce the fear of visiting a hospital or doctor's office for healthcare services. This year, 1,825 area residents attended the outdoor mini-hospital under the tents, including more than 730 children from infants to pre-teens, marking the largest crowd in the event's history.

Dr. Ted E. Bear greeted the children, who began their hospital tour by taking their dolls and stuffed toys to "Admitting" and "Emergency" for an exam and diagnosis. From there, children took their furry friends to various stations for X-rays, ultrasound, surgery, respiratory therapy, splints or stitches, depending on the diagnosis. The children received a "passport" that was stamped by the various participating hospital departments.

Hospital staff engaged the children in interactive activities designed to be fun as well as educational. For instance, the Pharmacy Department reviewed medication safety and challenged youngsters to tell the difference between medication and candy. Physical Medicine staff helped children test their balance by negotiating an obstacle course and talked about the importance of daily exercise. Kids viewed germs through microscopes at the Laboratory station and received education on the importance of proper handwashing techniques with demonstrations at the Infection Control area. At the Surgery station, children watched as surgeons expertly stitched their teddy bears.

All family members benefitted by receiving information about the essential components of wellness including good hygiene practices, annual exams/screenings, and healthy lifestyle choices that improve overall health. Healthcare experts answered questions about vaccinations, sun safety, injury prevention, bike safety, smoking and vaping prevention, sleep, cancer prevention, medications, nutrition, and other health-related topics.

Twenty-one diverse Greenwich Hospital departments were represented and representatives from Yale New Haven Children's Hospital Pediatric Specialty Center also attended. Collaborative community partners participated including Greenwich Library staff, who conducted story time, and Greenwich Emergency Medical Services, which provided ambulance tours.

With its focus on promoting health and wellness with tender loving care, the Teddy Bear Clinic has become Greenwich Hospital's largest community event and an annual tradition for families who bring their children and grandchildren year after year.



## Griffin Hospital Provides Free Prostate Cancer Screenings

GRIFFIN HOSPITAL

For the third year, the Center for Cancer Care at Griffin Hospital in Derby provided free prostate cancer screenings to encourage men to get checked for the disease and to increase men's health awareness.

To date, 83 men have been screened including 29 at this year's event. As a result of the screenings, more than six men were referred for further testing.

Healthcare providers included Joseph Cardinale, MD, Center for Cancer Care, and Joseph Camilleri, MD, Griffin Faculty Practice Urology, and resident physicians at Griffin Hospital.

In addition to the screenings, participants and family members are offered a tailgate party buffet at the Center for Cancer Care. The screening is sponsored by Griffin's Health Initiative for Men (HiM), which encourages men to have an annual physical and raises awareness about men's health issues such as prostate cancer and colorectal cancer.

"Being screened for prostate cancer is a critical part of men's health," said HiM Co-founder Judy Michaud. "Prostate cancer is the second-leading cancer killer in men; however, it can be successfully treated if caught early. We hope the men who took part in this screening go home and encourage others to get tested."

According to the American Cancer Society, prostate cancer screenings are recommended for men at 50 years of age. Men at higher risk, including African American men, and men who have a first-degree relative (father or brother) diagnosed with prostate cancer before age 65, should be screened at age 45. Men at a very high risk (multiple family members diagnosed with prostate cancer before age 65 years) should be tested at age 40.

In an effort to inspire men to have an annual physical and raise awareness about men's health issues such as prostate cancer and colorectal cancer, Griffin Hospital launched the HiM, a community-wide preventive healthcare effort. The goal of the HiM is to influence men to see their physician annually, and to be screened for various diseases that respond better to treatment if detected early.



## Hartford Hospital Community Health Provides Essential Care in the Community

HARTFORD HOSPITAL  
HARTFORD HEALTHCARE

Late last year, Brownstone Ambulatory Care Services officially became Hartford Hospital Community Health, welcoming patients to a gleaming, new building on Jefferson Street in Hartford. The new name reflects Hartford HealthCare's mission to improve the health and healing of the communities it serves.

For nearly five decades, Hartford Hospital's community health program has provided essential services to patients in the community regardless of their ability to pay. Many people who visit the health center have limited resources and medically complex needs such as diabetes, high blood pressure, high cholesterol, chronic pain, and psychosocial challenges. Hartford Hospital Community Health provides these patients with access to much-needed quality primary, dental, and specialty care, as well as social and human services.

During the ribbon-cutting ceremony, Hartford Hospital President Bimal Patel recognized the hospital and community leadership, contractors, architects, donors, and staff who helped to make the new building possible. "Today is about the heart and soul of our organization," he said. "I want to recognize that providing subsidized care doesn't mean substandard care. Providing this particular care is also a teaching moment. It's also about prevention."

More than \$3.4 million in philanthropic support was raised for the new health center — representing more than 40 percent of the funds required to complete it. Among the lead donors were Hartford Hospital employees, who contributed \$92,000 through the Hartford HealthCare Employee Giving Campaign.



The new center houses primary care offices and one of Connecticut's most extensive programs to care for patients with HIV. The Cystic Fibrosis Center and the Dental Clinic remain at the Brownstone Ambulatory Care Services' Retreat Avenue location.

With a focus on wellness and prevention, plans for the center include partnering with community and other organizations to address social determinants of health. One partnership with Greater Hartford Legal Aid will bring lawyers to the health center to see patients who may benefit from legal assistance. The health center will also partner with the national organization Wholesome Wave to help people with diabetes get affordable, healthful fruits and vegetables through local stores and services, such as C-Town Supermarkets and Hartford Mobile Food Market.

Hartford Hospital "was founded on the very purpose of community—of meeting a need," said Hartford HealthCare President and CEO Jeffrey Flaks. "From the very beginning, we were about serving this community and all people under all circumstances. Today, with this ribbon-cutting, it renews that level of commitment 165 years later."

## "Stop The Bleed" Community Training Courses Make a Difference

THE CHARLOTTE  
HUNGERFORD HOSPITAL  
HARTFORD HEALTHCARE

Hartford HealthCare's The Charlotte Hungerford Hospital and emergency first responders in northwest Connecticut are working together to educate and equip healthcare providers and members of the public to save victims of mass casualty events. While waiting for professionals to respond, civilian bystanders can often make the difference between life and death for those with traumatic injuries.

Throughout 2019, the hospital and its specially trained first responders sponsored

free "Stop The Bleed" training courses and trained participants to recognize and respond to life-threatening bleeding and take the appropriate action. This can include the immediate application of pressure, dressings, or tourniquets.

"We are very pleased with the response we've received from local residents and providers who, after taking the course, now have a better understanding and comfort level assisting with an event that includes bleeding. It is not easy for many, but having training helps those who want to be ready," said Fred Rosa, EMS Manager at The Charlotte Hungerford Hospital.

The *Stop the Bleed* course was developed by the American College of Surgeons to teach the

lay public the fundamentals of how to recognize and intervene when encountering severe bleeding. Hartford Hospital leaders were at the forefront of developing the training. The half-day sessions are part of a national campaign to cultivate grassroots efforts that encourage bystanders to become trained, equipped, and empowered to help in a bleeding emergency before professional help arrives.

According to the organization's current progress report, more than 65,000 "Stop the Bleed" courses have been taught in 103 countries to more than one million participants. More than 10,400 people have been trained in Connecticut. The initiative was launched in 2017 with a goal of eventually educating 200 million people worldwide.





## Johnson Memorial Hospital Grows Organ Donation Program

JOHNSON MEMORIAL HOSPITAL  
TRINITY HEALTH OF NEW ENGLAND

There are currently an estimated 1,170 people in Connecticut waiting for some type of organ donation, according to Donate Life Connecticut. To contribute to meeting this great need, Johnson Memorial Hospital enhanced its organ donation services throughout 2019. The hospital worked collaboratively to create a donation-friendly culture for colleagues, patients, and family members. The donation program aims to educate colleagues and members of the community about the importance of being a donor.

Johnson Memorial's collaborative work continues to have a meaningful impact on many lives. Through its organ donation program, the hospital was able to help 98 people with various organ and tissue needs. For these efforts, Johnson Memorial received

the Silver Recognition Award from Donate Life America, for activities to increase enrollment in the state organ, eye, and tissue donation registry.

Any hospital, big or small, can join this life-saving initiative that's added more than 492,000 donor registrations to state registries since 2011. During 2019, nearly 1,500 hospitals and workplaces worked with donation organizations to promote organ, eye, and tissue donations.

Johnson Memorial Hospital is proud to be one of the many organizations placing high value on the importance of organ and tissue donation. Transplantation offers patients a new chance at healthy, productive, and normal lives and returns them to their families, friends, and communities.



## Outreach Worker Passionate about Helping the Community

LAWRENCE + MEMORIAL HOSPITAL  
YALE NEW HAVEN HEALTH

Vaneshka Rivera is a success story. She's doing well in school, singing at church, dancing tap and hip-hop, and making crafty things with her grandmother.

Vaneshka deserves to celebrate this year, for life hasn't been so easy in her past. For a long time, Vaneshka missed out on many activities because she struggled with serious health conditions, including not only asthma, but a severe chronic gut inflammation that required the use of a feeding tube.

The fact that Vaneshka is doing much better is a tribute to her determination, to her doctors at Yale New Haven Hospital, and, in no small part, to the guidance and support of an outreach worker at Lawrence + Memorial Hospital named Jennifer Lemus.

Ms. Lemus runs a program called *Breathe Well-Respira Bien*, which is also supported by the Frank Loomis Palmer Fund. Ms. Lemus visits schools and talks with children and families, educating about asthma. She helps as many as 250 families a year and, because she serves a largely Hispanic population, she also helps bridge language barriers, removing roadblocks for families trying to make smart health choices.

"Helping my community is my passion," Ms. Lemus said. "When you help a child, you are helping that family, and when you help families, you are impacting the whole community."

Jennings School Wellness Coordinator Ninon Guinassi has seen the difference Ms. Lemus makes. "Jennifer is wonderful," she said. "To have these services available for parents is a huge help because if they don't have the resources, then they don't have the knowledge, and then they can't help their children."

In Vaneshka's case, her doctors determined that the girl's medical outlook might be improved by a new, cutting-edge medication, a biologic agent called mepolizumab. However, the medication is rarely given to children under 12, and it is also very expensive. That's when Ms. Lemus stepped in.

"Jennifer worked with Vaneshka's family as a bridge to the medical specialists," explained Laurel Holmes, Director Community Partnerships and Population Health for L+M Hospital. "She successfully advocated for health-plan approval for the medication, agreement to use the treatment in a child under 12, and she coordinated communications between the pediatric pulmonologist, allergist, and gastroenterologist."

Today, Vaneshka continues with treatments, and her health is significantly improved. Her asthma is well-managed and she's thriving at school. "She's a happy girl," Ms. Lemus added. "And, always, she says, 'Yes, I can do it!' She loves to learn something new. And, she sings like an angel!"

## Preventing Diabetes Through Lifestyle Change

MANCHESTER MEMORIAL HOSPITAL  
EASTERN CONNECTICUT HEALTH NETWORK



Community members are preventing Type 2 Diabetes together with the PreventT2 lifestyle change program offered by Manchester Memorial Hospital. Guided by trained lifestyle coaches, groups of participants are learning the skills they need to make lasting changes such as:

- losing a modest amount of weight
- being more physically active
- tips for better managing stress

Manchester Memorial Hospital is the one of only seven sites in the United States that has been awarded a grant by the American Diabetes Association to offer the PreventT2 program. As a result, there is currently no cost to members of the community for participation.

People with prediabetes, (higher-than-normal blood glucose levels) are 5 to 15 times more likely to develop Type 2 Diabetes than those with normal blood glucose levels. In fact, many people with prediabetes can be diagnosed with Type 2 Diabetes within just five years.

"One in three American adults has prediabetes, so the need for prevention has never been greater," said Deborah Weymouth, Chief Executive Officer for Eastern Connecticut Health Network. "The PreventT2 program offers a proven approach to preventing or delaying the onset of Type 2 Diabetes through modest lifestyle changes made with the support of a coach and one's peers."

Participants learn how to eat healthy, add physical activity to their routine, manage stress, stay motivated, and solve problems that can get in the way of healthy behavioral changes. PreventT2 groups meet for an entire year — weekly for the first

six months, then once or twice a month for the second six months to maintain healthy lifestyle changes. The program's group setting provides a supportive environment with people who are facing similar challenges and trying to make the same changes. Together, participants celebrate their successes and find ways to overcome obstacles.

PreventT2 is part of the National Diabetes Prevention Program, led by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). It is proven to prevent or delay the onset of Type 2 Diabetes. Research shows that modest behavior changes, such as making better food choices and increasing physical activity, reduced the risk of developing Type 2 Diabetes by 58 percent in people at high risk for developing this disease. The National Diabetes Prevention Program brings together federal agencies, community-based organizations, faith-based organizations, employers, insurers, healthcare professionals, academia, and other stakeholders to prevent or delay the onset of Type 2 Diabetes among people with prediabetes.



## Middlesex Health Holds Transgender Support Event

MIDDLESEX HEALTH

On November 2, 2019, Middlesex Health held A Day of G.I.F.T.S. (Gathering Information for Transgender Services to Support Health and Wellbeing). This event was free and held on the Middlesex Hospital campus in Middletown. It was open to anyone transgender or gender non-conforming, as well as members of their support system, such as parents, guardians or primary caregivers, partners or spouses, and close friends.

The goal was to help the more than 100 participants learn about and access the resources available in the community in a warm, welcoming setting.

A Day of G.I.F.T.S., the first-ever event of its kind hosted by Middlesex, featured medical experts, businesses that offer products specifically for the LGBTQ+ community, and community resources. There were also several guest speakers throughout the day, including Christine McGinn, MD. Dr. McGinn is a plastic surgeon who specializes in gender confirming surgery. Dr. McGinn runs the Papillon Gender Wellness Center in Pennsylvania.

During the event, various screenings were available. Attendees were also able to meet with Middlesex Health's many transgender medicine service providers and hear presentations on a variety of topics from navigating high school for transgender youth to voice training and gender validation surgery. Attendees also had the opportunity to experience integrative therapies and mindfulness.

The event was an opportunity for Middlesex Health to support a population that may sometimes be reluctant to seek out medical care, and those who attended received information and encouragement that will help them advocate for their health and well-being moving forward.

To date, Middlesex Health cares for nearly 1,000 individuals who identify as transgender. It launched a comprehensive Transgender Medicine Program in 2016 that continues to grow. Through that program, Middlesex's network of medical providers work with transgender persons to meet specific needs, and services are coordinated throughout the health system.

In recognition of its efforts, Middlesex Health is consistently named an "LGBTQ Healthcare Equality Leader" by the Human Rights Campaign Foundation, the nation's largest LGBTQ civil rights organization.



## Program Offers H.O.P.E. to Those With Addiction

MIDSTATE MEDICAL CENTER  
HARTFORD HEALTHCARE

The Heroin/Opioid Prevention & Education (H.O.P.E.) initiative is expanding its reach, assisting those struggling with addiction from the moment they come into contact with law enforcement and first responders.

In collaboration with Hartford HealthCare Behavioral Health Network, The Hospital of Central Connecticut, MidState Medical Center, the state Attorney General's office, and an array of community partners, the program is designed to offer treatment options as an alternative to arrest.

Since New Britain, Berlin, and Newington launched the H.O.P.E. initiative, more than 44 people have been introduced to the program.

Southington is the latest to join in the effort to combat the opioid epidemic in local communities. The program means a lot to Southington resident Christine Gagnon; she only wishes it was available when her son Michael was struggling with opioid addiction.

Michael Gagnon was a typical teenager at Southington High School. Passionate about football, he had a bright future as a nose guard with the Blue Knights varsity team. After being caught with a small amount of marijuana at school, Michael was expelled before he had a chance to play on the team. Christine says this event was the catalyst for a downward spiral of clinical depression and drug addiction that ultimately led to Michael's death by opioid overdose.

A turning point for the family came in April of 2017. "Mike was in a bad way and for the first time he asked for help," she recalled. His family took him to a hospital, only to be sent home without a plan for recovery. The next two months brought a renewed commitment to sobriety, but on July 17, Michael's life ended with a deadly dose of fentanyl.

"The H.O.P.E. initiative provides a recovery coach, induction of medication, and access to treatment within 24 hours," says Jessica Collins, BSN, RN-BC, LPC, Director



of Behavioral Health at The Hospital of Central Connecticut and MidState Medical Center. "For a patient who has experienced police involvement and they have gone the judicial route, the H.O.P.E. program can connect them to the right level of care."

Christine Gagnon thinks the H.O.P.E. initiative may have made a difference for Michael. "The H.O.P.E. initiative with the collaboration between law enforcement and Hartford HealthCare will be a vital tool in saving lives," she says. "I believe this initiative would have resulted in a different outcome for my family."

## Norwalk Hospital's Spiritual Care Chaplains Offer Comfort and Prayer

NORWALK HOSPITAL  
NUVANCE HEALTH

No one at Norwalk Hospital has to face illness and crisis alone. Hospital chaplains are available to care for patients and their loved ones by listening, praying, providing spiritual resources, and reading scripture – all free of charge. The chaplains' services are supported by community and hospital resources.

Chaplain visits are available for patients, family members, and staff of all religions and spiritual orientations, as well as those with no specific religion. Bibles and other religious items are provided upon request. Other services that are offered include hearing confession, prayer, Holy Anointing, Holy Communion, providing

Chaplain visits are available for patients, family members, and staff of all religions and spiritual orientations, as well as those with no specific religion.

Sabbath candles, prayer mats, and assisting with any religious concern or practice, including those related to dietary customs.

The Little Chapel interfaith center at Norwalk Hospital is open 24 hours a day and is available for people to pray, meditate, reflect, or simply sit quietly.

Norwalk Hospital's chaplains can help clarify spiritual issues and ethical dilemmas, and assist with living wills and advance directives. They respond to calls in emergency situations, both in the Emergency Department and throughout the hospital. Chaplains accompany dying patients, their family members, and loved ones. The Chaplains also tend to babies who die during or after birth, offering comfort to families at a difficult in their lives.





## Collaborative Partnership Focuses on Opioid Treatment

ROCKVILLE GENERAL HOSPITAL  
EASTERN CONNECTICUT HEALTH NETWORK

When Vernon Police Department Chief James Kenny saw how police in neighboring Manchester were offering treatment rather than arresting people who possessed small quantities of opiates, he was intrigued. Overdose deaths are devastating and, as a community, we needed to change the course.

The model of simply arresting anyone who possessed drugs was not working, a realization that police departments across Connecticut and the nation are coming to as addiction deaths continue to grow. Chief Kenny was aware of neighboring Manchester's Heroin & Opioid Prevention and Education (H.O.P.E.) initiative and stated, "I was very impressed with it."

In December 2018, clinicians from Rockville General Hospital (RGH) joined the Vernon Police Department, local providers, and other groups in discussions to change the model. One of those groups, the Connecticut Community for Addiction Recovery (CCAR) developed a

program in 2017 to support opioid patients in the Manchester Memorial Hospital Emergency Room through the use of Recovery Coaches.

A planning group began discussions with CCAR to implement this same valuable resource for Rockville General Hospital emergency room patients. Recovery Coaches have the lived experience of substance use disorder recovery and help patients with addictions, as well as their families both in the Emergency Room and in the community after discharge. The state Department of Mental Health and Addiction Services (DMHAS) funds the Emergency Department Recovery Coach program.

DMHAS Commissioner Miriam Delphin-Rittmon responded favorably to requests for support to ensure this collaborative program could be launched in September 2019. Once funding to establish the program was in place, RGH Emergency Medicine Medical Director Robert Carroll, MD, along with Jennifer Chadukiewicz of CCAR, participated in training and orientation with the Vernon Police Department.

Vernon Police Lieutenant William Meier states, "This will be a great resource for Vernon and the greater Vernon community. It should greatly improve immediate access for those seeking help with drug addiction treatment."

This initiative highlights the gains possible by community groups working together with a shared interest in caring for patients and their families. Together, we can help fight against substance use disorders and create collaborative programs to help the overall health of our community.

## Championing the Fight to Achieve Health Equity

SAINT FRANCIS HOSPITAL  
AND MEDICAL CENTER  
TRINITY HEALTH OF NEW ENGLAND

On a mid-September evening of celebration, the Pillar Community Development Corporation, a not-for-profit organization in the greater Hartford region, awarded the Curtis D. Robinson Center for Health Equity (CDRCHE), located at Saint Francis Hospital and Medical Center, the 2019 Health Equity Champion Award. The Pillar Community Development's Board of Directors presented the award during its 25th Anniversary Celebration and annual Dream Builders Fundraising Dinner and Awards Ceremony.

"We are honored to receive the Health Equity Champion Award," said N. Chineye Anako, Director, Community Health and Well Being, Curtis D. Robinson Center for Health Equity. "The award is a testament to our dedication in attaining health equity and eliminating health disparities in the greater Hartford region."

The CDRCHE was founded based on the desire to address the ethnic disparities in men's health, first opening its doors as the Men's Health Institute. Its mission was, and continues to be, a means for patient education, early diagnosis, and appropriate treatment for men at risk for prostate cancer. Since its inception, the center has expanded its efforts and is now widely recognized as a platform for a vast range of community outreach achievements. CDRCHE serves as a resource for



the community and the healthcare system in hopes of improving health equity through community outreach and engagement, education and training programs, and preventive services.

"The numbers are truly astounding, and I believe they speak for themselves," said Ms. Anako. "Since 2009, we have attended more than

580 community events, educated 12,329 individuals, screened more than 2,000 men, and, in total reached more than 20,819 people."

Over the last 25 years, the Pillar Community Development Corporation has also proven its commitment to providing health education to the community by hosting an annual health fair and walk-a-thon at First Cathedral Church in Bloomfield. The CDRCHE supports and participates in this event each year, conducting on-site prostate cancer screenings and providing education for the men who attend. This year's health fair and walk-a-thon took place in late September. Several Saint Francis departments joined in to take part in expanding the community outreach of the event. Representatives from the Karl J. Krapek Sr. Comprehensive Women's Health Center, the Smilow Cancer Hospital at Saint Francis, the Joan C. Dauber Food Bank, and the Center for Integrative Medicine were all in attendance. John Rodis, MD, President of Saint Francis Hospital and Medical Center, also attended and spoke at the event.

## Saint Mary's Hospital and the Community Care Team

SAINT MARY'S HOSPITAL  
TRINITY HEALTH OF NEW ENGLAND

In Waterbury, and across the nation, studies have shown that the most vulnerable population use hospital Emergency Departments (ED) at a higher rate than the general population. Many of these visits are related to behavioral health and substance use disorders.

These patients make frequent use of the Emergency Departments because they have complex healthcare needs and have no primary care physician or "medical home." Even with their many visits to the ED, these patients' health outcomes are often poor, due to the fact that they are also struggling with so many other issues in their lives including poverty and homelessness.

The Greater Waterbury Health Partnership (GWHIP) was created to help these patients by bringing together community resources necessary to address their healthcare needs as well as other barriers that are preventing them from achieving better outcomes. GWHIP



is a partnership of Saint Mary's Hospital, United Way of Greater Waterbury, Staywell Health Center, Waterbury Bridge to Success, Waterbury Hospital, Connecticut Community Foundation, and the Community Health Center.

GWHIP developed a Community Care Team (CCT) to help fulfill this concept. Using care managers, the CCT helps patients navigate the healthcare and human services resources in the area, with the goal of identifying and coordinating all necessary services to provide better patient outcomes.

Saint Mary's Hospital, through the Saint Mary's Hospital Foundation, has been a leader in this initiative and is dedicated to supporting the CCT by providing resources to employ case

managers for the first three years of this project. Carrie Fuller-McMahon, Chief Development Officer for Saint Mary's Hospital Foundation, says that "when people's lives are stabilized and they have regular access to quality care, they no longer need to make repeated, high-cost visits to the ED."

Three case managers from Saint Mary's Hospital's Medical Home Support Center will begin the care management coordination of the CCT program. These case managers have experience working with resources throughout the community and understand how this model of community care works.

Saint Mary's Hospital President, Steven Schneider, MD, an enthusiastic supporter of the CCT initiative, said, "the best part of the project is that it combines the resources and experience of the two hospitals in Waterbury with multiple community provider organizations, philanthropic organizations, and the City Health Department. All of these groups are focused on the common cause of providing care and a safety net for our city's most vulnerable citizens."

## Mobile Food Pantry Delivers Fresh Food

ST. VINCENT'S MEDICAL CENTER  
HARTFORD HEALTHCARE

If you've driven by St. Vincent's Medical Center on any given Friday, you may have seen a small crowd gathered in the parking lot, along with a Connecticut Food Bank truck. Thanks to a generous donation from the St. Vincent's Medical Center Foundation, St. Vincent's Mission Services has partnered with Connecticut Food Bank to provide an onsite mobile food pantry once a month to bring fresh food to those in need in the community. The program began in May 2019 and is currently funded for one year.

The initial inspiration for the Mobile Food Pantry came from St. Vincent's 2018 Medical Mission at Home, its annual health benefit event for under- and uninsured members of the community. Connecticut Food Bank partnered with St. Vincent's to provide fresh foods for those attending the Medical Mission via a Mobile Food Pantry. This service was so well received, Parish Nurse Coordinator Marilyn Faber looked into how the two organizations could work together in the future, and a new program was born.

"One of our goals as a hospital is to help improve public health by encouraging better nutrition," said Ms. Faber. The greater Bridgeport area struggles with obesity, diabetes, and cardiac disease, as identified

in the federally mandated Community Health Needs Assessment. "The mobile pantry focuses specifically on providing foods that can help prevent and fight against the most prevalent diseases affecting the poor and underserved."

So the crowd that gathers once a month comprises neighbors, patients, and employees. They come with their reusable grocery bags, carts, or carriages, receive their number, and wait for their turn in line. Everyone who presents is given a number – no questions asked – and will take home with them 35 to 40 pounds of food, mostly fruits and vegetables. Cooking tips are also provided.

"During the [current] six months that we have been providing this valuable service to our community, we have been pleased to serve between 140 and 200 families every month," said Bill Hoey, Vice President and Chief Mission Integration Officer at St. Vincent's Medical Center. "It has been an honor and a privilege to provide this service and to experience the gratitude of those in need. They thank us for the opportunity to provide healthy foods for their families, at no cost, which often frees up funds for other necessities."

The Mobile Food Pantry at St. Vincent's enables the employees and caregivers at St. Vincent's to live its mission of serving the poor and vulnerable in a manner that addresses the everyday challenge this community faces accessing nutritious foods.



## Behavioral Health First Aid Program Helps the Public Identify Those in Crisis

SHARON HOSPITAL  
NUVANCE HEALTH

Mental health problems affect 1 in 4 adults, according to the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, so educating the public on the signs and symptoms, as well as the tools to help others in crisis, is vital to every community. It is even more so in communities like Sharon, where access to behavioral health providers and services are extremely limited.

To fill that void, Sharon Hospital has been offering Mental

Health First Aid training programs since 2018. Recently, the hospital added additional courses, so emergency medical professionals can better fulfill a certification requirement that takes effect in January 2020.

The instructor, Jim Hutchison, is an Emergency Medical Technician, in addition to his role as a patient navigator at the hospital.

“We brought the training to the tri-state community so our friends, family, neighbors, and now paramedics will reap the benefits of this incredible program,” said Mr. Hutchison, a certified instructor through Mental



Health Connecticut. “This is about empowering them with the knowledge and confidence to support people in the community who need it the most.”

This eight-hour training course covers common risk factors and warning signs of mental health issues, teaches how to better assist someone experiencing a behavioral health crisis, and offers concrete tools and answers to key questions like, “What do I do?” and “Where can someone find help?”

Trainees are able to assess for risk of suicide or harm, listen nonjudgmentally, give reassurance and information, encourage appropriate professional help, encourage self-help, and more.

## Stamford Health Partners with AmeriCares to Serve the Community’s Healthcare Needs

STAMFORD HEALTH

Most people recognize AmeriCares for its disaster relief efforts. And, while Stamford Health has supported some of these individual programs, in 2014, AmeriCares opened its free clinic in Stamford and the true partnership between these organizations began.

The AmeriCares Free Clinic of Stamford provides quality primary care services to nearly 600 low-income, uninsured patients every year. The clinic’s mission has always been to provide a continuum of care for the uninsured population, especially caring for adults with chronic diseases such as diabetes and hypertension. With ongoing support through education and close medical management, patients adhere to medical advice and attain greater control of their chronic disease, resulting in a reduction of ER utilization and improved health. As a partner in this effort, Stamford Health provides all of the diagnostic testing for the clinic’s patients at no cost.

“Our mission is to provide primary care for a very vulnerable population, those who otherwise have no continuity of care,” said Karen Gottlieb, Executive Director, AmeriCares Free Clinics. “We need tools to practice quality healthcare and Stamford Health, by providing all of the diagnostic testing, has been a pivotal partner in fulfilling this mission in the Stamford and Darien communities.”

In addition to testing, Stamford Health-affiliated physicians serve as volunteers at the clinic. One such example is Craig Olin, MD, a Stamford Health Medical Group primary care physician who started volunteering with the clinic shortly after it first opened and has cared for hundreds of patients there ever since. Most recently, Dr. Olin became the Medical Director of the AmeriCares Free Clinic of Stamford, where he will now provide guidance on clinic policies



and procedures, support volunteer recruitment, and serve as an advocate in the community.

“I am honored to expand my efforts and take on this leadership role,” said Dr. Olin. “This partnership with AmeriCares affords us the opportunity to provide the top-level primary care we offer at Stamford Health to the underserved in our community.”

## UConn Health’s Opioid Overdose Tracking Program Goes Statewide

UCONN JOHN  
DEMPSEY HOSPITAL

With the number of opioid overdoses on the rise, UConn Health was looking to tackle the epidemic on the ground in a new way – not through the annual reporting of statistics, but daily and nearest to real time to save lives.

UConn Health piloted a program to improve surveillance of opioid overdoses in the city of Hartford in 2018 – led by its Emergency Medicine Department and EMS teams, along with the Connecticut Poison Control Center based at UConn Health.

As a result of the pilot’s success, Connecticut’s Department of Public Health and Office of Emergency Medical Services provided the backing and support to expand the scope to include the entire state and re-named the program the *Connecticut EMS Statewide Opioid Reporting Directive* (SWORD). It launched on June 1.

“We’re a small state, but the opioid crisis is hitting us pretty hard. The ultimate goal here is to reduce overdoses and save lives,” said Suzanne Doyon, MD, Medical Director of the Poison Control Center and Emergency Medicine Physician at UConn Health.

SWORD is a unique program leveraging EMS and the state Poison Control Center to tackle the opioid crisis by tracking spikes in



overdose occurrences inside communities so authorities can intervene to save more lives.

The program works through EMS responders at the scene of an overdose following-up with a call to the state’s Poison Control Center to answer a series of questions. The data are then mapped on a High Intensity Drug Trafficking (HIDTA) web-based overdose tracking application, and analyzed 24/7. When overdose spikes in specific communities or dangerous batches of opioids hitting the streets are identified, local health departments, local law enforcement, and

harm reduction groups are alerted so they can quickly intervene.

In its first month, the SWORD program reported 496 overdoses, 388 naloxone administrations, and 41 fatalities in the state. “This new program is increasing our awareness of what is happening on the ground,” said Peter Canning, EMS Coordinator at UConn John Dempsey Hospital, and a program leader. “The data gained are helping us combat the crisis and rapidly intervene to save more lives.”





## Diabetes Education Reinvented at Waterbury Hospital

### WATERBURY HOSPITAL PROSPECT

Waterbury Hospital partnered with intercity churches to raise awareness about diabetes through a unique nutrition series that provided diabetes education as part of a cooking demonstration.

The *Reinventing Banana Pudding* program deconstructs a popular dessert and provides a much healthier version. Waterbury Hospital registered dietitians developed a recipe that uses much less sugar and fat and dared participants to taste test.

While providing a cooking demonstration, dietitians spoke about diabetes, and gave tips on how to make small changes in recipes that could make a healthy difference. The dietitians answered questions from the audience regarding different cooking and nutrition topics.

The program focused on a geographical area of the city with high rates of diabetes, according to ChimeData. It was designed to be a more interactive way to provide diabetes education. The program is a condensed version of a multi-session diabetes class for participants who require a long-term commitment to making healthy changes.

In all, 165 people participated. The cooking and nutrition demonstration also included another recipe that the participants may not regularly try. A diabetes educator was present to answer medical questions about diabetes from community members. Participants were also provided with information regarding resources for diabetic patients.

To date, four sessions have been held at Community Tabernacle Church, Willow Plaza Community Center, Alpha & Omega Ministries, and Mount Olive Senior Center in Waterbury.



## Dementia Specialist at Windham Hospital Cares for Patients and Their Families

In most cases of dementia, there are two people in need – the person with the disease and the caregiver. The new dementia specialist at the Hartford HealthCare Center for Healthy Aging at Windham Hospital cares for both of them.

Adrienne DeVivo conducts assessments with dementia patients and their caregivers in person, over the phone, and in the home. The goal is to provide practical tips for living with dementia, and connect people with any needed community services.

“I try to meet the caregivers wherever they are in their journey and walk with them,” she says. “It’s a particularly lonely situation, especially when you consider that dementia is something you can’t see, so people forget there is a problem these families are dealing with.”

Joe Zuzel, Resource Coordinator with the Center for Healthy Aging at Windham, says the new position is designed to help increase communication with those struggling with dementia and, in the process, help them manage difficult emotions to lower their stress levels.

“Caregivers are the gatekeepers to the world in which the Alzheimer’s patients live,” he says. “Adrienne is helping them reconnect with skills they have always had but maybe are not used to using with their parents. She’s helping them flip their perspective.”

### WINDHAM HOSPITAL HARTFORD HEALTHCARE

Janlyn Neri of Colchester reached out for help caring for her mother, who has Alzheimer’s. “The challenges of caring for a parent with dementia/Alzheimer’s are overwhelming and far-reaching,” Ms. Neri said. “I needed guidance for medical and legal issues, and strategies for dealing with the day-to-day challenges.”

The help, she adds, has been “comforting, educational, affirming, and life-saving.”

“Knowing that Adrienne is available to give me informed, wise, and thoughtful advice means I can attend meetings on mom’s behalf and advocate for her with facts, confidence, and the right priorities.”

Working with Alzheimer’s patients and their caregivers is a passion for Ms. DeVivo, who previously worked as the coordinator of family-centered care at Windham, as well as an advocacy manager and behavioral specialist within Hartford HealthCare, a community resource specialist for the state, and a transitions coach and unit director for Alzheimer’s care at other facilities.

“I fell in love with the opportunity to see people through this chapter of their lives,” she said. “The patient’s brain is dying but I’m helping others see the light that person is. I tell them the patient responds to their emotions and I help them access the tools to be happy, open, and compassionate with their loved one. It opens up a whole new relationship opportunity for them.”

## Hospital Wrap! Addresses Food Insecurity in New Haven

### YALE NEW HAVEN HOSPITAL YALE NEW HAVEN HEALTH

Yale New Haven Hospital (YNHH) recognizes that food insecurity is detrimental to the health and well-being of the community it serves. To help mitigate hunger issues in and around New Haven, YNHH teamed up with Rock and Wrap It Up!, an organization that helps higher education institutions collaborate with community service agencies to distribute high-quality, unused food to those most in need. In 2013, Yale New Haven Hospital became the first hospital in the United States to partner with Rock and Wrap It Up!, under the name *Hospital Wrap!*



This sustainability program recovers food that has been prepared but not served from YNHH and donates it to those in need throughout the South Central Connecticut area. Beneficiary organizations include the Community Soup Kitchen at Christ Church and St. Luke’s Episcopal Church in New Haven, as well as St. Ann’s Soup Kitchen in Hamden. The food is collected and dispersed through their respective agencies. The program also provides these agencies with support to help decrease landfill use.

“We are proud to be the first hospital to help kick-off *Hospital Wrap!*” said Richard D’Aquila, President, YNHH. “This program is an obvious win for all involved. Area agencies receive much needed food donations, which helps their clients in need, and YNHH reduces waste while sharing a very valuable asset with the community. We are pleased Rock and Wrap It Up! asked us to partner with them on this important initiative.”

Since the inception of *Hospital Wrap!*, YNHH has been able to donate more than \$100,000 worth of fresh, hot meals through partner agencies while keeping excess food out of the waste stream. This is just one of many programs in place to help support the residents of the communities YNHH serves. YNHH annually supports the nutrition program at St. Martin de Porres Academy; provides access to local farmers markets, including mobile markets, by CitySeed; and works with New Haven Farms to provide lower-resourced patients with access to nutrition education to help mitigate diabetes.

Partnering in *Hospital Wrap!* helps YNHH demonstrate best practices that benefit both the local and greater community and encourages other hospitals to join the initiative in their areas as well.



### 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 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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