



## The Health of Your Hospital

*Michelle McEwen, FACHE, President/CEO*

*The following is excerpted from a presentation given at the Speare Memorial Hospital Association annual meeting on September 30.*

As we look back on fiscal year 2009, it was a time of building efficiency into our operations and further developing our care systems. At the same time, we were growing in the services and technology we provide to ensure that our patients receive the best care possible. It was a challenging year, but successful in many ways.

Economically this has been a difficult year for all of us. Speare was impacted by this recession with decreasing volumes as individuals postponed care and preventive screenings due to loss of income or perhaps their health insurance. We saw deterioration in our payer mix with higher levels of bad debt and charity care. We addressed these financial challenges with a critical eye towards making our organization more efficient and effective, and continue to monitor, with diligence, our revenues and expenses as we weather this economic storm.

Despite the challenges presented, it was also a year of growth and

development for us. Speare is a small community hospital, but regardless of our size, our community expects and deserves the same quality care that they would receive in a much larger hospital. There was a time when it was said that healthcare was local. Communities faithfully used the services of their local hospital, no matter what options may be available a few towns over. Today we face a very different environment. Our society is much more mobile: commuting for work, shopping and their healthcare needs.

I will agree that traveling to a larger center gains you access to specialists not available in smaller communities, but it does not necessarily mean that you get better care. When it comes to the treatment and management of chronic illnesses; prevention, screenings and wellness; and non- high risk obstetrics and orthopedic care; your small community hospital can “run with the big dogs.” This is to say Speare has the technology, the skilled physicians and the commitment to provide you the same level of care as found in the larger institutions; but with the added benefit of personal attention.

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## Celebrating 110 Years



Director of Development Susan Durgy (l) and President/CEO Michelle McEwen (r) stand with Evergreen Society honorees Ruth Harlow, Ed and Marilyn Wixson and Anthony P. Keefer.

Since 1899 when a small group of citizens gathered to establish the Emily Balch Cottage Hospital – today Speare Memorial Hospital – the central New Hampshire community has supported essential medical services being provided locally. The first report on the status of the hospital stated, “The reason why the hospital was founded was because the needs of the surrounding country were felt to be so great, and the means of meeting those needs so inadequate.”

Now, 110 years later, the spirit of community-mindedness is as strong as ever. Community members, donors, and the board of directors celebrated with leadership and staff on Saturday, August 22 at the Inn on Newfound Lake in Bridgewater, honoring community members and donors for their continued support. The event was sponsored by: John Noyes and Noyes Insurance Agency, Inc, Charles Foundation Inc., Stewarts Ambulance, and Millennium Integrated Marketing.

## Celebrating 110 Years



The Inn on Newfound Lake in Bridgewater provided a beautiful backdrop for SMH's 110th Celebration. Plymouth "historian" Ross Deachman reflected on Speare as a valued community resource during his keynote address.



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### The intent of the **Health Beat**

newsletter is to provide useful health-related news in a timely, accurate manner.

It is not intended to provide medical advice on personal health matters. Such advice should be obtained directly from a qualified health care provider.

Published by  
**Speare Memorial Hospital**  
Office of Community Relations  
16 Hospital Road  
Plymouth NH 03264  
603-238-6468

## The Health of Your Hospital

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The healthcare team at Speare has made safe, high quality patient care their mission. Together they have implemented many of the national patient safety initiatives, such as medication reconciliation, bedside medication verification and critical results reporting. They have prescribed to complying with evidence based practices – chronic heart failure, heart attack/chest pain, pneumonia and surgical care – the same four areas that our Federal Government is now reporting on their national report card. Speare's performance in practicing evidence based medical care in these four areas has greatly improved, placing us among the top performing hospitals in New Hampshire.

It is not only important to deliver the right care at the right time, to each of our patients, it is also important to hear their voice and understand their needs. Quality is in the eye of the beholder. For that reason, we monitor patients' perception of the care they received at Speare, through the use of a national patient survey tool. Once again, these responses indicate that Speare is out performing the majority of New Hampshire hospitals.

Looking forward to 2010, we have a number of items on our plate. Our medical office building at Boulder Point will open in January. Simultaneously we will open White Mountain Eye Care, a hospital owned ophthalmology practice and optical shop. Dr. Richards will

be an important part of this new practice, as will his new associate Dr. Russo who will join the practice in August 2010. Renovations to the former PSU infirmary have just begun. This will be followed by the demolition of our 1960's medical office building and renovations to the newer section that attaches the hospital to this medical office building. As a result, Plymouth OB/GYN and Plymouth General Surgery will have new accommodations. By the end of this new fiscal year, all of our practices will have modern, new facilities, enabling them to become more efficient and to grow as our communities' needs for healthcare increase.

In addition to improving the environment of care for our physician practices, Speare is embarking on an information technology initiative that will move all of our physician practices to an electronic record. This will ensure that the most current and complete patient information will be easily accessible to healthcare providers, in the office or at the hospital, enabling them to provide the best care possible for our patients.

It will be an exciting year for Speare, and one that could not be achieved without the support of our community. I want to thank you all for your support of Speare and encourage you to contact any of our board members, members of our management team or me, to share your thoughts about how Speare is doing in meeting our community's healthcare needs.



# Pursuing Excellence: Excellence Across the Continuum of Care

*Kofi A. Cash, M.S., Director, Quality & Safety*

Seventy-five percent of healthcare services are provided in your physician’s office, rather than the four walls of a hospital. Even so, hospitals across the country are vigorously extracting, maintaining and reporting data that highlight patient outcomes related to quality, patient safety, and service excellence. Spear Memorial Hospital enthusiastically supports the federal and state reporting requirements and endorses the need for elevated accountability and transparency.

However, there is a change on the horizon. In the future, Spear will be evaluated on how well we can integrate systems with primary care offices and ancillary services across the continuum of care. To better understand the healthcare continuum consider the following scenario featuring fictional patient Ms. Elsewhere:

Ms. Elsewhere makes an appointment with her primary care physician in early November. She gets a flu shot and general check-up. Her physician orders lab tests. Two weeks later, she comes to the hospital, registers as an outpatient, and proceeds to the lab to have her blood drawn.

In early January, Ms. Elsewhere suffers a skiing injury and is transported to Spear’s emergency room. She is seen by an ED physician who consults with the orthopedic surgeon on-call from Plymouth Orthopedics and Sports Medicine Clinic. Surgery is scheduled and takes place later that afternoon.

Plymouth Orthopedics makes a follow-up appointment for Ms. Elsewhere. The surgeon refers her to Spear’s RehabFIT (rehabilitation services) for physical therapy. After another visit to Plymouth Orthopedics, an appointment is made for Ms. Elsewhere to follow up with her primary care provider the week after the Super Bowl.

Ms. Elsewhere visits with her primary care provider in February. In March, she makes her first visit to RehabFIT where she will undergo a series of therapy sessions.

*How does Ms. Elsewhere’s hospital lab results get processed and sent to the primary care physician’s office (Integration)?*

*How is Ms. Elsewhere’s patient satisfaction (Service Excellence) measured during her ED visit?*

*What processes are in place in the hospital operating room to ensure that Ms. Elsewhere obtains the correct antibiotic*

*(Quality) prior to surgery and that patient safety is optimized?*

*What mechanisms are in place to appropriately inform Ms. Elsewhere about the results of the surgery and the expected next steps (Service Excellence)?*

*What processes are in place, within the hospital, to alert Ms. Elsewhere’s primary care physician about the surgical case (Integration)?*

*How does the hospital’s physical therapy program provide progress updates to Ms. Elsewhere’s primary care physician (Integration)?*

These are the types of questions Spear Memorial Hospital is addressing across the continuum of care. The goal is to improve measurement, integration, and patient data dissemination, to optimize the overall patient care experience.

## Infection Control: Protect Patients. Protect Yourself.

We know how important the support and care of family and friends is to our patients wellbeing. As visitors you can help us prevent the spread of infection:

- W**ash your hands or use hand sanitizer (available in each room) upon entering and before leaving the patient’s room.
- E**xpect our staff to clean their hands before patient care. Remind them if they forget.
- C**over your sneeze or cough with a tissue or upper arm. Please, do not visit if you are sick.
- A**void touching anything used to care for the patient.
- R**ead and follow any instructions posted outside the patient’s room
- E**liminate germs when the patient goes home by using disinfectants, such as sprays and wipes, to clean hard surfaces often.

## H1N1 Flu Q & A

### What are the signs and symptoms H1N1 flu in people?

The symptoms of H1N1 flu virus in people are similar to those of regular seasonal flu and include fever, cough, sore throat, runny or stuffy nose, body aches, headache, chills, and fatigue. A significant number of people have reported diarrhea and vomiting associated with the H1N1 flu virus. Severe illnesses and death has occurred as a result of illness associated with this virus.

### How does someone get H1N1?

The spread of H1N1 flu virus is from person to person through coughing or sneezing by people with influenza. People may also become infected by touching something – such as a surface or object – with flu viruses on it and then touching their mouth or nose.

### When can someone with the H1N1 flu infect someone else?

Infected people may be able to infect others beginning 1 day before symptoms develop and up to 7 days or more after becoming sick. That means you may be able to pass the flu on to someone else before you know you are sick, as well as while you are sick.

### Is there medicine to treat the H1N1 flu?

Yes. Antiviral drugs are prescription medications that fight against the flu by keeping flu viruses from reproducing in your body, making your illness milder. They may also prevent serious flu complications.

### Tips for Staying Healthy

- Cover your nose and mouth with a tissue when you cough or sneeze, or use your elbow, then throw the tissue in the trash after use.
- Wash your hands often with soap and water (15-20 seconds with soap and warm water), especially after you cough or sneeze. Alcohol-based hand cleaners are also effective.
- Try to avoid close contact with sick people.

### Who should be vaccinated?

Based on CDC recommendations, the following are priority populations:

- a. Pregnant Women
- b. Children and young adults 6 months through age 24
- c. Household contacts of children less than 6 months of age
- d. Health care workers and first responders with patient contact
- e. Adults 25 – 64 with medical conditions that are complicated by the influenza virus

### What should I do if I, or someone in my family, gets sick?

Stay home at least 24 hours after your fever is gone, except to get medical care or for other necessities. You may want to contact your healthcare provider, particularly if you are worried about your symptoms. They can determine whether influenza testing or treatment is needed. Stay away from others as much as possible to keep from making others sick. You should not leave your home except to seek

medical care. This means avoiding normal activities, including work, school, travel, shopping, social events, and public gatherings.

### What are the emergency warning signs of severe illness?

In children emergency warning signs that need urgent medical attention include:

- Fast breathing or trouble breathing
- Bluish skin color
- Not drinking enough fluids
- Not waking up or not interacting
- Being so irritable that the child does not want to be held
- Flu-like symptoms improve but then return with fever and worse cough
- Fever with a rash

In adults the emergency warning signs that need urgent medical attention include:

- Difficulty breathing or shortness of breath
- Pain or sudden pressure in the chest or abdomen
- Sudden dizziness
- Confusion
- Severe or persistent vomiting

Source: New Hampshire Department of Health & Human Services. [www.dhhs.state.nh.us](http://www.dhhs.state.nh.us)

Susan Durgy, Director of Development  
(603)238-2211

The last thing a family thinks about while on vacation is their 13-year-old needing an emergency appendectomy. But that is exactly what happened to a Massachusetts family in August. Kevin was so grateful for the care his daughter, Kate, received he sent this letter of appreciation along with a wonderful gift:

*"while on vacation and hours from home, my daughter Katherine was operated on and had her appendix removed at Speare. From the moment we walked into the ER waiting room through the next afternoon when Kate was discharged, I was amazed at what a competent hospital you have and how wonderful everyone was. I wanted to show my appreciation with a contribution. I went through our finances and pondered what amount I could afford. When the number began to hurt as much as Kate's appendix did, I felt that was the right amount. Please pass our thanks and let your employees know what a great job they did and how much it meant to us."*

I spoke the Kate's parents who report that she is doing great and was in the back yard playing with a new puppy that they had just adopted. We are extremely grateful for their kind words, generous support and that Kate had such a wonderful experience.

Whether caring for visitors to our community or our neighbors and families, Speare Memorial Hospital is prepared to provide state-of-the-art, safe, quality care. Your support helps assure care will be here when you or a loved one needs us. **Your gift matters!** Please make Speare

Memorial Hospital one of the charities you choose to support this year.

With gratitude, the board and staff of Speare Memorial Hospital acknowledge gifts totaling \$33,079

given between June 20 and September 30, 2009 from the following individuals, families and businesses:

### Friends of Speare Memorial Hospital

On behalf of the Board of Directors and Staff, Speare Memorial Hospital gratefully acknowledges the generosity of the following friends, patients, family members and employees who gave to the hospital between January 1 and June 19, 2009. Your kindness helps support care that is delivered each and every day of the year. A total of \$71,184 was raised during this time period.

Abbey Cellars  
Janet K. Adams  
Julie Anderson  
Ashland Woman's Club  
Kathleen M. Beriau  
The Bierbrier Family  
Jo Boyce  
Ms. Lola F. Brown  
Beryl A. Buzzell  
Charles Foundation, Inc.  
Chase Street Market  
Robert Clay  
Mr. and Mrs. Arlyn Clement  
Peter S. Cofran  
Community Guaranty Savings Bank  
Irving and Avis Cushing  
Ms. Judith J. Dearborn  
Marilyn and Robert Derrickson  
Jim and Kay Desmarais  
Jane Doggett  
John and Anita Downing  
Ray and Elaine Downs  
Bertha L. Duncklee  
Dunkin Donuts  
Susan Durgy and Charles Barilla  
Anonymous  
Sara Furmanick  
Dr. Victor Gennaro and Dr.

Mary-Catherine Gennaro  
George V. Durgin Charitable Trust  
Frederick and Pam Gould  
Nancy W. Grady  
Jack Griffin  
H.R. Hamilton  
Ruth E. Harlow  
Harris Family Furniture  
Katie Wood Hedberg, ARNP & Viking A. Hedberg, MD, MPH  
Barb Hendrick  
Chris and Tiffany Hodges  
Charles Hogan  
Marguerite "T" Hoyesen  
Jeanette Sidney Albert Foundation, Inc.  
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William and Sandra Larsen  
Loon Laverack  
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James and Michelle McEwen

Medtronic  
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Robert Morton  
Barbara Nicholson  
Noyes Insurance Agency, Inc.  
OfficeMax  
Owl's Nest Golf Club  
Mr. and Mrs. John Piantadosi  
Ravida and Nat Preston  
Robert C. and Jo-Anne S. Rier  
Mr. and Mrs. Robert C. Rooke  
Samyng-D'Elia Architects  
Raymond and Mary Anne Scott  
Suzanne M. Somma  
Speare Memorial Hospital Staff  
Dan Stack  
Judith and John Stang  
Stanley Elevator Company, Inc.  
Rob and Carol Stewart  
Stewart's Ambulance Service, Inc.  
Murray and Jean Swindell  
The Balsam's Grand Resort Hotel  
The Common Man  
The Inn on Newfoundland Lake  
Mr. and Mrs. Jack Tishler  
TOSA Foundation

Sue Velazquez  
Viaggio Spa  
Volpe Charitable Trust  
Wal-Mart  
Wild Coyote Grill  
Roger & June Winsor  
Karen A. Young

#### Tribute Donations

In Honor of Eleanor A. Tishler  
by Mr. and Mrs. Jack Tishler

In Memory of  
Lorraine C. Bisson  
by Ms. Judith J. Dearborn

In Memory of Pearl Boyce  
by Jo Boyce & Sue Velazquez

In Memory of Wilmer R. Brown  
by Ms. Lola F. Brown

In Memory of Lloyd M. Buzzell  
by Beryl A. Buzzell

In Memory of Raymond Glines  
by Marguerite "T" Hoyesen

## Diabetes Expo

Saturday, November 14  
9 a.m. – 1 p.m.

Plymouth Regional Senior Ctr.

A free event offering education and information to help you take a preventative, proactive and pro-management approach to living with diabetes.

#### Featuring:

#### Team Type I

Elite racing cyclists, all of whom live with diabetes

Informational booths, demonstrations and presentations include:

- Low carb/healthy holiday cooking demonstration
- **Dr. Chapin** (Endocrinologist)
- **Dick Smith** (Neighborhood Diabetes)
- EMT presentation
- Ask your pharmacist  
Diabetes Supplies and Foot wear
- Blood pressure, Cholesterol/Blood Sugar, Foot, Eye and Dental screenings
- Exercise, Massage and Reiki Demonstrations

## Health Beat

The WELLNESS NEWSLETTER for the Community We Serve

## *Speare Memorial at Boulder Point*

Construction continues on Speare's new medical office building at Boulder Point, located off Tenney Mountain Highway in Plymouth. All practices and services are expected to be relocated by mid-January 2010. Boulder Point will serve as the new home to:

**RehabFIT (Rehabilitation Services)**

(602) 238-2225

*New Medical Fitness*

*Outpatient Occupational & Physical  
 Therapy*

*School Occupational Therapy*

**Tenney Mountain**

**Internal Medicine**

(603) 536-6355

*Dr. Jeff Reisert*

*Dr. Kathy Pearson*

*(Adolescent Medicine Specialist)*

*Britt MacDonald, PA*

**Plymouth Orthopedics & Sports  
 Medicine Clinic**

(603) 536-1565

*Dr. Michael Giovan*

*Dr. Victor Gennaro*

*Patricia Lacey, PA-C*

**White Mountain Eye Care**

(603) 536-1284

*Dr. John Richards*

*Dr. Chris Russo (August 2010)*

**Visiting Physicians**

(603) 238-2209

*Cardiology*

*Ear, Nose, Throat*

*Neurology*

*Urology*



The exterior work on Speare Memorial at Boulder Point is nearly complete. Photo taken on October 6.



A view of the upper hallway looking north, from which patients will access Tenney Mountain Internal Medicine, Plymouth Orthopedics & Sports Medicine Clinic and the Visiting Physician Suite.