

# carenews

together we are transforming the future of health care

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“Through all of this, we are trying our best to position Memorial and all of our Care New England organizations for a stronger future. Please stop and think about this. Our chances for success are maximized when we all pull together.”

Good day!

## In this issue:



The volatility of the health care environment has come home to roost. As we grapple with the financial challenges at Memorial, we are thrust into a maelstrom of controversy as individuals and groups question the facts and the perceptions around our actions. We are striving to be sensitive and responsive, taking into account and evaluating the merits of every differing view. Yet, there are some indisputable truths.

The situation at Memorial has only worsened over the past 18 months and the continued struggle—declining inpatient volume, increasing competition and diminishing reimbursement rates—has created a wholly unsustainable financial situation. This threatens the viability of not only the hospital itself, but for all of Care New England. Despite our very best efforts, we find ourselves in the unpopular position of making difficult decisions. These are not decisions we take lightly. These are decisions that are being made in order to give Memorial the best chance to survive.

We have explored many different options for our best course of action over the last several months—and we will continue to do so. Any suggestion that there is anything suspect or surreptitious in our motives is patently false. I’ve been at Care New England for five years and have learned two things: there are no secrets in Rhode Island; and anything I commit to writing will wind up in someone’s hands! So, the notion that we somehow “snuck” into the director of Health’s office in the dead of night to discuss possible ways to merge licenses at Kent and Memorial is nonsense. We have been very upfront on this with the union at Memorial for more than a year, and have been discussing with them a master agreement to allow us to do just that over that same time period.

Through all of this, we are trying our best to position Memorial and all of our Care New England organizations for a stronger future. Please stop and think about this. Our chances for success are maximized when we all pull together.

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While it may appear that we are singularly focused, work across Care New England is continuing on many different fronts. This includes an active advocacy program at both the state and national level.

Indeed Care New England and our member organizations are not alone in facing the challenges of a fast-moving and complex health care environment. The ongoing shift away from fee-for-service models and reduced reimbursements from both government and private payers pose significant challenges to the nation's safety-net hospitals working to fulfill their missions of providing access to high-quality care for all, including the most vulnerable.

On the national landscape, Care New England partners with hundreds of other providers as part of America's Essential Hospitals (AEH), formerly the National Association of Public Hospitals and Health Systems. AEH is the only national association and champion for hospitals and health systems dedicated to caring for the underserved and supporting members with advocacy, policy development, research, and education.

Care New England has worked closely with AEH and its members throughout this legislative session to bring a unified voice to Capitol Hill. High-priority areas of focus include protecting the 340B Drug Pricing Program, which supports affordable drugs and services to vulnerable patients, and asking our delegation to support The Establishing Beneficiary Equity in the Hospital Readmission Program Act, which would allow hospital readmission penalties to be risk adjusted based on the socioeconomic status of the populations being served. Protecting outpatient access for underserved communities, increasing funding for graduate medical education, providing incentives for behavioral health providers implementing electronic medical record platforms, and defending Medicare disproportionate share hospital (DSH) payments are all critical issues for AEH—and Care New England—in 2016.

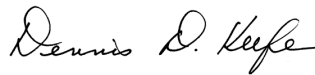
It is important to note that our federal delegation—senators Reed and Whitehouse, congressmen Langevin and Cicilline—remain staunch supporters of our hospitals and our missions. These elected officials have proven themselves to be smart, accessible and caring, and Rhode Island is well served by our small, but well respected delegation. I extend my thanks to each of them for their commitment to health care.

In addition to its advocacy efforts, AEH provides a range of educational opportunities to leaders from its member organization. Earlier this month, two representatives from Care New England completed AEH's Fellows Program which is a year-long effort to "bring leaders together to look unflinchingly at the enormous challenges in health care and give them the tools necessary to meet those challenges on behalf of our most vulnerable people."

My sincere congratulations go out to Mary Marran, MS, OT, MBA, vice president, services development and operational integration at Butler Hospital, and Matt Quin, senior vice president and chief nursing officer at Women & Infants Hospital, for their participation. They were among a group of 100 chief operating officers, chief financial officers, medical directors, vice presidents, directors and chief quality staff who were selected from around the country to join in this initiative. I am certain the skills they acquired and the lessons they brought back are already paying dividends for CNE, our employees, and the patients and families we serve.

Keep the focus on what is good and what is right—there's still plenty of that to go around Care New England.

Sincerely,



Dennis D. Keefe  
President and Chief Executive Officer





## Keller named to list of World's Most Influential Scientific Minds



For the second year in a row, Martin B. Keller, MD, director of Strategic Academic Planning at Butler, has been named one of "The World's Most Influential Scientific Minds 2015." This list of highly cited researchers in 21 science and social science fields is created by Thomson Reuters and generated by compiling researchers with "highly cited papers" published from 2003 to 2013. Highly cited papers rank in the top one percent by citations for their field and year of publication. Between 2003 and 2013, Dr. Keller had been either lead or co-author for 147 journal publications, 15 journal supplements, 15 books, chapters, or monographs, and four editorials, letters and book reviews.

## Advocacy team gathers for colorectal cancer awareness

A special advocacy and screening event in recognition of Colorectal Cancer Awareness Month was held last week at the Rhode Island State House. Physicians and staff from Women & Infants' Center for Women's Gastrointestinal Health and Kent Hospital Affinity surgeons were on hand to address disparities and increase awareness about colorectal cancer screening in order to eliminate colorectal cancer as a major public health problem. The goal of the National Colorectal Cancer Roundtable is to have 80 percent of Rhode Island adults screened for colorectal cancer by 2018. The initiative encompasses the pledge of more than 690 organizations to commit to reducing colorectal cancer as a major public health problem for adults 50 and older.

In addition, Dr. Christy Dibble, director of Women & Infants' Center for Women's Gastrointestinal Health presented two resolutions to the floor—one recognizing cancer survivor Ashley Weeks for her advocacy and the second proclaiming March 22 through March 29 to be Rhode Island Colorectal Cancer Awareness Week.



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Improving homes. Improving lives.

## TPC receives Home Depot Foundation grant

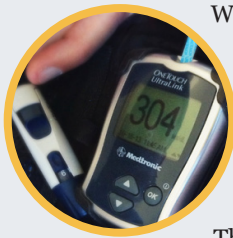
The Providence Center has been awarded a \$50,000 grant from The Home Depot Foundation to make improvements to the heating system at Joyce House, a transitional living program for homeless veterans.

Opened in 2013 in Providence, Joyce House is designed to help homeless veterans get back on their feet by providing transitional housing and supportive services, including mental health and substance use treatment, case management, financial planning, employment assistance, and community engagement. After being in the program for a year, veteran residents are supported by TPC to obtain permanent housing that best fits their unique needs. To date, more than 87 percent of the veterans served by Joyce House have moved on to independent housing upon discharge.

"The funding provided by The Home Depot Foundation will allow us to provide critical repairs to this important program," said Dale K. Klatzker, PhD, president of The Providence Center. "With 45 percent of veterans experiencing mental health issues, including post-traumatic stress disorder, and 70 percent experiencing substance use disorders, Joyce House is an important program that connects our veterans to the housing and treatment that they so rightfully deserve. We are incredibly grateful to The Home Depot Foundation for their generous gift."



## Outpatient diabetes education series offered



The Care New England Wellness Center will be holding its five-week outpatient diabetes classes on Wednesdays, starting April 6 from 10 a.m. to 12 noon, and Thursdays, starting April 7 from 6 to 8 p.m. This series includes a three-month follow-up session. The program is designed for anyone with pre-existing or new diabetes. Family members are welcome!

The Diabetes Outpatient Education (DOE) program is led by Kathy Shilko, RD, LDN, CDOE, CDE, CVDOE, along with a multidisciplinary team of certified instructors that include registered dietitians, an exercise physiologist, nurse and pharmacist.

These classes will cover how foods affect body chemistry in relation to diabetes, blood pressure and cholesterol; how to eat and snack effectively to improve blood sugar; managing diabetes when ill; how to manage stress; the benefits of physical activity; how medications work and how to prevent future complications, plus much more.

The Care New England Wellness Center is certified by the Rhode Island Department of Health and is recognized as an accredited Outpatient Diabetes Center by the American Diabetes Association. Most health insurance plans will cover the cost of the educational program for those who are referred by a physician. Copays may apply, depending on your insurance. Class size is limited. For more information or to register, call (401) 732-3066.

## Nursing plays a critical role at TPC

When you think of behavioral health care, it's most likely psychiatrists and case managers that first come to mind. But more and more, nursing has become a critical part of the treatment landscape. The Providence Center employs nurses in many departments with a variety of specialties, including prescribing nurses, float nurses, and nurse practitioners.



Melanie Dubois has held many positions at TPC and currently works in Emergency Services, helping patients manage acute symptoms. She started at TPC as a third-shift residential assistant and eventually worked her way up to a position in vocational development. In nursing school, she double majored in psych and found pediatrics and psychology particularly interesting. Her first nursing job was as a nurse at Hasbro.

Melanie found that the hospital setting wasn't what she was looking for. "I found it a little bit restrictive and felt that my knowledge was not being fully utilized. I decided to make a change (one of the great things about nursing), which led me back to TPC," said Melanie. Melanie rejoined TPC in the home care field, traveling around and providing care where patients live. She left to have a family and eventually returned to Emergency Services and Intake, but has covered in other departments like Engagement and Diversion and the Crisis Stabilization Unit.

Melanie enjoys the connections that are made with patients in behavioral health. "Because we have to think about the patient's long-term success, we're able to establish relationships, even with Emergency Services patients who we see for only a short time. I still have folks that leave me a message to let me know how they're doing and how I've helped them, which is very rewarding."

Maggie Raczkowska is a nurse that oversees all TPC's residential locations, providing care at all the group homes and supervised apartments. She was a case manager at Brick Manor, a residential facility, when it was acquired by TPC, and decided to stay on when she finished nursing school. She enjoys the flexibility to be able to provide the right care where it's required. "I have scheduled rounds and meetings with patients, but I can change my schedule and prioritize based on need, like if a patient is having an emergency."

Maggie likes that nurses at The Providence Center can take a hands-on approach to care. "Nurses here have the advantage of working with psychiatrists side-by-side, and many of our nurses can visit patients at their homes and assess things based on how they live." She's also proud of the important part nurses play in caring for TPC's patients. "Since I started here, nurses have come to represent more and more of the medical side of treatment at TPC. They are like the second hands of our doctors, and they should be acknowledged for all the work they put in."



## Educational conference focuses on parity for behavioral health

Butler Hospital is hosting an educational conference titled "Making Parity Work: Securing Access to All Levels of Behavioral Health Care." The event features a state of affairs discussion on parity for behavioral health by an expert panel. Presenters include Patrick J. Kennedy, founder of the Kennedy Forum and co-founder of One Mind, and Meiram Bendat, JD, PhD, president of Psych-Appeal. Joining them as the panel moderator is Henry Harbin, MD, advisor to the Parity Implementation Coalition and former CEO of Megellan Health Services. Panelists will discuss topics including Non-Quantitative Treatment Limitations (NQTL), access to mental health care and insurance coverage, and regulatory and legislative policies.

Tuesday, April 5, 2016, 11:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m.  
Ray Conference Center  
3 CEUs, CMEs, Nursing Credit Hours  
\$40 registration fee  
Learn more and register: <http://www.butler.org/parity/index.cfm>



## Active Threat Drill slated

Kent Hospital will conduct Operation Take Cover, an active threat drill, on the morning of March 30.



Kent Hospital, in coordination with the Warwick Police Department, will conduct this training drill to assess planning, communication and staff preparedness in dealing with an active threat scenario in the hospital. In addition to this scenario taking place, observers will be located on hospital units seeking staff feedback and assessing employee understanding of steps to be taken in the event of a real-world scenario. Following the drill, there will be a thorough review of findings with follow-up planning to continue the important staff training and education. *one*

