

carenews

together we are transforming the future of health care

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In this issue:



“Although we are going through a time of unprecedented change in health care, we continue to maintain an unwavering commitment to the underserved. This is who we are and will continue to be.”

Good day!

As you may be aware, Care New England operates what are referred to as “safety-net” hospitals, meaning we treat all people regardless of their ability to pay. A significant number of our patients are on Medicaid, Medicare or lack health insurance altogether, and a little-known federal statute called the 340B drug discount program helps us care for the neediest among us.

Signed into law by George H. W. Bush in 1992, the program requires drug companies to sell discounted medications to health care providers that serve high numbers of low-income Medicare and Medicaid patients or are located in remote rural areas. These safety-net hospitals pass the discounts on to patients in need and use savings from the program to fund primary and specialty care for underserved patients with cancer, HIV/AIDS, and diabetes. Care New England saves approximately \$16.5 million annually as a result of the 340B program, and has provided free or reduced-price care to more than 6,300 Rhode Islanders in 2016 alone.

Unfortunately, this critically important program is at risk. In recent years, pharmaceutical manufacturers have become less willing to share their profits to help those in need, and now they want to dramatically scale back the 340B program by limiting hospital and patient eligibility. They’ve taken this position even though 340B drugs amount to just two percent of the \$457-billion annual U.S. pharmaceutical market. This is simply not acceptable.

Even with an increased number of patients insured under the Affordable Care Act, Care New England still provides more than \$18 million in charity and uncompensated care per year. 340B savings help us fund free and discounted medications for indigent patients, as well as supplement the operating costs of our neonatal care units, behavioral health services, emergency rooms, and obstetric and gynecologic care, among other areas.

continued

Treating patients with limited or no financial means is tremendously expensive. Hospitals in the 340B program serve nearly twice as many needy patients as other providers. They also supply nearly 60 percent of all uncompensated care. Although we are going through a time of unprecedented change in health care, we continue to maintain an unwavering commitment to the underserved. This is who we are and will continue to be. It is this commitment that binds Care New England and why many of you have dedicated your careers to serving the patients and families who walk through our doors.

It's important to understand that 340B is not taxpayer funded but instead requires very profitable drug companies to give a discount to health care providers that serve our most vulnerable citizens. These companies can afford to help. If the programs were significantly reduced or eliminated, Care New England would be forced to cut back drug access and clinical care to the needy, which is in direct opposition to our vision of creating a community of healthier people. I hope you agree that our community deserves better.

In August 2015, the Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA), which administers the 340B program, released proposed guidance that would substantially limit its impact. The hope was that this guidance would provide clarity on program oversight and offer clear guidelines for hospitals. Instead, the guidance serves to restrict and add burden to the program. While we continue to undertake significant efforts to move towards a more integrated system of care, the burdensome restrictions of these guidelines would significantly restrict the ability of vulnerable patients to access affordable medications, result in a higher cost of care for uninsured or underinsured patients, and leave providers such as Care New England with even less resources to reinvest in the communities we are here to serve.

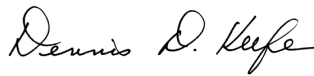
We continue to work closely with our federal delegation and America's Essential Hospitals, a Washington, DC-based trade organization representing safety-net hospitals nationwide, with the hopes that HRSA will withdraw or delay implementation of their guidance until a more comprehensive evaluation of the proposed changes can be determined and a policy can be developed to better meet everyone's interests.

Voicing your opinion will only make the case for protecting this critical program stronger. You can do that by contacting members of Rhode Island's congressional delegation (<http://bit.ly/2bu2IZi>). I'm confident our efforts can and will make a difference.

Thank you, as always, for the great work you are doing across Care New England to make our organizations strong and to provide the highest-level of care to those who need it most.

Have a great week ahead!

Sincerely,



Dennis D. Keefe
President and Chief Executive Officer



Memorial researcher earns \$2.6 million grant to study exercise and heart failure in elderly women



Charles Eaton, MD, director of the Center for Primary Care and Prevention at Memorial Hospital recently received a \$2.6-million grant from the National Heart, Lung and Blood Institute to launch the first and largest community-based primary prevention trial on the effects exercise and strength training have on heart failure in elderly women.

The five-year Women's Health Initiative Strong and Healthy (WHISH)-2 Prevent Heart Failure Study - an extension of the Women's Health Initiative that has continued for the past two decades across the country, including a site at Memorial—will examine the effects of physical activity both on the prevention of heart failure and the burden of the disease in women who were previously diagnosed with it.

"Poor outcomes for the sub-type of heart failure called 'heart failure with preserved ejection fraction' or 'diastolic heart failure' in the elderly have changed little in the past two decades, despite advances in therapy for the other type of heart failure associated with reduced ejection fraction," Dr. Eaton explains.

The incidence of heart failure, he continues, is more common in women than in men, and affects people as they age, when they typically exercise less and lose muscle strength and physiologic reserve.

"We believe that improving exercise capacity and muscle strength could attenuate and even reverse heart failure as the person ages," Dr. Eaton says. "Previous observational research has shown that even modest levels of physical activity can help, in comparison to a sedentary lifestyle."

There have, however, been no research trials to date that probe whether changing levels of physical activity is effective in reducing one's risk of heart failure, especially in older adults. In addition, the amount of physical activity needed for such protection is unclear. The WHISH-2 Prevent Heart Failure study will address the following aims:

- Test whether older women who do not initially have heart failure avoid it by beginning a physical activity regimen compared with women who do not exercise.
- Test whether older women with or without heart failure at the beginning of the trial see a reduction in the burden of the disease, in the form of hospitalizations and death, by engaging in physical activity compared with women who do not exercise.

In addition, Dr. Eaton says the study will analyze the type, intensity and frequency of physical activity, including skeletal muscle strengthening, to see if there's a related reduction in the risk of heart failure and heart failure burden in the study participants.

"We believe we will find that women who increase or maintain light or moderate intensity physical activity will experience reduced rates of heart failure," he says. "Those who add skeletal muscle strengthening will see additional health benefits."

All study participants have already been recruited and randomized to receive the physical activity intervention or not.



Care New England: Know Your Numbers, Earn Your Discount!

Flex benefit-eligible employees (non-union), learn your cholesterol, HDL, LDL, triglycerides, fasting glucose, HbA1c, and nicotine levels through a free blood draw, plus blood pressure and BMI check at one of our FREE, CONFIDENTIAL and private biometric screenings. To schedule an appointment online, please visit <http://ehealthscreenings.com/signup> (use screening key CNE01) or register by phone at 1-888-708-8807, ext. 1. Screening events will be held at various times and locations during August and September. All you have to do to earn your monthly health contributions discount (**discount begins January 1, 2017**) is complete your biometric screening, prove that you are tobacco free or enrolled in a tobacco cessation program, and designate a primary care physician. Visit **carenet** for more information and screening schedule.



Dennis Keefe named March of Dimes 2016 Citizen of the Year

The Botanical Center at Providence's Roger Williams Park will be the backdrop for this year's March of Dimes Citizen of the Year Fundraiser that will recognize Care New England's President and CEO, Dennis Keefe, as the March of Dimes 2016 Citizen of the Year. The event will be held Thursday, November 10, 6 to 8:30 p.m.



Each year a community leader is selected for this honor, based on interest and support of the March of Dimes and its mission to improve the health of babies by preventing birth defects, premature birth and infant mortality. On behalf of the 2016 Citizen of the Year Leadership Advisory Committee, co-chairs Mark Marcantano, president and COO, Women & Infants Hospital and Constance Howes, 2009 Citizen of the Year recipient, recommended Keefe as this year's honoree.

According to the March of Dimes, the Keefe nomination reflects the dedication and commitment to superior health care delivery practiced at all of the Care New England partner facilities—Women & Infants Hospital, Butler Hospital, Kent Hospital, Memorial Hospital, The Providence Center, VNA of New England and Care New England Wellness Center.

"On behalf of the Care New England Board of Directors, we offer our sincere congratulations to Dennis on receiving this most distinguished March of Dimes award. He is a wonderful community leader who epitomizes philanthropy at its best. He truly cares about making a difference in the lives of others. We are delighted that Dennis will be added to the impressive list of prior Citizen of the Year recipients" commented Charles Reppucci, Chair of the CNE Board of Directors.

Neil Sharpe, March of Dimes executive director of Market Development for Rhode Island and southeastern New England, added: "Like Mr. Reppucci and the CNE Board of Directors, March of Dimes is proud of all that Dennis and Care New England have done to make communities more vibrant and healthier places for all our residents. And, in regard to moms and babies in particular, there is no doubt that the future is brighter than ever for newborns and their families because of the commitment of Dennis and so many dedicated employees at Care New England."

Past Citizen of the Year honorees include: Nicki Maher, Larry Merlo, Deborah Thomas, Constance Howes, Tom Ryan, Merrill Sherman, John Hazen White Jr, Howard Sutton, Anne Szostak and Alan Hassenfeld.

The public is invited to participate in this event. For corporate sponsorship opportunities or individual ticket purchase details, please call the March of Dimes offices at (401) 454-1911 or visit <http://marchofdimes.org/rhodeisland>.



TPC Women's Residential Treatment Program to move to new location



The Providence Center's Women's Roads to Recovery (RTR) residential substance use disorder treatment program is moving this month to a more modern facility at 15 Baker Pines Road in Wyoming. Women's RTR is currently housed on the grounds of Zambarano Hospital in Burrillville, in a building TPC leases from the state. The new location is also state-owned and was formerly Corkery House, a residential treatment facility for teen boys operated by Gateway Healthcare. Women's RTR is designed to meet the specialized need of women in recovery. The program, which has 22 beds, provides individualized treatment and discharge planning, individual and group therapy, and case management services designed to meet the unique needs of women in recovery, focusing on issues such as trauma, domestic violence, developing positive relationships, pregnancy health, employment and education and parenting skills.

Kent awards Warwick nurse with DAISY Award

Kent Hospital recently presented Barbara Moulton, RN, Dialysis Unit, with the summer 2016, DAISY Award. This award is part of the DAISY Foundation's program to recognize the above-and-beyond efforts performed by nurses every day.

Barbara was nominated by Deanna Gillis, a patient, who wrote, "Barbara was the very first nurse to care for me. I was scared and confused; I had no idea what dialysis was even for. With her warm and compassionate bedside manner she put me at ease and explained each step, she also put my family at ease. She has cared for me for the last eight years. She is truly the greatest employee and a true nurse, thank you Barbara."

"It is a pleasure to recognize Barbara for all of her hard work and dedication to her patients and Kent Hospital, especially one who has been coming to Kent for so long" said Rebecca Burke, RN, MS, NEA-BC, senior vice president for patient care services and chief nursing officer at Kent Hospital. "In the nomination Barbara's patient wrote about Barbara's kindness and compassion for the past eight years, always tending to her needs and taking the time to explain her procedures to her and her family. Thank you Barbara."



Susan Hallas, RN; Deanna Gillis; Barbara Moulton, RN; Rebecca Burke, RN, MS, NEA-BC, senior vice president for patient care services and chief nursing officer and Candace Dube, RN

The not-for-profit DAISY Foundation is based in Glen Ellen, CA, and was established by family members in memory of J. Patrick Barnes. Patrick died at the age of 33 in late 1999 from complications of Idiopathic Thrombocytopenic Purpura (ITP), a little known but not uncommon auto-immune disease. The care Patrick and his family received from nurses while he was ill inspired this unique means of thanking nurses for making a profound difference in the lives of their patients and patient families.

Donna McGowan achieves certification

Congratulations to Donna McGowan, CHDA, a research study coordinator in the Department of Pediatrics at Women & Infants Hospital, who recently passed the Certified Health Data Analyst examination of the American Health Information Management Association (AHIMA). Donna passed the exam on her first attempt, something achieved by only 49 percent of the exam takers in 2015. CHDA certification provides practitioners with the knowledge to acquire, manage, analyze, interpret and transform data into accurate, consistent and timely information, while balancing the "big picture" strategic vision with day-to-day details.



Save the date—Gasbarro's Taste for a Cause

Gasbarro's will be hosting the annual "Taste for a Cause" to benefit Women & Infants Program in Women's Oncology on **Friday, October 21 from 6:30 to 9:30 p.m.** at Aldrich Mansion in Warwick. Taste more than 75 delicious wines paired with gourmet appetizers and food stations. Enjoy live musical entertainment, participate in a silent auction filled with boutique items and unique experiences. Tickets are \$100 per person and may be purchased at <http://gasbarros.com/pages/taste-for-a-cause>.



Correction: Locations for Surgical Weight Loss Support Groups

Last week's edition of **carenews** mistakenly listed surgical weight loss support group sessions to be held at Women & Infants Hospital. These sessions have been moved to Memorial Hospital.



If you are interested in attending a free weight loss surgery seminar at Memorial Hospital they are held on the second Tuesday of each month, in the Sayles Auditorium, 111 Brewster Street, Pawtucket, 6 to 8:30 p.m. Free parking is available, no RSVP is needed for this site. The next two sessions will be held on Sept. 13 and Oct. 11.

In addition, informational sessions continue to be held at Kent Hospital on the first Tuesday of every month in the Doctors' Auditorium from 6 to 9 p.m. The next two sessions will be held on Sept. 6 and Oct. 4. Free parking is available on the Doctors' Auditorium side of the hospital by entering at the service vehicle entrance on Toll Gate Road. No RSVP is needed. 