CHA Special Edition of Update: Annual Meeting Awards

The Connecticut Hospital Association will hold its 97th Annual Meeting on Tuesday, June 30, 2015, at the Aqua Turf Club in Southington. This year’s theme, Connecticut Hospitals: Leading the Journey to Better Care, Better Health, Lower Costs, is illustrative of the ways in which hospitals are leading the charge to take healthcare into the future.

The meeting will feature CHA’s annual awards, including the Connecticut’s Healthcare Heroes Awards, the AHA Grassroots Champion Award, the CHA Honorary Membership Award, the Connecticut’s Community Service Award, and the John D. Thompson Award for Excellence in the Delivery of Healthcare Through the Use of Data.

Katty Kay, lead anchor, BBC World News America, will be the keynote speaker. Kay’s reports on the latest U.S. economic and political news are viewed on nearly 300 Public Broadcasting Stations that carry BBC World News America broadcasts, giving her a vast and diverse international audience. The daughter of a British diplomat, Kay grew up in the Middle East and began her career with the BBC in Zimbabwe, where she also covered the end of apartheid in South Africa. Her assignments as a BBC correspondent began in London, and later Tokyo, where she reported on stories including the Japanese economic recession.

As someone who has lived in and reported from the Middle East, Africa, Asia, Europe and now Washington D.C., Kay offers a fresh perspective on American politics and global affairs – looking beyond the headlines to provide clear insights on critical political and economic issues. Kay is also a frequent guest commentator on NBC’s Meet the Press as well as a regular guest and substitute co-host on MSNBC’s Morning Joe.

CHA gratefully acknowledges the generous Annual Meeting sponsorship of our Platinum Sponsor, Credit Suisse.

CHA to Recognize UConn Health’s John Dempsey Hospital with the John D. Thompson Award for Excellence in the Delivery of Healthcare Through the Use of Data

At its 97th Annual Meeting on Tuesday, June 30, 2015, the Connecticut Hospital Association (CHA) will recognize UConn Health’s John Dempsey Hospital with the 2015 John D. Thompson Award for Excellence in the Delivery of Healthcare Through the Use of Data for its project, STEMI Partnership for Patient Outcome Optimization.

In 2009, UConn Health’s John Dempsey Hospital set out to optimize outcomes for patients with a type of heart attack called a STEMI (ST-elevation myocardial infarction) through effective collaboration with Emergency Medical Services (EMS) providers and through thoughtful and strategic process improvements.

The hospital recognized that not only could paramedics learn to recognize a STEMI with a high degree of reliability, but they could be instrumental in real-time notification and early activation of the hospital’s cardiac catheterization lab, where balloon angioplasty can be performed to open blocked blood vessels. This would optimize the hospital’s readiness to implement emergent care.

The collaboration empowered EMS professionals to start providing care, and coordinate with hospital cardiac staff, as soon as they arrive at a patient’s home. The hospital trained EMS providers to perform a 12-lead electrocardiogram (ECG) and interpret the results to identify the signs of a STEMI.

Once an EMS provider has identified a possible STEMI, he or she can activate the cardiac catheterization lab from the field, allowing clinical staff to be ready sooner and eliminating any unnecessary time in the Emergency Department (ED). Some patients can bypass the ED completely.

Education for paramedics is a key component. As valued members of the team, they receive additional information from clinical staff after the procedure and learn about patient outcomes. Collaborating with EMS providers in the decision-making process and providing them with rapid feedback has fostered a patient-centered working relationship that has benefitted patients.

The process improvements of EMS education, empowerment through STEMI alert activation in the field, emphasis on early notification, and other procedural improvements has led to the hospital decreasing its median door-to-balloon time by a dramatic 45 percent since 2011. STEMI patients went from receiving a cardiac catheterization at 80 minutes to receiving it at a median time of 44 minutes.

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Bristol Hospital and New Milford Hospital to Receive 2015 Community Service Awards

At its 97th Annual Meeting on Tuesday, June 30, 2015, the Connecticut Hospital Association (CHA) will recognize Bristol Hospital and New Milford Hospital, a member of the Western Connecticut Health Network, with a 2015 Connecticut’s Hospital Community Service Award. Sponsored by CHA and the Connecticut Department of Public Health, the Connecticut’s Hospital Community Service Award recognizes outstanding achievement in community service. Bristol Hospital is being recognized for its Family Wellness Program, while New Milford Hospital is being recognized for its Plow to Plate® program.

Concern about obesity in the community led Bristol Hospital’s Parent and Child Center to create the Family Wellness Program, which uses healthy gardening, family exercise, and nutrition education to encourage overall health for low-income families. In less than two
years, the program has touched the lives of nearly 150 families, and the obesity rate of the participating families has improved.

There are four parts to the Family Wellness Program: Gardening for Health, Shopping Matters, Family Zumba, and Nutrition Education. Additional physical activity classes for toddlers and preschoolers were introduced for children too young to participate in Zumba.

Body mass index (BMI) data from 33 children and 20 parents showed that two-thirds of the children had a decrease in BMI after participating in the program. Of those children, 70 percent had parents who participated in at least three of the four parts of the program, reinforcing the success of a family-centered approach. Of the participating parents who completed at least three parts of the program, 100 percent had a decrease in their BMI.

Plow to Plate® was created at New Milford Hospital, a member of the Western Connecticut Health Network, in response to astonishing upward trends in obesity and related diseases. The initiative, which advocates healthy food as a direct path to disease prevention while promoting the local agricultural economy, delivers a fully integrated, healthful food service program to patients, staff, and the community. It uses fresh produce from nine local farms.

Plow to Plate® has expanded to encompass important nutrition-based community programs including a "Senior Suppers" program, which provides seniors with a nutritious meal for $5; a Youth Chef Advocates program, which offers an experiential curriculum teaching high school applicants about nutrition and the food industry; an information table at a weekly farmer’s market; and a Signature Dish Initiative, in which more than 30 establishments serving food – including restaurants, markets, and schools – use menus and signs to communicate the importance of healthy food choices.

A prime example of positive outcomes and community advocacy is a three-year study conducted by Plow to Plate® cofounder, Diane D’Isidori, MD, in collaboration with the United Way. To measure the effectiveness of sustainable health education, in 2012, Dr. D’Isidori measured the BMI of 148 children age four who regularly visited her practice. Data were collected over three years, with the study ending in 2015, when the children were age six. In 2012, 13 percent of the enrollees were considered obese with 24 percent considered at risk. In 2015, 9 percent of the enrollees were considered obese with 19 percent considered at risk; a decline of 4 percent and 5 percent respectively over three years of sustainable health education.

Hartford HealthCare Behavioral Health Network’s Stephen W. Larcen, PhD, Named Connecticut’s 2015 Grassroots Champion

At its 97th Annual Meeting on Tuesday, June 30, 2015, the American Hospital Association (AHA) and the Connecticut Hospital Association (CHA) will recognize Stephen W. Larcen, PhD, President of Hartford HealthCare’s Behavioral Health Network, as Connecticut’s 2015 Grassroots Champion. Dr. Larcen is being recognized for his exceptional leadership in generating grassroots and community support for issues of importance to hospitals and healthcare.

“Steve is a powerful force in advocating for mental healthcare in Connecticut,” said Jennifer Jackson, CEO, CHA. “With a deep well of experience and knowledge, Steve educates legislators on critical issues related to the mental health system. He advocates for public policy that benefits Connecticut patients and all those in our communities. We are very pleased that he is this year’s Grassroots Champion.”

The award, given annually to one person in each state, was created to recognize hospital leaders who effectively educate elected officials about how major issues affect hospitals’ roles in the community, who have expanded the base of community support for hospitals, and who have been tireless advocates for hospitals and patients.

Dr. Larcen took on the role of vice president of Behavioral Health for Hartford HealthCare in 1997 while serving as president and CEO of Natchaug Hospital, a position he assumed in 1990. In 2011, he added the role of president and CEO of Windham Hospital. With the reorganization of Hartford HealthCare into regions in 2013, his focus became the system’s behavioral health service line.

Hartford HealthCare’s Behavioral Health Network, for which Dr. Larcen currently serves as president, includes The Institute of Living at Hartford Hospital, Natchaug Hospital, Rushford, and behavioral health services at other Hartford HealthCare member organizations, including Backus Hospital and The Hospital of Central Connecticut.

With CHA, Dr. Larcen serves as the co-chair of the Subcommittee on Mental Health. He is also a long-standing member of CHA’s Committee on Government.

CHA to Recognize Curtis D. Robinson with an Honorary Lifetime Membership Award

At its 97th Annual Meeting on Tuesday, June 30, 2015, the Connecticut Hospital Association (CHA) will recognize Curtis D. Robinson with an Honorary CHA Lifetime Membership Award. Mr. Robinson is being honored for his commitment to helping those in need, for his work on behalf of Connecticut hospitals as a
CHA Honors 11 Healthcare Heroes

One Healthcare Hero cares for veterans in the waning days of their lives. Another keeps patients and hospital staff safe during emergencies. A third mentors the next generation of nurses. These are just some of the stories behind the 2015 CHA Healthcare Heroes.

Each year, CHA recognizes an inspiring and committed group of individuals from across the state who embody the best in their profession.

The following Healthcare Heroes will be acknowledged at the 97th CHA Annual Meeting on June 30, 2015.

Denise Buonocore, MSN, ACNPC, CCNS, CCRN, CHFN, Nurse Practitioner, Heart Failure Service, St. Vincent’s Health Services

Nurse practitioner Denise Buonocore, who cares for patients with heart failure at St. Vincent’s Medical Center, has made three separate mission trips to bring her knowledge and experience to Haiti, one of the poorest nations in the world. Denise provided guidance on various aspects of heart failure clinic development and worked with the local medical staff.

Karen Butterworth-Erban, RN, Regional Director of Emergency Services, Hartford HealthCare East Region

Registered nurse Karen Butterworth-Erban helped form an Emergency Services-Community Public Safety Collaborative to eliminate gaps along the substance abuse continuum of care, and develop treatment linkages. Karen also helped create a Hartford HealthCare East Region-Department of Children and Families Partnership to combat child abuse, which has opened new doors between DCF and Hartford HealthCare that have led to positive patient outcomes.

Maddalena DeRosa, MD, Medical Director, VA Connecticut Healthcare System

Dr. Maddalena DeRosa goes to great lengths to care for veterans, serving as a doctor, friend, confidant, and advocate. She has great sensitivity for end-of-life issues, is holistic in her approach, and ensures that all dimensions of care are addressed.

Scott Ellner, DO, MHCM, FACS, President, Saint Francis Medical Group; Vice Chairman, Department of Surgery; Director of Surgical Quality, Saint Francis Hospital and Medical Center

For six years, Scott Ellner, DO, has been at the forefront of the regional and national charge to improve patient safety and surgical outcomes. His work has led to lower infection rates, faster recoveries, shorter hospitalizations – and has saved lives.

Paul Kelly, MD, Chief of Cardiology, Saint Mary’s Hospital

Dr. Paul Kelly developed "The Pump Club," to help cardiac patients overcome challenges in the weeks following their hospital discharge and avoid hospital readmission. Pump Club members come to the hospital for post-discharge education, help managing their medications, IV therapy, and other treatment.

Ron Kersey, Emergency Medical Services Coordinator, Lawrence + Memorial Hospital

Whether the situation is a fire, hurricane, flood, blizzard, or other extraordinary event, Ron Kersey readily takes the lead, orchestrating complex responses, mobilizing needed resources, ensuring the flow of information, and above all, keeping patients safe. Ron led the hospital through emergencies including Hurricane Sandy and Ebola preparations.

Erica Kesselman, MD, Obstetrician/Gynecologist, Day Kimball Healthcare

Since Erica Kesselman, MD, arrived in Connecticut in 2002, her OB/GYN practice has grown to nine practitioners and has become part of Day Kimball Medical Group, a service division of Day Kimball Healthcare. Erica also cares for children (and their families) after their birth, working with the Windham County Multidisciplinary Team to support children who have disclosed sexual abuse, and engages in preventive education.

Janie Mezzatesta, RN, Cardiac Nurse, Griffin Hospital

Janie Mezzatesta has contributed her vast experience and endless energy to Griffin Hospital’s Sharps Committee and supported efforts to identify and secure safer medical devices to use in patient care. Janie has volunteered hundreds of hours to care for people recovering from a cardiac event, and has precepted nearly 100 new nurses.

Rajani Nadkarni, MD, Medical Oncology and Hematology Specialist, MidState Medical Center

Dr. Rajani Nadkarni’s ability to look at the big picture of cancer care, especially the personal needs of patients and families, stems from
both her caring heart and her earlier training in psychiatry. Raj, as she invites other to call her, has also pioneered the introduction of genetic counseling and assessment of people at increased risk for cancer.

Rebecca Santiago, BSN, RN, N&P, FCN, Community Healthcare Navigator/OASIS Facilitator, Saint Francis Hospital and Medical Center
Sunday mornings will find community health nurse Rebecca Santiago at a church, mosque, barber shop, or beauty salon, reaching out to people who need medical care but don’t know how to access it, or teaching them how to stay healthy.

William H. Zeidler, MD, Medical Director, Middlesex Hospice & Palliative Care, Middlesex Hospital
For 30 years, Dr. Bill Zeidler has been committed to caring for patients with chronic and terminal illnesses. Under Bill’s leadership, the Hospice and Palliative Care program at Middlesex Hospital has grown immensely, and Bill has come to be recognized by clinicians across the state as an expert in his field.

Congratulations to all of the Healthcare Heroes.