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Connecticut Hospitals Celebrate National Breast Cancer Awareness Month

Connecticut hospitals are honoring National Breast Cancer Awareness Month, celebrated each year in October. Throughout the month, hospitals across the state have been holding activities and programs emphasizing the importance of breast health and regular screening for breast cancer. Here are some of the activities happening in hospitals this month:



To mark Breast Cancer Awareness Month, **Greenwich Hospital** hosted a community event, *Developments in Diagnosing and Treating Breast Cancer*, with specialists Lisa Wiechmann, MD, breast surgeon; Daniela Addeo, MD, radiation oncologist; and Denise Addorisio, RD, a registered dietitian. Barbara Ward, MD, Medical Director of the Breast Center, participated in the Breast Cancer Alliance's Go for Pink event. WGCH's "Spotlight on Medicine" weekly radio show featured Greenwich Hospital experts speaking about cancer-related topics such as breast cancer screening, diagnosis, and treatment options; breast

reconstruction; and egg preservation for cancer patients planning to have children in the future.



Staff at **The William W. Backus Hospital** (Backus) volunteered for and participated in the 2016 Laura Beth Seder Memorial Golf Tournament, which took place at the Mohegan Sun Golf Club on October 7. Now in its fifth year, the tournament, named for a woman who passed away far too young from breast cancer, raises awareness and funds for the Backus Breast Health Initiative and helps keep the memory of Laura alive.

In 2005, building on the success of its cancer education effort, **Stamford Health** significantly expanded its breast cancer awareness message by creating "Paint the Town Pink," a campaign that takes place every October to celebrate National Breast Cancer Awareness Month. Paint the Town Pink emphasizes the importance of screening and early detection, and spreads the word about the comprehensive breast care services available in the community. The initiative, spearheaded by the Hospital's Bennett Cancer Center staff, includes the development and maintenance of partnerships with area organizations, businesses, and corporations, along with the coordination of a [month-long calendar](#) of events that take place in Stamford and beyond.



Throughout the month of October, **Saint Mary's Hospital** has been lighting up the front of the hospital with pink lights as a reminder for all women in the community to get screened for breast cancer, and promoted breast cancer awareness through a social media campaign featuring physicians and staff members with a traveling pink ribbon and giant pink bow tie. Additionally, members of the hospital's security department wore pink each Friday to promote awareness. Saint Mary's also served as the starting line sponsor for the American Cancer Society's Making Strides Against Breast Cancer walk on October 23 in Waterbury, and participated in the second annual "Pink Out" fundraising event at Saint Mary Magdalen School in Oakville, which raised more than \$7,000 for the Breast Screening Fund at Saint Mary's Hospital Foundation.



Lawrence + Memorial Hospital (L+M) employees at locations across the region demonstrated their awareness, support, and compassion for women fighting breast cancer during L+M's first "Pink Out" event on October 21. The event, which is intended to raise awareness about the importance of early detection while also supporting those fighting the disease, was proposed by L+M Breast Health Navigator Donna Slonksi.

The **Hartford HealthCare Cancer Institute** at Hartford Hospital began the month with a breast cancer research fundraiser. The Pink Party was held on October 6 in Blue Back Square in West Hartford, and included a raffle, live music, refreshments, and a fashion show featuring breast cancer survivors modeling the latest trends. The hospital also sponsored the Laura Beth Seder Memorial Pink Dinner Reception on October 7 in Baltic, offered a free program on exercise therapy for cancer patients, and held its first multi-lingual program on breast health education at The Hospital of Central Connecticut.

In observance of National Mammography Day on October 21, the staff of Radiology and the Neag Comprehensive Cancer Center at **UConn Health** wore pink and took a moment to pose for a photo.



Western Connecticut Health Network (WCHN) promoted breast cancer awareness throughout the entire month of October by hosting, sponsoring, and supporting programs and events that focused on the prevention and early detection of breast cancer. The schedule of events included programs on nutrition, support groups, lectures by medical experts, nutrition classes, four "Pinktober" fundraising events in partnership with the radio station Star 99.9, which included a paint night and a masquerade ball, and a seminar on breast health entitled *Paying it Forward: African-American Women Sharing Their Experience to Help Our Community*.

Downtown Fairfield was awash in pink on September 29 as **Bridgeport Hospital's Norma Pfriem Breast Center** kicked off its second annual Pink Pledge breast cancer awareness and fundraising campaign. Nearly 200 people took part in the Stroll for Strength, a walk by survivors, family members, and others. Pink Pledge activities continued through October, with individuals,



schools, fitness centers, restaurants, businesses, town offices, and many others offering specials and hosting fundraisers to help raise awareness of breast cancer and support the charitable programs at the breast center.

Now in its seventh year, the goPINK Project is an annual event held each October in Middlesex County to honor Breast Cancer Awareness Month and raise funds for the **Middlesex Hospital Cancer Center**. Over the course of the month, area hair salons, businesses, and schools came together to underwrite no-cost massage, Reiki, reflexology, and other integrative medicine modalities for patients experiencing fatigue, pain, neuropathy, and other cancer-related symptoms. Since its inception in 2010, the event has raised \$130,351 to support breast

cancer patients at Middlesex Hospital.



Staff at the **Day Kimball Healthcare Center** in Plainfield found a way to combine autumn themes with Breast Cancer Awareness Month by holding a Pink Pumpkin Contest that was both fun and informative. The contest was initiated by Suzanne Brown, a registered technologist in radiology and mammography at Day Kimball.

Employees were invited to submit a pumpkin to the contest, with the main criteria being that it had to be decorated in PINK to show support for Breast Cancer Awareness and as creatively as possible, but without being carved. The pumpkins are displayed in the main lobby and visitors are invited to vote for their favorite. An

informational poster about breast cancer is on display near the pumpkins.



In recognition of Breast Cancer Awareness Month, **Saint Francis Hospital and Medical Center** and Radiology Associates of Hartford partnered with NBC Connecticut to offer free screening mammograms for uninsured women. The free mammograms were offered on October 26 in three locations. They included digital mammography, same-day results, and follow-up consultations. The hospital also offered a variety of other events and courses, such as support groups, chair massage, and drumming circles, throughout the month.

Senator Murphy Calls Attention to Problems in Mental Health Parity Law



U.S. Senator Chris Murphy, (D-Conn), held a press conference at the Legislative Office Building on October 24 to draw attention to loopholes in the 1996 Mental Health Parity Act that make it difficult for patients to obtain insurance approval for psychiatric treatments.

Sen. Murphy said many of the administrative hurdles erected by insurance companies would be eliminated by the Mental Health Reform Act of 2016. The Act, which was co-sponsored by a bipartisan group of Congressional lawmakers, would enforce the 1996 parity law, which requires insurance companies to treat mental health and physical health equally.

That isn't happening, however, Sen. Murphy said, which is why he and other federal lawmakers believe the Mental Health Reform Act is needed. That Act would provide clear guidance to insurance companies about what would put them in violation of the existing parity law and expedite insurance approvals for patients seeking psychiatric services and medication.

The proposed legislation has been approved by the Senate's Health, Education, Labor and Pensions Committee, of which Sen. Murphy is a member. It could be voted on as early as the legislative session that immediately follows the election.

Sen. Murphy, who was joined at the press conference by Frank Fortunati, MD, Medical Director at Yale New Haven Psychiatric Hospital, and Peter Jacoby, MD, Chairman, Department of Emergency Medicine at St. Mary's Hospital, also spoke about the stress being placed on hospitals due to the lack of capacity in the mental health system. Dr. Fortunati is a member of the Connecticut Hospital Association (CHA) Subcommittee on Mental Health and the CT Behavioral Health Partnership Oversight Council.

Eliminating pre-authorizations for mental health and substance use treatment is a priority for CHA's Subcommittee on Mental Health, since this will enable Connecticut citizens to access insurance coverage for mental health and substance use treatment services more efficiently. One positive step in this direction was taken earlier this month when Cigna announced it will end its policy of requiring pre-authorizations for medications used to treat opioid abuse.

Every Connecticut hospital treats adults and children with mental health-related conditions. More than 28 percent of all inpatient and emergency department (ED) visits to Connecticut hospitals are from patients with a mental health disorder diagnosis, who often have no other recourse than to go to the ED. The problem is particularly acute for children and adolescents, for whom the need for services greatly outstrips the number of available beds and trained specialists. Hospitals struggle to care for these patients and, while funding levels keep shrinking, the number of patients coming to hospitals for these services keeps growing.

Connecticut hospitals are pursuing initiatives to improve behavioral healthcare for children and adults, such as the development and implementation of Community Care Teams (CCTs), but are concerned that state funding for these initiatives has been eliminated. CCTs are partnerships among hospitals and other community providers who meet regularly to address the needs of vulnerable patients, including those who are chronically mentally and/or physically ill, homeless, or abusing substances.

For more information, please refer to CHA's issue brief on [Hospitals and Mental Health](#).

Ellen Crowe Joins CHA as Director, Clinical Excellence and Care Redesign



CHA welcomes Ellen Crowe, RN, as Director, Clinical Excellence and Care Redesign. In this role, Ms. Crowe will advance clinical and operational excellence through shared learning, meaningful metrics, and data analytics. She will also support Patient Safety Organization (PSO) activities, various CHA-led collaboratives, externally funded activity, and educational activities that support these goals.

Ms. Crowe, who has been a nurse for 30 years, brings extensive experience to CHA. Most recently, she was Regional Director, Clinical Excellence and Innovation, at Hartford HealthCare East Region, where she created and implemented a Clinical Excellence Regional Team to support nursing education at both the Backus and Windham Hospital campuses. Prior to that, Ms. Crowe was Assistant Vice President, Patient Care Services, Clinical Excellence and Innovation at Backus Hospital, where she led interdisciplinary professional performance improvement and innovation projects, conducted peer reviews, and recommended system enhancements to promote clinical excellence and organizational efficiency.

Ms. Crowe also previously worked as Quality & Innovation Consultant at Lawrence + Memorial Hospital, and held positions at the University of Maryland Medical System, Long Beach Medical Center, Children's Hospital of Buffalo, and Inova Fairfax Hospital for Children, where she successfully built a multifaceted clinic structure to care for the 46,000 children with special healthcare needs in the Northern Virginia service area.

Ms. Crowe holds a Bachelor of Science in Nursing from Niagara University, a post-graduate certificate in Health Care Management, and is currently pursuing a Masters of Business Administration and Systems Integration from the University of New Haven.

Yale New Haven Hospital Receives Magnet® Redesignation

Yale New Haven Hospital (YNHH) has once again achieved the prestigious Magnet designation from the American Nurses Credentialing Center (ANCC), placing it among the approximately seven percent of the more than 5,600 hospitals nationwide – and one of six in Connecticut – to achieve this honor. YNHH received the Magnet designation for the first time on May 25, 2011.

"We are pleased and proud to announce that the American Nurses Credentialing Center has re-designated Yale New Haven Hospital as a Magnet Hospital, the most prestigious distinction a healthcare organization can receive for nursing excellence and quality patient outcomes," said Sue Fitzsimons, RN, PhD, Senior Vice President, Patient Services, YNHH. "As an organization, this important re-designation celebrates the collaboration between nurses and members of the healthcare team to achieve excellent outcomes in patient care."

ANCC is the world's largest and most prestigious nurse credentialing organization and a subsidiary of the American Nurses Association.



Magnet appraisers look closely at four areas of nursing excellence. They rigorously examine the hospital's nursing leaders and how they empower nursing staff, the hospital's culture of safety, the quality of nursing practice, and the best practices nurses discover and share to deliver safe patient care.

"Consumers of healthcare services today are increasingly sophisticated and they are choosing hospitals that have achieved Magnet recognition," said Richard D'Aquila, President, YNHH and YNHHS. "To be able to achieve this honor for the first time as a combined hospital – Yale New Haven and the former St. Raphael's – speaks volumes not only to our nursing excellence but to the wonderful way we have all come together to create an outstanding patient experience."

In addition to YNHH, the other five Connecticut hospitals to have achieved Magnet designation are Bristol Hospital, Greenwich Hospital, Middlesex Hospital, St. Vincent's Medical Center, and Stamford Hospital.

DPH Tracking Early Influenza Cases



The Connecticut Department of Public Health (DPH) reports that influenza cases have been slowly rising in Connecticut since the end of August and are now considered to be "geographically sporadic."

To date this season, there have been 20 confirmed cases of influenza and 6 hospitalizations in Connecticut. No deaths have been reported. The predominant influenza viruses identified so far this season are Type A, although there is a small percentage of Type B influenza viruses in circulation. Statewide emergency department (ED) visits attributed to the "fever/flu syndrome" are beginning to increase and are now at 4.2 percent, which is below the level of 5 percent statewide generally considered the minimum threshold when there are elevated influenza-associated ED visits.

Vaccination is a best practice for patient and healthcare worker safety. CHA is participating in the third annual United Against the Flu campaign, which uses social media outreach to bring national attention to the need for flu vaccinations. In 2011, the CHA Board adopted a statewide policy endorsing mandatory influenza vaccination for hospital personnel as part of CHA hospitals' commitment to patient safety. To date, the vast majority of acute care CHA member hospitals in Connecticut have implemented a mandatory participation or mandatory vaccination program.

Education Updates

Lean Principles: Process Flow and Value Stream Mapping in Healthcare

Session I: Monday, October 31, 2016

9:00 a.m. - 2:00 p.m.

Session II: Monday, November 7, 2016

9:00 a.m. - 2:00 p.m.

[View Brochure](#) | [Event Registration](#)

As the demands of health reform drive change in all areas of healthcare delivery, hospital leaders are focused on transforming their organizations through strategies that simultaneously increase revenue and sharply reduce costs. Lean principles offer leaders a management system and methodology that improves team engagement, eliminates road blocks, and allows hospitals to improve the quality of care for patients by reducing errors and waste streams, including wait times. It is a systematic approach to reducing costs and risks, while simultaneously setting the stage for growth and expansion.

Please note: this is a two-session program, participants should attend both sessions.

Continuing education credits will be offered. See the brochure for details.

Transitioning From Staff to Management: What's Next?

Wednesday, November 9, 2016

8:30 a.m. - 3:30 p.m.

[View Brochure](#) | [Event Registration](#)

Whether recently assigned to the role of manager or a seasoned veteran, it is important to determine how well one's problem solving, critical thinking, and decision making skills are keeping pace with the ever-changing healthcare environment. For those who attended "Staff to Management: Starting the Transition" in March or September, this is the second course in the two-part program and provides additional development for all managers who want to continually improve their skills.

Continuing education credits will be offered.

Leading in a VUCA Environment

Thursday, November 10, 2016

9:00 a.m. - 3:00 p.m.

[View Brochure](#) | [Event Registration](#)

The scope and pace of change in healthcare is unrelenting. VUCA is an acronym that describes an environment that is Volatile, Uncertain, Complex, and Ambiguous—a military term that was created during the Cold War and reused during the Middle East conflicts. Healthcare fits the description perfectly—and as the landscape continues to evolve, learning the strategies and principles of VUCA Leadership will enhance focus and agility. This workshop will blend didactic and experiential material, giving leaders practical tools to engage their employees in shaping organizational culture and achieving outcomes that drive operational excellence.

Continuing education credits will be offered.

Best Practices for Handling Hazardous Drugs (for Hospital Engineers)

Thursday, November 10, 2016

8:00 a.m. - 11:15 a.m.

[View Brochure](#) | [Event Registration](#)

This training—which is designed for hospital engineers—will include examples of the effects of exposure to hazardous drugs (HD) on healthcare staff that handle HDs, best practice related to HD compounding, and differences between USP Chapters <800> from <797> and <795>. A description of the primary, secondary, and supplemental engineering control requirements will also be provided.

Registration for this session includes access to CriticalPoint's eLearning course: Engineering Controls and Personal Protective Equipment. This lesson and post test must be completed by all participants prior to the scheduled training.

Best Practices for Handling Hazardous Drugs (for Hospital Pharmacists)

Thursday, November 10, 2016

8:00 a.m. - 5:30 p.m.

[View Brochure](#) | [Event Registration](#)

This full-day, interactive training is designed for hospital pharmacists and pharmacy technicians, and will review current and proposed regulation concerning all aspects of handling hazardous drugs (HD). Understanding these regulations will allow users to future-proof their facility and employ best work practices when performing both non-sterile and sterile HD handling.

Registration for this session includes access to CriticalPoint's eLearning courses Introduction and Overview and Engineering Controls,

Personal Protective Equipment, and Hazardous Drug Work Practice Strategies (5 hours of ACPE-approved CE). The three lessons and post tests must be completed by all participants prior to the scheduled training.

Creating Sustainability for High Reliability Organizations

Tuesday, November 15, 2016

9:00 a.m. - 12:15 p.m.

[Event Registration](#)

This session is designed for drivers of change in the organization and covers techniques to ensure the changes resulting from high reliability approaches are ongoing.

Medicine, Nursing, and Quality continuing education credits are offered for this session.

HRO Top Ten Problem Lists and Action Plans

Tuesday, November 15, 2016

1:00 p.m. - 4:15 p.m.

[Event Registration](#)

When issues are identified in Safety Huddle, how does one solve them and maintain work on other projects? Problem Solving with the Top 10 is a tool for prioritizing and implementing projects without losing sight of the core value of safety.

Medicine, Nursing, and Quality continuing education credits are offered for this session.

Worker Safety and Worker Engagement: A High Reliability Approach

Wednesday, November 16, 2016

1:00 p.m. - 4:15 p.m.

[Event Registration](#)

This session supports CHA's efforts to take care of the staff who take care of patients. Worker Safety and Worker Engagement: A High Reliability Approach discusses behaviors, techniques, and measurement for worker safety, as used by other high reliability hospitals that are farther along their journey.

Medicine, Nursing, and Quality continuing education credits are offered for this session.

HRO Safety Coach Training

Wednesday, November 16, 2016

9:00 a.m. - 12:15 p.m.

[Event Registration](#)

Safety Coaches are peer mentors, designed to recognize and acknowledge good high reliability behavior and to remind people about opportunities to improve behavior that does not stay true to high reliability concepts.

Medicine, Nursing, and Quality continuing education credits are offered for this session.

HRO Leadership Method Training

Thursday, November 17, 2016

9:00 a.m. - 4:15 p.m.

[Event Registration](#)

Leadership Method Training is for organizations that are new to high reliability or for new management employees in organizations that are already on the high reliability journey. Both hospital and ambulatory organization leadership practices will be addressed. The leadership session is designed to teach hospital or ambulatory leaders the concepts of high reliability science and behaviors. The sessions are structured for leaders at the manager level and above.

Medicine, Nursing, Quality, and Radiology continuing education credits are being offered for this session.

Ninth Annual State of the State: Connecticut Perinatal Quality Collaborative

Monday, November 21, 2016

9:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m.

[View Brochure](#) [Event Registration](#)

This full-day program will address the complexities of supporting the mother-infant dyad affected by neonatal abstinence syndrome. We are pleased to welcome as speakers Mary Coughlin, RN, MS, NNP, founder and President of Caring Essentials Collaborative, LLC, and Mara Coyle, MD, neonatologist at Women and Infants Hospital in Rhode Island and Medical Director of the NICU at St. Luke's Hospital.

