



Keeping Connecticut Healthy

Connecticut Hospitals Strengthening Community Health

CONNECTICUT HOSPITAL ASSOCIATION

MAY 2009

The William W. Backus Hospital • Bridgeport Hospital • Bristol Hospital • The Hospital of Central Connecticut • Connecticut Children's Medical Center Danbury Hospital • Day Kimball Hospital • John Dempsey Hospital • Eastern Connecticut Health Network (Manchester Memorial Hospital, Rockville General Hospital) Greenwich Hospital • Griffin Hospital • Hartford Hospital • The Charlotte Hungerford Hospital • Lawrence & Memorial Hospital • Middlesex Hospital MidState Medical Center • Milford Hospital • New Milford Hospital • Norwalk Hospital • Saint Francis Hospital and Medical Center • Saint Mary's Hospital Hospital of Saint Raphael • St. Vincent's Medical Center • Stamford Hospital • Waterbury Hospital • Windham Community Memorial Hospital • Yale-New Haven Hospital



In 2007, Connecticut hospitals spent \$718 million on community benefit initiatives — that's 9.4% of total hospital revenue — and provided more than 9.7 million community benefit services to individuals and families.

Community Benefit by the Numbers

\$434.3 million

Government Sponsored Health Benefits
to cover the unpaid costs of government programs

\$228.8 million

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

\$29 million

Subsidized health services
to provide care needed by the community

\$15.3 million

Community services
to improve the health of the community

\$4 million

Community building
to create stronger, healthier communities

\$3.4 million

Donations
to help support community organizations

\$3.2 million

Research and other
to advance healthcare for patients and the community

Every day, in communities throughout the state, Connecticut hospitals are touching lives—in ways we might not expect.

Hospitals are always there when we need them — caring for all regardless of ability to pay. But, the contributions to community health and wellness extend far beyond the hospital walls.

Hospital “community benefit” services are needed now more than ever. With the bleak economic climate, a growing number of individuals and families are losing jobs and health insurance—and are turning to hospital charity care and Medicaid to obtain necessary health-care services.

Connecticut hospitals offer a variety of community benefit programs and services to help residents maintain and enhance their health. These include: financial assistance to the uninsured; mobile vans and clinics delivering primary and preventive care; healthy lifestyle education programs; weight loss and physical activity promotion; programs for managing chronic conditions like asthma; and multi-faceted initiatives to address Connecticut's key public health challenges like heart disease and cancer. The value of community benefits also includes investment in traditional “safety net” services. In 2007, Connecticut hospitals spent \$228.8 million in uncompensated care — \$89.1 million in charity care and another \$139.7 million of care that hospitals had to “write-off” for patients

who couldn't pay. They also incurred \$434.3 million in losses due to the unpaid costs of government programs — the shortfall resulting from Medicare and Medicaid paying hospitals less than the cost of caring for beneficiaries of public programs.

While the dollars and cents of Connecticut hospitals' community benefit are impressive, it is the human impact of these programs and services that tell the real story.



Providing access to needed care

Backus Hospital Helps Patients Get the Care They Need

The Access to Care Program at The William W. Backus Hospital has helped more than 600 uninsured patients seeking healthcare in the hospital's emergency department (ED). Established in October 2006, the program is funded through a partnership between United Community & Family Services (UCFS) in Norwich and Backus Hospital. The hospital and UCFS work together to provide free eligibility screenings for uninsured persons who have no means of payment for health services.

When uninsured patients come to the ED for care, they are referred to the hospital's Access to Care Specialist who is employed by UCFS but works out of Backus. She screens them and helps them fill out the appropriate applications for programs such as HUSKY, Title XIX, SAGA, and Healthy Start. The Access to Care Specialist also goes beyond the application process and connects patients with a primary medical home, often a community health center.

A similar program is available for Backus inpatients. An Advocate for Charity Care Specialist works predominantly with uninsured hospital patients to help them find needed resources. This might be helping to fill out an application for Medicaid or reconciling their hospital bill.

Bridgeport Hospital Gets Medications to Vulnerable Populations

Established in February 2007, the Bridgeport Hospital Community Patient Assistance Program helps uninsured and underinsured patients acquire needed prescription medications at little or no cost. The program was initially available to help oncology patients obtain expensive cancer drugs and was expanded to provide assistance to qualified patients hospital-wide.

One goal of the program is to reduce the number of patient visits to the hospital due to non-compliance with prescription use. The program's coordinator works with patients to obtain financial assistance for medications from pharmaceutical companies. Although there is no cost for the program, patients are responsible for co-payments charged by the pharmaceutical companies. In less than two years, the program has served more than 70 patients, saving them \$1.5 million in prescription costs.



Danbury Hospital Offers Primary Care Services for Those in Need

Danbury Hospital's Seifert & Ford Family Community Health Center provides primary pediatric, geriatric, and adult care, and dental services, and helps to connect patients with specialty care services within the hospital and with community physicians. The Center is the locale where community medicine services are offered in collaboration with the Connecticut Department of Public Health for addressing issues such as TB. Conveniently located near the senior center and on a bus line to provide easy access for all, the Center was recognized in 2008 for its role in helping Danbury achieve the best immunization rate in Connecticut.

David X. is an area resident, who recently lost his job and his health benefits. He was about to lose his housing too, because a physical examination was required in order to maintain his housing status. The staff at the Seifert & Ford Family Community Health Center recognized his plight and took care of his physical examination so that he was able to keep his housing intact.



Eastern Connecticut Health Network Gives a Lifeline to the Homeless

Eastern Connecticut Hospital Networks' Lifeline service, operated by Rockville General Hospital, provides free 24-hour emergency response services to Tri-Town Shelter Services, Inc. of Vernon. A fifteen-bed facility providing temporary housing to the homeless, Tri-Town is more than just "a bed and a bowl of soup." The shelter is a safe and supportive place where residents must demonstrate their efforts toward personal growth and productivity.

Because each Tri-Town resident has his or her own private room, individuals with a health condition are given a Lifeline personal response button to wear in case of an emergency when they are alone in the shelter. With the push of a button, individuals can alert the Lifeline response center and the shelter staff that medical assistance is needed.

Tri-Town has utilized the Lifeline service numerous times over the years. Among those who have benefited from the service are a resident who appeared to have suffered a seizure, a woman in labor, and a depressed individual experiencing back pain. All residents were successfully assisted and transported to the hospital of their choice.

Free HIV Testing for Emergency Department Patients at Waterbury Hospital

In celebration of World AIDS Day on December 1, 2008, Waterbury Hospital began offering free HIV testing to patients admitted to the hospital's emergency department (ED) for evaluation or treatment of other symptoms. Waterbury Hospital's program is being offered as a way to identify the undiagnosed portion of Connecticut's population, get these individuals into care, and prevent the transmission of the virus to others. The first hospital in Connecticut to offer this service, it has served as a model for other healthcare institutions across the state.

Patients who wish to be tested are administered an oral fluid swab in a private area of the ED, with test results available in 20 minutes. If the result is negative, the patient is notified and educated about what he or she can do to stay negative. If the result is positive, the patient is advised that this is a preliminary finding; a confirmatory blood test will be done to verify the initial test. Pre- and post-test counseling is also provided for patients.

Addressing Connecticut's major healthcare needs

MidState Medical Center Meets Community Needs Through Collaboration

MidState Medical Center offers a diverse range of health education programming to the communities it serves in Meriden, Wallingford, Southington, and Cheshire. In fiscal year 2008 alone, skilled physicians and clinicians provided more than 700 community outreach programs and screenings on topics related to cancer prevention, diabetes management, nutrition and physical activity, stress reduction, complementary therapies, and various others geared toward helping individuals and families live healthy lifestyles.

In its efforts to keep the community informed, MidState collaboratively works with government agencies, service organizations, local libraries, fitness centers, senior centers, the business community, and faith communities through its Health Ministry Partnership to assess health needs, and, more importantly, address them. A founder and supporter of community health initiatives in its service area, MidState is actively involved in the community to uncover any unmet needs.



Day Kimball Hospital Shows that Small Changes Can Make a Big Difference

Day Kimball Hospital created the Small Changes, Big Difference program in the fall of 2007. During the program's duration—either six or eight weeks—participants meet for two hours, once a week with an expert on a specific topic such as nutrition and fitness, setting wellness goals, exercise techniques, more effective grocery shopping, and holistic health. The program begins with a pre-screening of interested community members where they are asked health questions and set goals for progress throughout the program.

Small Changes, Big Difference participants are living proof that every change made, no matter how small, has the power to become a big difference. This has evolved into a donor-funded wellness program hosted by the hospital as a cardiovascular risk reduction program. Looking ahead, it will serve as a benchmark for the process of reducing participants' cardiovascular risk. Day Kimball Hospital will run three separate sessions throughout the year and measure participant's progress, adjusting the program as needed to maintain desired results.

Due to an increasing elderly population, geriatric programming is among one of the most active areas of community outreach. MidState has been staffing a gerontological nurse at the LaPlanche Clinic at the Meriden Senior Center since 1979, where guest lectures, health screenings, and one-on-one consultation are offered. During the past two years, geriatric outreach has expanded to the nearby Cheshire and Southington Senior Centers. These clinics see over 2,000 persons annually.

To date, 80 percent of the patients have reduced or maintained their BMI.

... I want to tell you that my sons know how to buy groceries in the grocery store; what to pick up and they read the nutrition labels before purchasing. This has also changed how I and my husband eat. My family is more active and has more energy now. I want to say thank you to all who made this program possible.

– Mother of children who participated in Kids' Fans



Stamford Hospital Offers Fitness & Nutrition Services for Kids

The Pediatric Clinic at Stamford Hospital operates a program of nutrition and dance called Kids' Fans, or Kids' Fitness & Nutrition Services. Kids' Fans offers a 12-week program that includes 30 minutes of nutrition and 30 minutes of Hip Hop dance for children with a higher than average Body Mass Index (BMI). The children enrolled in the program love dancing and are eager participants in the nutrition class. The program, which is for both children and parents, emphasizes label reading, portion sizes, green/yellow/red foods, maintaining a journal, tips to use at parties, and other topics related to healthy lifestyles. In addition, the families bring in their favorite recipes, which are altered by the nutritionist into low-calorie recipes and shared with all participants.



New Milford Hospital Brings Healthy Eating to Communities

Over the last two years in Litchfield County, Plow to Plate™, a regional grassroots initiative led by New Milford Hospital, has brought the message of healthful eating to communities in Connecticut and nearby New York through a variety of programs that support the consumption of local food for healthier living.

Plow to Plate has promoted “the joy, health, and economic well-being that comes from a community united in support of local farmers, who give us real food, harvested and shared with friends and families,” according to the mission statement drafted by coalition members in 2007. After two growing seasons of community outreach and education, Plow to Plate continued to gain momentum in 2008 with a host of events and activities that have served more than 8,300 people and provided approximately \$60,000 in community benefits for disease prevention, healthy nutrition, and farm preservation.

One innovative initiative is the “youth chefs” program designed to help middle and high school students gain an appreciation for locally grown foods and prepare them for healthier lifestyles. These students participate in field trips to harvest foods at local farms and fishing docks, learn the culinary skills to prepare the foods, and then serve the dishes to family and friends.



Saint Mary's Hospital Partners for Nutrition Education

Saint Mary's Hospital partners with the Waterbury Police Activity League (PAL) to provide a series of culinary arts and nutrition education programs for the youth of the Greater Waterbury area, with the hope of having a positive impact on their future. A not-for-profit organization, PAL promotes partnerships between youth, law enforcement, and the community through educational, athletic, and recreational programs designed to encourage team building and foster positive relationships.

Through this unique collaboration, Saint Mary's and PAL have introduced concepts such as basic nutrition and food safety, along with introductory

Giving children a LittleAIR at Middlesex Hospital

Brothers Rontarus Carr and Jeavonté Freeman have been enrolled in the LittleAIR asthma management program at Middlesex Hospital from its beginning. Their mother, Georgette Carr, knows first hand what asthma feels like. “Asthma runs in my family,” she says. When two of her three children showed symptoms, “I did everything a mom could. But I never really understood asthma, what triggered it, or how life threatening it can be, until the asthma program at Middlesex Hospital. That woke me up.”

Georgette's doctor sent the family to Middlesex Hospital's LittleAIR pediatric asthma program to find help for her sons.

“I learned how important it was to take my medicine, how much and when,” says Rontarus. “And how to use the pump if you're having a hard time breathing,” adds Jeavonté.

The help goes far beyond education and medication. “We learned that carpet dust can bring on an attack,” says Georgette. “So they even helped me find an apartment that didn't have carpeting. They showed us special mattress covers, for more protection. They're awesome.”

Georgette has seen “steady progress” in her sons since taking part in the program. “They run around more and play longer.”

Rontarus loves swimming. “I'm feeling better. I'm not coughing hard. I'm growing out of my asthma, and it's good.” And Jeavonté, who was once too winded to climb the monkey bars? “I can even go outside in the winter now and play!”



cooking skills and taste testing. The goal of the initiative is to promote good eating habits that will last a lifetime, as well as improve children's health and academic performance.

One of the initiatives conducted through this partnership is an “Iron Chef” style cooking competition for Waterbury youth.

Bristol Hospital Increasing Women's Screening for Breast Health

Ten years ago, with the support of the Charlotte Johnson Hollfelder Foundation, Radiologic Associates, physicians, local businesses, employees, and community members, Bristol Hospital began the Bristol Community Health Breast Project to improve the health and save the lives of women over 40 in the community by increasing the number of women who receive annual mammograms. The hospital determined that, to have a dramatic impact, it would reach out to the community in many ways, including providing financial support, increasing the hours of operation at its mammography centers, or simply providing education on the importance of having a mammogram.

Through this program, more than 350 free mammograms are provided annually for the un- and underinsured; over 200 local businesses provided education and/or paid time off for their employees to get mammograms; and Early Detection Education workshops, large special events, and numerous community appearances to raise awareness, are held annually. After just two years of intensive education and awareness efforts, the rate of mammograms dramatically improved from 47 percent to 70 percent—today, the number of women receiving mammograms in the community has increased to 82 percent.



Hungerford Establishes Breast Cancer Resource Library for Community

The Charlotte Hungerford Hospital recently opened the Hungerford Breast Cancer Resource Library at its Torrington campus to provide local women with a place to gather more information about breast cancer.

The library features cancer-related books, periodicals, pamphlets, and educational materials, which are available for patients and all members of the community. In addition to the book collection, the library offers breast cancer diagrams and charts and a computer system with free access to top breast cancer websites.

Aside from the Resource Library's educational function, the space serves as a welcoming environment for the Breast Navigator, who meets with patients diagnosed with breast cancer to help them access needed health services. It also offers a comfortable space for patients before or after their surgical appointments.



Greenwich Hospital Offers Screening for Prostate Cancer

For more than 15 years, Greenwich Hospital has offered the Prostate Cancer Education Forum—the only prostate cancer support group in lower Fairfield County. The Forum, which takes place the first Monday of every month, provides free education programs and opportunities to meet with supportive prostate cancer survivors. Speakers include urologists, pathologists, and other specialists who focus on prevention, screenings, diagnosis, treatment, and research. Other sessions include a “Learn and Share” segment that allows patients to speak with men who have gone through the treatment process.

The hospital also provides free prostate cancer screenings to the community once a year in conjunction with the Prostate Cancer Education Forum. The screenings are available at three community sites in Connecticut and New York. The two-part process involves an initial prostate specific antigen (PSA) blood test and a follow-up meeting with a Greenwich Hospital physician to review the findings and undergo a digital rectal exam. A total of 110 men annually benefit from the free screening program. Because of this screening, prostate cancer cases were diag-

nosed and early treatment was initiated. About 250 men, some with their spouses, take part in the Prostate Cancer Education Forum each year.

Raising awareness/education

Milford Hospital Provides Health Screenings for Community

For the past 20 years, Milford Hospital has offered its community a free bi-monthly blood pressure/blood sugar screening where results and counseling are provided within minutes. Everyone who comes for a screening receives one—no one is turned away. Thanks to this program, many people have been made aware of abnormal blood results and sent for follow up with physicians, or referred immediately to the emergency department. For example, this past November, following the screenings, the hospital heard from a participant who had been told to contact his physician immediately when he received his results. This patient called to tell the hospital that the screening “saved his life” because they found multiple blockages resulting in an angioplasty—his doctor told him that he was a prime candidate for a heart attack.

Hospital of Saint Raphael Improves Seniors' Health and Wellness

The Health and Wellness Program for Underserved Seniors in New Haven was begun by the Hospital of Saint Raphael in 2002. The program, which targets underserved elders in New Haven and West Haven, offers community-based health and wellness programs including health screenings and one-on-one health counseling, lectures, exercise programs, nutrition, and medication management counseling. There are 14 sites where services are delivered (ten in New Haven and four in West Haven); last year, the program reached over 1,000 seniors. The majority of the seniors engaged in the program are minority and lower income. Since 2003, the Agency on Aging of South Central Connecticut has funded a portion (30 percent) of the program cost and the hospital supports the rest. In addition to caring for the neediest seniors, this program helps to connect seniors who do not receive regular primary care with the hospital's community-based Project Eldercare clinic.

Connecticut Children's Medical Center Works to Keep Teens Safe on the Road

Car crashes are the leading cause of death for 16- to 20-year-olds nationally, with approximately 10 deaths occurring every day.

During the past two years, the Connecticut Children's Medical Center has been working to strengthen Connecticut's teen driving laws in the hope of preventing further injuries and deaths. The medical center's director of pediatric trauma is a member of Governor M. Jodi Rell's Teen Driving Task Force, which was formed in the aftermath of seven teenage deaths from car crashes over a four-month span in 2007. He leads a coalition called the Connecticut Teen Driver Safety Partnership that includes members from numerous organizations including Connecticut Children's Injury Prevention Center, the Connecticut Chapter of the American Academy of Pediatrics, the Connecticut Department of Motor Vehicles, and IMPACT (Mourning Parents Act). The goal of the Connecticut Teen Driver Safety Partnership is to enlist pediatricians and family physicians around the state to engage their patient families in blunt conversations about state laws pertaining to teen drivers, and the risks that teens take when operating a motor vehicle.

Governor Rell relied on the task force to make evidence-based recommendations on how to improve the laws designed to impose restrictions that allow teens to gain experience driving under conditions of minimal risk. As a result of the task force's work, new graduated drivers laws were passed.

Windham Hospital Diabetes Education Classes Helps Community

Marjorie Mathieu is eager to tell her story—a story about her experiences with Windham Hospital's Diabetes Education Classes.

“It's been a couple of years,” she begins, “and I admit I cried for several days when I learned that I would need to take insulin. It had been a personal goal of mine...to manage the diabetes without the medication. But that's not how it worked out, so I had to pull myself together and deal with it.”

Fortunately, she had some assistance. At the recommendation of her physician of more than 40 years, Marjorie scheduled a meeting with Windham Hospital's Diabetes Educator, and from the first moment, felt perfectly at ease and comfortable. “They were so supportive and informative. I learned so much from them...how to take my meds, how to monitor my levels...I just can't say enough about them and the positive attitude they put forth. They really care a lot about their patients, and they were incredibly helpful to me.”



St. Vincent's Mock Trauma Program Saves Teen Lives

TEDD-TV (Trauma Education on Drinking and Driving and Teen Violence), sponsored by St. Vincent's Medical Center's Adolescent Injury Prevention Committee, graphically demonstrates to teens the consequences of drinking and driving and other violent behaviors. A group of 25 students from area schools witness first-hand the aftermath in the hospital of a motor vehicle crash caused by driving under the influence—including a depiction of both the physical and mental pain and suffering—resulting from such a tragedy. During a typical school year, approximately 250 students participate in the program, and learn about the consequences of impulsive and risky behavior.

"It was fascinating to see the reality of every step of an accident and emergency procedure. It was a brutal reality, but TEDD-TV should be mandatory for all high school students," said one young man about the monthly program.

The mock trauma concludes with a presentation where students view graphic photos of real accident victims and violence, hear a talk by a police officer about the legal consequences of impaired driving, and hear the story and personal appeal from a parent who has lost a teen in a drunk driving accident, describing what life has been like for the family since the death.

Jane Winters, RN, BSN, paramedic who coordinates the program explains, "Our hope is that we provide the opportunity for even just one student's life to be saved as a result of our program. Our motto is 'Losers take chances; winners make choices.' Every time we offer TEDD-TV, this group of hospital and community volunteers gets the opportunity to educate our future leaders about ways to make the right choices and think smart."

UConn Health Center Offers Community Health Information

Through its Discovery Series, UConn Health Center (John Dempsey Hospital) provides free educational sessions on conventional topics such as cancer prevention, memory loss, and advances in cardiac care, as well as topics of growing interest including complementary medicine, humor and medicine, and end of life issues. Approximately 10,000 people have attended Discovery Series programs since its inception. Thousands more Connecticut men and women have seen Discovery Series programs broadcast on CT-N, the Connecticut Network, which airs on cable systems across the state, and just recently, the series has been posted on the Health Center website, www.uchc.edu.

Many physicians have referred their patients to watch the programs on the website for further information on a particular health topic, and several program attendees reported they have referred friends or relatives, some from out of state, to view the programs as a source of health information.

Preparing for the future

Norwalk Hospital Brings Cutting Edge Cancer Research to Fairfield County

The focus of the Whittingham Cancer Center at Norwalk Hospital research program is to integrate cutting edge research into the personalized and individually tailored cancer therapies prescribed by the hospital's oncologists. Since 2000, the Whittingham Cancer Center has conducted clinical trials in conjunction with the National Cancer Institute, pharmaceutical companies, and large cancer centers, as well as those developed at the hospital. Many of the trials

test the effectiveness of emerging therapies that have already been shown to be safe and promising based on earlier studies.

The Whittingham Cancer Center continues to build on its record of offering the patients of Fairfield County some of the most innovative clinical trials available for cancer treatment. It has become the only community cancer center in the region to offer Phase I clinical trials, testing new drugs before they become more available in later phase trials. The Center excels in the area of breast and lung cancer research; other cancers targeted by novel clinical trials include colorectal, prostate, and ovarian, as well as multiple myeloma and lymphoma.

Among the recent success stories is the case of an 83-year old man with metastatic prostate cancer. He had been previously treated with hormone and radiation therapy, but his prostate specific antigen (PSA) value continued to rise. When he voluntarily participated in a clinical trial using a new class of drugs called epothilones, his PSA went from 200 to eight in three months and his pain disappeared.

Building healthier communities

Yale-New Haven Hospital Supports Neighborhood Leadership Development

Yale-New Haven Hospital (YNHH) is in the third year of its Community Investment Program with the Hill Development Corporation (HDC) that supports New Haven's Hill neighborhood. The Summer Youth Program is a component of that program and provides free summer programs, including classroom and recreational activities and camp scholarships to Hill youth.

The hospital's support for the Summer Youth Program enabled approximately 350 Hill children



to attend free summer programs. Through the Community Investment Program with HDC, funding is also provided for child care subsidies, scholarships, and home rehabilitation grants.

YNHH has a second Community Investment Program with the City of New Haven, which provides funding over a five-year period for economic development, youth initiatives, community health outreach workers, and voluntary payments.

Manchester Memorial Hospital Donates Vacant Homes for Community Use

For more than five years, Eastern Connecticut Health Network (ECHN) has put some vacant homes located on its Manchester Memorial Hospital property to good use. Various houses, slated for demolition due to ongoing hospital expansion projects, have become valuable training sites for the town of Manchester's police and fire departments and the Capitol Region Emergency Services Team (CREST).

In March, April, and July 2008, ten vacant homes were utilized for various emergency response and rescue training exercises. The Manchester Fire Department constructed a skills course, similar to an obstacle course, where firefighters learned new techniques and reinforced basic skills. The Manchester Police Department and CREST, a tactical team of officers from Wethersfield, Rocky Hill, Glastonbury, East Hartford, Manchester, South Windsor, and Vernon who are specially trained in crisis situations, used the houses to simulate hostage situation procedures, firearms response training, and SWAT maneuvers.



Griffin Hospital Mini-Medical School Enhances Community Health Information

Griffin Hospital offered its first Mini-Med School program in Fall 2006, bringing physicians and the community together to foster education and understanding. The free program consists of a series of ten consecutive Thursday evening sessions (offered in both Spring and Fall), conducted by physician volunteers, and designed for a general audience ranging from adolescents interested in pursuing healthcare careers to senior citizens seeking information on how to live longer, healthier lives.

In addition to getting a basic understanding of human anatomy and the pathology of various diseases, participants also learn about strategies for disease prevention. Physician presenters stress a number of common themes, such as the harmful effects of smoking, the importance of regular health screenings, and the impact of lifestyle choices on overall health. Both the individual sessions and overall program have received consistently positive reviews from the more than 375 "Mini-Med Students" who have participated in the program. The ongoing community interest and demand was reflected in the fact that more than 150 people were placed on a waiting list for the inaugural session, and each subsequent session has been filled to capacity.

Hartford Hospital Program Educates Teens About Sexual Involvement

Hartford Hospital began the Postponing Sexual Involvement (PSI) Program in 1996 in response to an alarming statistic—more teenage girls in Hartford were becoming pregnant and dropping out of school than were graduating from high school. The goal of the program is to teach students in fifth grade to resist becoming sexually involved before they are ready.

The PSI Program is multi-lingual and taught in nine elementary schools in the Hartford area by high school students who are trained to become PSI Teen Leaders. These Teen Leaders go out with partners to the elementary schools to teach the students about puberty and sexual relations. They become positive role models for the fifth graders, who are more willing to listen to them than to adults. In addition, the Teen Leaders have the opportunity to participate in community service that reinforces their goals for a more positive future. Many of the leaders are from disadvantaged backgrounds and/or ethnic minorities, and all have gone on to graduate from high school and attend college.



Moms Learn from Moms at The Hospital of Central Connecticut

Mothers Offering Mothers Support (M.O.M.S.) is a support group conducted by The Hospital of Central Connecticut at New Britain General Hospital and Bradley Memorial Hospital for young pregnant or parenting mothers, ages 21 or below. It offers a fun, relaxed atmosphere that allows mothers to learn from one another through discussion, activities, guest speakers, and field trips. This program is built on the belief that young parents can be successful, learn, support one another, and make informed decisions.

M.O.M.S. groups are led by peer facilitators – women who were young mothers themselves and understand the potential fears and questions of participants. In addition to various activities,

Lawrence & Memorial Hospital Helps Keep Kids Safe

I never realized...

“Until recently, when I was in a serious car crash, I never realized how important it was to take the time to get my child’s car seat checked and properly installed by a qualified person. My husband and I have used the free car seat inspection program at Lawrence & Memorial Hospital because it has given us the security that we are doing all that we can to ensure that our children are safe. I truly appreciate this important service to the community. Now I know that my children are riding safely every time we are in the car.”

Nine out of 10 car seats are installed improperly. Children restrained in an appropriate child safety seat, properly installed, are 69 percent less likely to be hospitalized following a car crash. Lawrence & Memorial Hospital is the only hospital in the state of Connecticut with an on-site child safety seat inspection station with fixed hours.



the group offers information and tips on parenting strategies, child development, stress management, and health and nutrition.

Since its inception many years ago, the M.O.M.S. program has helped hundreds of young New Britain residents develop parenting skills, strengthen family supports by involving couples in the program, and minimize opportuni-

ties for abuse and neglect. The program is also instrumental in creating the fabric of a community among young people facing the daunting challenges of parenthood, often in the midst of socioeconomic disadvantages.



Saint Francis Hospital and Medical Center Helps Feed Local Families in Need

Saint Francis Hospital and Medical Center has the only hospital-based emergency food bank in the United States. Established in 1977, with a small closet of donated foods at the former Mount Sinai Hospital, the Food Bank has been a labor of love for a group of volunteers who collect, sort, and distribute food to patients in the hospital’s clinics, and to homebound individuals and residents of senior housing complexes.

Betty Barker, of Hartford, says that the Emergency Food Bank at Saint Francis Hospital and Medical Center makes a difference in her life. The 65-year-old grandmother has legal custody of eight grandchildren, aged 7 to 18. She counts on food from the Food Bank to supplement the food stamps she gets every month.

“I can depend on Joan,” she says of Joan Dauber, R.D., C.D.-N., the dietician who started the Food Bank in 1977 and continues to administer it today. “Joan provides potatoes and other fresh vegetables that I can’t buy for the whole month in advance.”

Once a month, the Food Bank also provides Betty with meat, canned goods, and staples that are either donated or obtained through Food Share.

“This makes all the difference for me in feeding my grandchildren,” says Betty.



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