

carenews

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Good day. I'd be remiss if I didn't start my message this week by acknowledging the terrible tragedy unfolding in Texas and Louisiana.

Like so many of you, I have been watching the news reports and wishing there was something I could do to help those who are impacted by Hurricane Harvey. While this certainly is tragic, it has been heartwarming to me to see so many incredible stories of selflessness, with neighbors helping neighbors, and strangers volunteering to put themselves in harms way to help someone else. If you feel so inclined, I encourage you to help out by making a donation to the [American Red Cross](#) or any other reputable organization that is assisting in the relief efforts. At least we will be helping, in one small way.

And speaking of helping out, check out the many opportunities there are to volunteer for the VNA of Care New England's Hospice Program. From making phone calls, to sitting with a dying patient, to taking care of pets and helping out around the house, there are so many ways that we can help patients and their families as they are nearing the end of life.

This week, we are sharing some wonderful news about not one, but two grants that our colleagues at Butler Hospital have received from the National Institutes of Health. The two new studies secured monies to continue work in alcohol use and suicidal ideation and behavior—two issues that are experiencing increases in risk to the health of our communities. Congratulations to Drs. Michael Stein and Michael Arney and their teams on these awards. They are just two examples of some of the incredible research going on at Butler and across Care New England.

I'd like to offer my congratulations to Drs. Umadevi Tantravahi and Joyce Ou from Women & Infants' Department of Pathology and Laboratory Medicine on their recent promotions at The Warren Alpert Medical School of Brown University. I know that we announced other promotions in last week's *carenews*, and I offer my congratulations and sincere appreciation to all of the physicians and staff who remain committed not only to patient care, but also to academics and research.

I hope you enjoyed your Labor Day weekend. Thank you for all of your hard work!

Sincerely,

Dennis D. Keefe
President and Chief Executive Officer



“It has been heartwarming to me to see so many incredible stories of selflessness, with neighbors helping neighbors, and strangers volunteering to put themselves in harm's way to help someone else.”

Butler Hospital receives two National Institutes of Health research grants totaling more than \$3 million



Within weeks of each other, two research teams, in association with Brown University, were awarded National Institutes of Health (NIH) grants. The two new studies secured monies to continue work in alcohol use and suicidal ideation and behavior—two issues that are experiencing increases in risk to the health of our communities. Spearheaded by Dr. Michael Stein, one will test the reliability of a phone app to detect when individuals have reached alcohol intoxication based on measuring the movement of the body while walking. The second, led by investigator Michael Armev, PhD, will also apply technology, but in this case neuroimaging will be used to examine how the brain functions during periods of suicidal thoughts and attempts.

Using technology to measure intoxication levels

This research study recently received a grant award from the National Institute on Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism for \$405,067 over two years. While almost a quarter of the population ages 18 years and older reporting binge drinking in the last month, studies also show most people believe they can control their drinking behavior on their own. However, most underestimate how impaired they are when leaving a bar or driving home from a party. Enter the possibility of using smartphone technology, leveraging the long-studied connection between alcohol intoxication and changes in walking after drinking as a novel form of self-monitoring alcohol use. Dr. Stein, co-director of the behavioral medicine division at Butler Hospital with his colleague Ana Abrantes, PhD, of Butler and Brown University, will test a phone app called Alcotag, technology pioneered by co-investigator Emmanuel Agu from Worcester Polytechnic Institute. The technology uses a person's motion—for instance, speed and balance—to make estimates of levels of drunkenness through accelerometer software built into existing smartphones that will automatically send data to a remote computer for analysis of steps and step timing. Stein's group will perform a lab-based alcohol administration protocol and have participants walk when sober and after varying amounts of drinking. Pilot testing will begin in fall 2017.

Understanding the connection of suicidal behaviors with brain function

While previous studies have identified cross-sectional predictors of suicidal ideation and behavior, such as age, gender and psychiatric diagnosis, the processes that underpin episodic suicide risk—that is, episodes of suicidal ideation and behavior as they occur in the real world—remain poorly understood. Armev's research team is hoping to validate the preliminary data that shows the brain functions differently in these situations and hopes to identify a novel marker of suicide risk. Previous neuroimaging studies demonstrated that individuals with suicidal ideation (SI) and behavior (SB) show that circuits in the brain that control decision making and emotional processing functioning differently. This study will combine the use of brain scans and documenting genetics and monitoring current behaviors and experiences in real time to attempt to find a novel marker for suicide risk. The National Institute on Mental Health grant will fund five years of research with a total of \$2.9 million over the duration.

Women & Infants pathologists promoted at Brown

Congratulations to the following physicians in the Department of Pathology and Laboratory Medicine at Women & Infants Hospital who have been promoted at The Warren Alpert Medical School of Brown University.

Umadevi Tantravahi, PhD, has been promoted to professor of pathology and laboratory medicine, Clinician Educator Track. Dr. Tantravahi is director of the Genetics Laboratory.

Joyce J. Ou, MD, PhD, has been promoted to associate professor of pathology and laboratory medicine, Teaching Scholar Track. Dr. Ou is the director of Clinical Chemistry Laboratory at Women & Infants Hospital and associate director of laboratory informatics of Care New England. She is also the director of Preclinical Pathology Education at the Warren Alpert Medical School.



Kent Hospital nurse recognized with DAISY Award

Kent Hospital recently presented Gabrielle Choquette, RN, of the Intensive Care Unit (ICU), as the August 2017 DAISY Award recipient. The award is part of the DAISY Foundation's program to recognize the exceptional efforts performed by nurses every day.

Gabrielle was nominated by the daughter of a patient who wrote:

"In late April my mother collapsed at the airport and went into cardiac arrest. Paramedics revived her and brought her to Kent Hospital. When we arrived to the unit that evening with my mother intubated and unresponsive, Gabby was there to greet us. She took the time to explain what was going on and made sure not only my mother, but us as a family, were comfortable.

Gabrielle went above and beyond to make sure my mother was well cared for, comfortable, her dignity maintained, and received the best medical care possible. When my mother passed away, with us by her side, Gabby was instrumental in making sure her passing was peaceful."

Gabrielle's nomination closes with a commendable statement, "I have been a nurse for 15 years, I know firsthand, that skilled, caring, and selfless nurses like Gabby are hard to come by. I now strive to be as good a nurse as she is."

The nominating family joined nursing leadership to surprise Gabrielle with the DAISY recognition and once again thank her for "the ease" she provided to the entire family.

"It is a pleasure to recognize Gabrielle for all of her hard work and dedication to her patients and Kent Hospital," said Rebecca Burke, RN, MS, NEA-BC, sr. vice president patient care services, chief nursing officer at Kent Hospital. "In Gabrielle's nomination you can feel the appreciation of the patient as they explain how they were comforted to have Gabrielle as their nurse. We strive for the best patient care here at Kent Hospital and she demonstrated that. Thank you, Gabrielle."

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.



VNA of Care New England calling for hospice volunteers

Are you or someone you know looking for a rewarding opportunity to volunteer?

The VNA of Care New England Hospice is looking for people who care about terminally ill people and want to make a difference in the life of a dying person. There are a number of volunteer opportunities available including some that can be done at home, in the VNA office, or with patients.

Training is provided that includes monthly gatherings for ongoing education and volunteer companionship. Make new friends and learn a new skill, all while making a positive impact for hospice patients in the community.

Phone A Friend – If you want to help hospice patients who are scared, lonely, or need support, volunteer to call adult terminally ill patients. These calls are made from the VNA offices in Warwick and

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might include skype chat or phone chat. Volunteers can offer community updates, local news, and general friendly conversation.

Guardian Angel – Spend two hours at a time sitting with a dying patient who is living in a nursing home, so they don't die without a person by their side. Guardian Angel volunteers provide a calming and peaceful presence during end of life at local nursing homes in the community.

Critter Sitter – Help with pet care for a terminally ill patient. All pets will have updated vaccinations.

Knight In Shining Armor – Visit hospice patients in their homes to provide in-person companionship and rest for their caregivers on Saturdays/Sundays or evenings.

Coordination Crew – Work in the hospice office supporting the hospice volunteer coordinator.

Creative Crafters – Opportunities exist to work directly with terminally ill patients and their family members to create legacy/memory books and to help children of terminally ill parents by providing a distraction from illness. Work from home and still contribute to the community by creating busy blankets for patients with dementia or knitting lap blankets for hospice patients.

Journey Companion – General volunteers make visits to terminally ill patients during daytime or evening hours to provide one-on-one companionship, helping caregivers with light chores or staying with the patient so the caregiver can get out of the home for enjoyment or errands. Responsibilities may also include clerical duties in the office, light cooking for patients, or running errands for terminally ill patients.

For more information

Call the VNA of Care New England Hospice at (401) 737-6050 or apply online at <http://carenewengland.org/volunteer>.

Save the date! Providence Center open house

The Providence Center (TPC) will be holding an open house on September 20 at the new location of its Pawtucket Health Home Team Program on Armistice Boulevard. Visitors will be able to see the facility, meet the staff, and find out more about the supports provided by the Health Home program. At noon, TPC president Deb O'Brien and team manager, Kenia Richards will give brief remarks about the program and the advantages of the new space.

The Health Home Program services clients with severe and persistent mental illness with a team-based approach that provides coordination of services and specialized treatment plans.

TPC's Pawtucket Health Home team includes:

- Therapists.
- Nurses.
- Psychiatrists and/or Nurse practitioners.
- Case managers.
- Recovery specialists.
- Peer mentors.

TPC will likely expand the location to include other levels of care in the future.

The Pawtucket Health Home team is located at 174 Armistice Boulevard. For more information on the Pawtucket Health Home team, please contact Kenia Richards at KRichards@provctr.org. 

