BMC Awarded Innovative Grant
to Promote Health, Cut Healthcare Costs

Hospital Leads One of Nine Partnerships to Share in First-In-The-Nation Initiative

A community-based partnership led by Berkshire Medical Center is one of nine such partnerships in Massachusetts to receive funds in an innovative health and wellness initiative, according to the Patrick Administration. This program builds on Berkshire Health Systems’ and community partners’ continuing wellness and prevention initiatives.

For the past several years, BHS has initiated and expanded several highly successful programs aimed at improving community health, including its Wellness at Work program, strong community outreach services, and most recently, the unique partnership with the Canyon Ranch Institute Life Enhancement Program.

The Patrick Administration announced more than $40 million in grants that will be shared by nine partnerships to help fight chronic illness and improve health outcomes on the community level while reducing healthcare costs. Part of the Prevention and Wellness Trust Fund, this first-in-the-nation effort is part of a $60 million grant over four years created by the Legislature and administered by the Massachusetts Department of Public Health.

Berkshire Medical Center is a member of the County Health Initiative, which is made up of healthcare providers, public health agencies and human service and community planning organizations across the entire county. The Berkshire group is one of nine partnerships in the Commonwealth that have been awarded grants up to $250,000 for the first phase of their work. As grantees demonstrate their readiness to implement interventions in community and clinical settings, they will receive additional funding between $900,000 and $1.5 million for each of the next three years. The amount each receives depends upon population covered and the number of conditions addressed.

Berkshire Medical Center is the coordinating organization for the grant, working with the following partners to achieve the goals outlined in the grant: Berkshire County Boards of Health; Berkshire Regional Planning Commission / Berkshire Public Health Alliance; Berkshire United Way; Fairview Hospital; North Adams Regional Hospital; Northern Berkshire Community Coalition; Pittsfield Health Department; and Tri-town Health Department.

“This grant is another important component of Berkshire Health Systems’ mission to continually improve the health of our community,” said David Phelps, President & CEO of Berkshire Health Systems. “For several years BHS has been committed to developing and implementing prevention and wellness programs. Combining all of our resources, we can transform the Berkshires into one of the healthiest communities in the nation.”

“Berkshire Health Systems has worked for years with key stakeholders from many community organizations with a strong partnership that addresses the major health issues facing Berkshire County, and our success at attaining this funding stems from that collective effort,” said Ruth Blodgett, BHS Vice President of Planning and Development. “We have tremendous healthcare and social resources in the Berkshires, but there is also tremendous need, and this grant will help us to map out a strategy for addressing these major health risks.”

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The Prevention and Wellness Trust Fund supports community-based partnerships in achieving measurable health goals through research-based interventions. Working together, municipalities, healthcare systems, community organizations, businesses, regional planning organizations and schools design community-specific programs addressing issues such as: hypertension, smoking, falls prevention among older adults and diabetes. As a condition of funding, each partnership must achieve specified health and cost saving benchmarks on at least two of these four health issues prioritized by the Trust.

Funded partnerships will work to reduce rates of the most prevalent and preventable health conditions, advance healthy behaviors, increase the adoption of workplace wellness or health management programs and address health disparities.

“We know that if we have the right health and wellness programs in place and can engage people in improving their own health, we can have a significant impact on the overall health of our community,” said Mark Pettus, MD, Director of Wellness and Population Health at BHS. “Teaming the medical staffs from BMC, Fairview and North Adams Regional Hospital and public health experts with the resources of these numerous community organizations gives this effort a strong foundation for success in improving the health of all who live and work in the Berkshires.”

Berkshire Medical Center plans to develop evidence-based initiatives to address tobacco use, hypertension, falls among the elderly and diabetes in Berkshire County. This partnership has identified key populations in the county and has selected the most appropriate health conditions to align with these groups. In addition, the best outcomes will be realized by prioritizing key areas in the county, involving community health workers, and developing plans to link primary care.
The Berkshire Health Systems Annual Meeting was held on January 29th at the Colonial Theatre in Pittsfield (see last issue of Scope), highlighting the continuing award-winning care provided by BMC and Fairview and the BHS commitment to expanding wellness initiatives for the community. Here are some photos from the event.

Enjoying the reception following the meeting, from left to right: Rachel Tomkowicz, Manager of Business Applications; Laurie Lamarre, Vice President of the Revenue Cycle; Darlene Rodowicz, BHS Chief Financial Officer; Tina Lamarre, Information Systems Project Manager; Bretta Karp, Contracting Officer; and Jennifer Slattery, BMC Director of Access Services.

From left to right, Dr. Alex Sabo, Chairman, Department of Psychiatry and Behavioral Science; Joseph LaRoche, Director of Facilities Engineering; and Dennis Hogan, a member of the BHS Board of Trustees.

Above: BHS Board member and former Judge Alfred Barbalunga, left, poses with Berkshire Eagle publisher Kevin Corrado and his wife, Angela.

At right: BHS President and CEO David Phelps poses with Carole Siegel, a longtime member of the Board of Trustees, who was honored with the Gladys Allen Brigham Award for her commitment to volunteerism.
Berkshire Medical Center has announced that applications are being accepted for two scholarships, both aimed at students who will pursue careers in the healthcare field.

The Kermit Gordon Scholarship will be awarded to Berkshire County college students enrolled in medicine, dentistry, nursing, pharmacy or health science programs. Through the support and generosity of the Gordon Family – longstanding donors to Berkshire Medical Center – ten Berkshire County students last year were awarded scholarships to begin or continue their education in the healthcare field. The Kermit Gordon Scholarship Fund at Berkshire Medical Center was created by Mr. and Mrs. Kermit Gordon in 1985 for students who plan to enter the healthcare field. The scholarships are awarded on the basis of financial need, superior academic performance, commitment to a chosen field and potential for success.

BMC is also accepting applications for nursing scholarships, awarded annually to county residents from funds through the former Henry W. Bishop and St. Luke’s nursing schools. These scholarships will help pay initial tuition and expenses for those pursuing an associate’s degree, Bachelor of Science in Nursing, or a Master of Science in Nursing.

The number and amount of scholarships to be awarded will be set by the scholarship committee. Application forms may be obtained from the Berkshire Health Systems Education Department, 165 Tor Court in Pittsfield or from county high school guidance counselors. All applications are due by May 1. For more information, call the BHS Education Department at 447-2132.

**BHS Postal Challenge**

In 2013, BHS spent an average of $5,255 to send mail that could have easily been sent by more cost-effective methods.

U.S. Postal rates increased dramatically again as of January 27, 2014. Materials Management needs your help to reach its goal of reducing unnecessary postal fees by 50% in 2014. We can do it!

**What You Can Do:**

**Just Say NO to Flats**

Anything that cannot be sent at a letter rate can cost up to 3 times as much. Use #10 or 6x9 envelopes whenever possible.

The BMC storeroom stocks these items:

- BMC #10 envelope: stk # 01181
- BMC #10 window envelope: stk # 01194
- BHS #10 envelope: stk # 01058
- BMC 6 x 9 envelope: stk # 16816
- BHS 6 x 9 envelope: stk # 17164

**Utilize Our BHS Courier System**

Our mail service sees many letters, flats and other types of mail sent from one BHS department (or practice) to another—locations that receive daily courier delivery through BHS at no cost. In many cases, items are mailed across the street from one building to another.

**TIP**

Got a Big Project? Ask First, Then Plan. Design and logistical choices at the onset of your project can help reduce costs dramatically. The best bargain? A postcard sized as large as 6.25” H x 11” W that mails at the letter rate. Call us for help: x 5080 (Marie Kimber) & x 7927 (Deirdre McKenna).
Fairview Hospital sponsored its 5th annual Women's Heart Health Night at Berkshire South in Great Barrington on February 7. The event, which raised awareness of heart disease in women, was spearheaded by the Critical Care nurse team at Fairview. Over 150 women attended the education programs, which included a comprehensive overview of the disease as well as information on prevention and treatment options that are available. Following the program, attendees had the opportunity for individual conversations, screenings and discussions on specific areas of interest to women including nutrition, caring for elders, stroke, respiratory care, rehabilitation programs and support. They also learned about body composition testing, stress management and smoking cessation. Area restaurants and food purveyors, including Guido's, Berkshire Co-op, Marketplace Kitchen, Bola Granola, SoCo Creamery, Castle Street Cafe, the Meat Market, Berkshire Mountain Bakery and Mill River Organics provided delicious and healthy food tastings for the attendees, as shown in the photo.
Train to Run

**Steel Rail Half Marathon**

**Dates:**
Sunday, March 9 - Sunday, May 11, 2014

**Location:**
The Berkshire Running Center, 42 Summer Street, Pittsfield

**Time:**
8:00 AM

**Cost:**
$75 for BHS employees & spouses

WellnessWorks and the Berkshire Running Center (BRC) team up to help you train for the race or improve your technique. Meet once weekly for 10 weeks to build up your long distance mileage. BRC will work with each athlete to develop an individualized training program and help them reach their goals. Program includes information on proper form, training techniques, hydration, nutrition and race preparation. We will do our long runs together every Sunday.

Pre-Registration Required. Log in to the WellnessWorks website or call ext. 3100 for more information. Please complete registration form and 2014 Par-Q. This program is limited to the 1st 20 individuals who sign up and pay the registration fee.

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**Love Your Heart Event at BMC**

The Wellness and Cardiology Departments hosted their annual Love Your Heart Event on Friday, February 7th in the BMC Cafeteria. In all, 214 employees attended this educational event. The program included a cooking demonstration by Julie Shepard, RD, and the Nutrition Department, a heart health game by Community Outreach, nutrition information by Wellness Dietitian Jennifer Ward, Get Cuffed blood pressure checks by Wellness and Cardiology RNs, a breakroom circuit workout from Wellness, medication information from the Pharmacy, tobacco treatment information and heart health information by Cardiology and Cardiac Rehabilitation. Many attendees and participants donned red in support of the American Heart Associations Red Dress Day!

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**Great Snow = Great Snowshoeing**

Join Joanna Ezinga, MS, PT, Level 2 Triathlon Coach, and Kripalu Yoga Teacher. These moderate 2-3 mile treks will focus on the fitness aspect of snowshoeing. Participants will need to bring their own snowshoes; poles are optional but recommended. Bring your water and a healthy snack, dress in layers and wear waterproof boots.

**Loop Trail, Beartown State Forest**

Saturday, February 22, 2014 • 11:00 am - 1:00 pm • ($5.00)

**Burbank Trail and North Yokun Ridge, Olivia’s Overlook**

Saturday, March 8, 2014 • 10:30 am - 12:30 pm • ($5.00)

*Directions to Trek locations available on website: (https://www.bhswellnessworks.org)
Job Opportunities

Berkshire Medical Postings, 02/14/14
3 East Surgical, Nursing Assistant, 32 Hr/N
Critical Care Step Down Unit, Unit Secretary, 32 Hr/D Temp.
5 West, RN, 32 Hr/E
2 East Rehab, Nursing Assistant 32 Hr/D
2 East Rehab, Nursing Assistant, 24 Hr/D
2 East Rehab, RN, 32 Hr/D
Behavioral Sciences, Jones III, RN, 32 Hr/D
Operating Room, Certified Surgical Technician, Non-Scheduled
Operating Room, Certified Surgical Technician/FA, Non-Scheduled
Employee Pharmacy, Employee Pharmacy Tech II, Non-Scheduled
Employee Pharmacy, Employee Pharmacy Tech II, Non-Scheduled
Environmental Services, Housekeeper, 40 Hr/N
Environmental Services, Housekeeper, 40 Hr/E
HIV Case Management, Case Coordinator – Grant, 35 Hr/D
Transport Services, Central Transport Aide, 24 Hr/E
Laboratory, Clinical Lab Analyst, 40 Hr/D
Emergency Department, Unit Assistant, 32 Hr/E
Emergency Department, Triage Patient/Family Liaison, 24 Hr/E
3 South Medical, Nursing Assistant, 32 Hr/N
3 South Medical, Nursing Assistant, 24 Hr/N
Laboratory, General Tech, 40 Hr/E
Emergency Department, RN, 40 Hr/N Night Special
Emergency Department, RN, Non-Scheduled
Emergency Department, RN, Non-Scheduled
Emergency Department, RN, 24 Hr/E
Emergency Department, RN, 16 Hr/E
Laboratory, Histotech, 40 Hr/D
Laboratory, Histotech, Non-Scheduled
Radiation Oncology, Radiation Therapist, Non-Scheduled
Respiratory Therapy, Registered Respiratory Therapist, Non-Scheduled
Safety & Security, Safety & Security Officer, Non-Scheduled
Safety & Security, Safety & Security Officer, Non-Scheduled

Berkshire Health Systems Postings, 02/14/14
Compensation/Benefits, Compensation Specialist, 40 Hr/D Temp.

Fairview Hospital Postings, 02/14/14
Med/Surg, Nursing Assistant, 36 Hr/D/E
Radiology, Radiologic Technician, Per Diem
Food Services, Food Service Aide, Per Diem
Wound Center, Hyperbaric Medical Assistant, Per Diem
Case Management, Case Manager, Per Diem
Wound Center, Registered Nurse, Per Diem
Rehabilitation, Physical Therapist, Per Diem

Scope

Please direct any comments, questions or suggestions for Scope to Development and Community Relations at 447-2060.
Editor: Ruth Blodgett
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Layout and Printing: Deirdre McKenna, Materials Management

Please take our Money
Consolidation Loans
9.99% APR*
Let’s be on a first name basis!
The Loan SALE
Berkshire Federal Credit Union
January 2014
We need to buy a bigger sofa or loan out some money. Let’s help each other out and consolidate those credit cards and old loans today!
We also have Car – Home Equity & Holiday Loans
* You must be credit qualified – On New loans only
NCUA #11176

Scope is printed on paper with post-consumer recycled content.

Exercise: Keeping it Simple
Sign up NOW-Starts March 3rd!
Go to the WellnessWorks website: https://www.bhswellnessworks.org
Thanks and Recognition

“I have two favorite hospitals: Fairview and Berkshire Medical Center. The quality of care and concern are truly wonderful.”
– Comment from a BMC patient

To the editor of The Eagle:

Recently our 95-year-old family matriarch was admitted to Berkshire Medical Center’s 2 South Medical Stroke/Neurology Unit. We’d like to express our deepest gratitude for the care members of this team provided. They went above and beyond professionalism with their compassion and concern.

Not only did they give remarkable comfort care to her, they cared for our very large family that did not want to leave her side. They made us feel very welcome and didn't make us feel we were in the way. They showed such generosity during this difficult time as we were losing our loved one.

Our community is very fortunate to have this wonderful gem as a part of BMC. Extra gratitude to Dr. Seetha Muthavarapu, Dr. Jason Touhey, and her primary doctor, Dr. Barry Lobovits, for their support and compassion. God bless them all.

– Letter to the Editor that appeared in the Berkshire Eagle, signed by Patricia Dufur of Pittsfield, writing on behalf of the family of Bertha Brewster

“My stay was very good; your staff made sure I was taken care of. I am Catholic and I was able to receive communion. Thank your staff for all they did.” – Comment from a BMC Surgical Services patient

“The staff was friendly and helpful, and established excellent rapport.” – Comment from a BMC Center for Rehabilitation patient

“Everyone who treated me in the Emergency Department and on the floor treated me very well. Everyone on the 5th floor – nurses, doctors and other staff – were a caring group. I cannot say enough for the way I was treated.” – Comment from a BMC Emergency Department patient

“The facility and the staff were both welcoming and calming. They presented a combination of comfort and excellence. My slight anxiety from the test was immediately dissipated.” – Comment from a BMC Radiology Services patient

In Memoriam

• Jerry Kim Tesney, a former Information Systems employee with Berkshire Health Systems, died on February 9th at the age of 71.

• Geraldine E. Healey, a former dietary aide with BMC Nutrition and Food Service, died on February 10th at the age of 93. She had worked at BMC for 30 years, retiring in 1990.

The staff of Berkshire Health Systems offers its deepest condolences to their friends and family.

Chaplain’s Corner: “Who Are We?”

By The Reverend Art Kaufman, BMC Chaplain

An old Zen story goes something like this: One day the Master's disciples asked him, "Master, who are you? Are you the Buddha?"

“No,” replied the Master.

“Are you the Messiah?”

Again the Master replied, “No, I am not the Messiah.”

“Then you must be Elijah!”

“No, I am not Elijah,” replied the Master.

“Then who are you?” his disciples asked in frustration.

“I am,” replied the Master, “alive!”

This story affirms the Reverend Dr. Howard Thurman's response to the question, “What does the world need now to be whole?”

His response was: “Don't ask what the world needs. Ask yourself what makes you come alive, and then go do that. Because what the world needs is people who have come alive.”