



John Hession

Acknowledging New Hampshire's Mental Health Crisis

Michelle McEwen, FACHE, President/CEO

Recent news articles have brought to light the challenges New Hampshire faces in providing adequate mental health services. Access to mental health services, particularly for crisis situations, is not a new problem. However, the continual growth in demand for services underscores how fragile and inadequate New Hampshire's mental health system is in meeting the needs of its population, particularly in the rural areas.

The Situation

Speare Memorial Hospital's Emergency Department, like other small and rural New Hampshire hospitals, plays a critical role in a patient's initial intervention as it is where patients go when they are experiencing a mental health crisis. Unfortunately, these are the same hospitals that lack the appropriate resources to care for these patients. Many of these communities, including Plymouth, do not have psychiatrists available resulting in a reliance on our mental health system. For the most part, this means our community Mental Health Centers and the State Hospital.

The Process

Community Mental Health Centers were initially established and funded to serve as New Hampshire's mental health "safety

net". Unfortunately continuous funding cuts and shortages have made it difficult for them to support hospital emergency departments in assisting with the evaluation and placement of crisis patients. Genesis Behavioral Health is Plymouth's Community Mental Health Center. They also cover LRGHealthcare. Covering the Plymouth location was a financial burden, and so for many years SMH has lacked access to the necessary resources to conduct an Involuntary Emergency Assessment and arrange placement at the State Hospital.

Resulting Consequences

To coordinate a patient's transfer is a lengthy and complex, multi-step process. Patients first have to get to the appropriate facility for assessment and then to another facility for admission. It takes hours to reach the point of decision of admission, and then hours prior to actual admission, if a bed is available.

Finding an available bed is an even bigger challenge in the north country. As the State Hospital runs at very high occupancy rate, many times patients would be transported to the designated receiving facility in Berlin. Unfortunately, that facility was closed six months ago and there has been no plan implemented to address the resulting increased

Continued on page 6

SMH Welcomes Baby New Year 2008

Bradford "Brad" Balgach was born on Tuesday, January 1 at 1:35 p.m., making him the first baby of 2008 born at Speare Memorial Hospital. Entering the world at 7 lbs., 8 oz., and measuring 20 inches long, Bradford was welcomed by his parents, Joanna and Stephen Balgach of Thornton, and joins older brother Michael, age two.

"Dr. Ebner told me I was his best shot for a New Year's baby," noted Joanna, who explained she had been experiencing false labor and was in the hospital on New Year's Eve for a check-up. As well as having the honor of being the first baby born at SMH in 2008, Bradford is named in honor of his parents' friend. "We

Continued on page 2



Joanna and Stephen Balgach present their son, Bradford, the first baby of 2008 born at Speare Memorial Hospital.

SMH Provides Learning Opportunities for Students

Elaine Melquist, Director of Student & Volunteer Services



Ashley Rochefort, an intern with SMH's Cardiac Rehab program, prepares to check a patient's blood pressure during a workout.

SPEARE
Memorial Hospital
A Critical Access Hospital

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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.

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Knowing that many health professions face serious shortages in the near future, Speare Memorial Hospital is committed to attracting students to health careers. SMH is not a teaching hospital but can still offer brief job shadowing experiences for students enrolled in high schools, universities or who are applying to technical schools.

Other students come to Speare Memorial for their clinical experience or internships. These students need to fulfill 140 – 440 supervised hours to complete their learning objectives. Clinical students are usually found in radiology, the laboratory, medical offices and rehabilitation; however, this spring there is also a Plymouth State University intern assigned to the Community Relations Office.

The newest student experience is the nurse externship program that provides practical experience for nursing students who have completed a Fundamentals of Nursing course and at least one other clinical course. The externship is available as a paid summertime position. Interested nursing students may contact Ann Graves at 603-238-6412.

Ashley Rochefort, PSU senior in Applied Health Fitness, is interning in Cardiac Rehabilitation this winter. Ashley will complete 440 internship hours before she graduates in May. Although her career goal is undecided, she knows she enjoys working with people and motivating them to live a healthy lifestyle.

Ashley learned about the Cardiac Rehab placement from a former SMH intern who spoke highly of the experience. Ashley said that while students can practice taking blood pressures on each other, it is better to have a real life experience that allows practice time with more diverse age groups and health conditions.

Her preceptor is Craig Johnson, exercise physiologist in Cardiac Rehabilitation. Craig speaks enthusiastically about having interns in his department, "I enjoy using PSU because the Health and Human Performance Department sends me the most skilled and most prepared students in the Applied Health Fitness and Exercise Physiology degree programs. After about one-two weeks of training in Cardiac Rehab and the Cardiopulmonary Stress lab, these students are able to apply some of the skills learned through their education."

More information about internships and job shadowing is available from the Student and Volunteer Services office at Speare Memorial, emelquist@spearehospital.com or call 603-238-6460.

SMH Welcomes Baby New Year 2008 *Continued from page 1*

named him for a good friend who actually introduced us, but has since passed away," Joanna said.

A kindergarten teacher at Lin-Wood Elementary school, Joanna's students were all abuzz with the news the baby had arrived. Dad, Stephen, is the assistant manager at the Village of Loon Swim, Tennis & Fitness Club.



SMH Purchases New Equipment for Cardiac Rehab Gym

Contributions from February fundraiser facilitate purchase

Speare Memorial Hospital's *Paint the Town Red* reception held back in February not only raised awareness about the importance of heart health, but was a fundraiser for a new BioStep® Semi-Recumbent Elliptical machine. Seven months later, SMH's Cardiac Rehabilitation added the new machine to its gym.

Joyce Smith of Bristol, a regular participant in SMH's Cardiac Rehabilitation maintenance program, says, "This machine really warms you up. It is a lot of work, but I like the challenge."

Ernest Wallis, also of Bristol, agrees, "It gives you a good work out and is easier on my legs and knees. It requires more effort than some of the other machines, but it's worth it."

Adding the BioStep® Semi-Recumbent Elliptical trainer to the Cardiac Rehab gym now gives patients a choice of six different stations to choose from during their 30-minute circuit. "We selected this machine because it is ideal for older adults and the resistance level is adjustable," explains SMH's Director of Rehabilitation Services Gillian Cavezzali. "It has a smooth and continuous mechanism that gives a low impact, total body workout. And because it is semi-recumbent with a comfortable seat, it broadens the scope as to who can use it." Cavezzali noted the Cardiac Rehab gym is used not only for the cardiac rehabilitation and maintenance program, but also for the Diabetes Exercise and Cancer Recovery groups.



For more information about Cardiac Rehabilitation at Speare Memorial Hospital contact your physician or call (603) 238-6440.

Coping With a Chronic Illness

Lifestyle and Diet Changes May Help
Marie Veselsky, MAOE, RD, LD, CDE

Despite the fact that the majority of the United States population looks rather healthy, statistics tell a different story. Nearly one in two people have a chronic condition. A chronic illness is one lasting three months or more, by definition from the U.S. National Center for Health Statistics.

Metabolic Syndrome meets this definition. Metabolic Syndrome is characterized by abdominal obesity, high cholesterol, elevated blood pressure and glucose intolerance. It is estimated that over 50 million people in the United States have this condition. The underlying risk factor for Metabolic Syndrome is obesity.

People who have Metabolic Syndrome are at increased risk for developing even more serious chronic illnesses such as diabetes, heart disease and stroke. The known factors related to development of a chronic illness are genetics, environment and a person's lifestyle. Genetics and environment you can't do much about.

So what can you do about it? Diet and lifestyle changes such as exercise, can reduce your risk factors for developing a chronic illness. In addition, changes in diet and lifestyle can make a huge difference in the outcome of your existing chronic illness.

Studies indicate early intervention of chronic disease and improvements to a person's health practices can greatly improve their outcome. In other words, you can make a difference. No matter what chronic illness you have, you can benefit from nutritional and lifestyle intervention.

Let 2008 be the year you decide to make a change for a healthier lifestyle. Take advantage of the many health intervention programs at Speare Memorial Hospital.

Nutritional Services
Physical & Occupational Therapy, Cardiac Rehab
Weight Loss Support Group
Diabetes Exercise Program
Diabetes Support Group

Call Nutrition Services at 238-6472 or Rehabilitation Services at 238-2225 for details.

Giving Matters

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

Your Health, Our Mission has been the focus of Speare Memorial Hospital's message to you this year. Our healthcare team could not accomplish our mission without the leadership, expertise and commitment of our wonderful physicians. March 30 is National Doctor's Day, which is an opportunity to honor the physicians who take such great care of us.

Enclosed with this newsletter is a gift envelope in which you can send a donation to Speare Memorial Hospital in honor of a doctor to show how much you appreciate his or her commitment to your good health. You can include a brief message expressing that appreciation. Then on Doctor's Day, we will convey these special messages to those physicians.

Your gift truly matters in helping to provide excellent care here at Speare Memorial Hospital. Please consider taking this opportunity to support *your* community hospital, helping make *Your Health, Our Mission*.

Friends of SMH

Speare Memorial Hospital gratefully acknowledges the generosity of our friends, patients and family for gifts received between September 15, and December 31, 2007. \$175,734 was given during this time period to support the healthcare services, programs and operations. This list does not reflect gifts to the Capital Campaign, which will be recognized in a final campaign report.

Victor Aldridge	Mrs. Reginald Greenwood	Nathaniel and Ravidia Preston	In Memory of Phyllis C. Berton
Mr. and Mrs. Allan E. Ames	Steve and Karen Gregg	PRHS Class of 2008	by Tom and Ann Blair
Nine Anonymous Gifts	Rita E. Grote	The Procter & Gamble Company	
Ashland Women's Club	"Mil" Haines	Acer Proulx	In Memory of Jim Collins
Roberta T. Bartlett Charitable	Hannaford Brothers Grocery	Marjorie H. Randall	by Winnie Collins
Remainder Trust	Store	Lisa A. Reid	
John T. Bennett, Jr. Charitable	Katie Wood Hedberg, ARNP &	Robert C. Rier	In Memory of
Gift Fund	Viking A. Hedberg, MD	Rockywood-Deephaven	Reginald Greenwood
John and Catherine Bentwood	Joseph H. Highland	Camps, Inc.	by Mrs. Reginald Greenwood
Tom and Ann Blair	Christine Hodecker-George	Mr. and Mrs. Robert C. Rooke	In Memory of Olivia Howe
Mary A. Bohn	Mr. and Mrs. Arthur Howe, Jr.	Ken and Nance Ruhm	by Mr. and Mrs. Arthur Howe, Jr.
Nancy Brogren	Ellen S. Hoyt	Dr. Arnie and Sonia Scheller	
Anne L. Bryan	Clint and Michele Hutchins	Joyce Sobetzer	In Memory of Grace Jewell
The Carpenter Family	Innisfree Bookshop	Frank and Barbara Stevens	by Freudenberg-NOK (Bristol/
Chase Street Market	Cheryl Johnson	Barbara and John Stokoe	Ashland) Employees Fund
Winnie Collins	Mr. and Mrs. Scott K. Keefer	Murray and Jean Swindell	
Harte C. Crow, MD	David and Carolyn Kent	David Talbot	In Memory of
Curves of Plymouth/Meredith	Kent L. Kirkland, MD	Mr. and Mrs. Walter Kisser	by Rita E. Grote
The Guy de Chazal Family	Mr. and Mrs. J. Gifford Kriebel	by Max MacPherson	
Charitable Fund	La Societe Des Quarnate	In Memory of	Sherley MacPherson
Joseph Denning	Hommes Et Huit Chevaux	by Max MacPherson	
Marguerite A. Desjardins	Roger and Carol LaFontaine	In Memory of	Harry Fowler Marden
Mr. Maynard W. Dow	Kathy and Todd Lambert	by Jane Porter Potter	
Helen L. Durgy	David and Debbie Lurie	In Memory of Herbert G. Reid	by Lisa A. Reid
Mr. Preston Eames	Max MacPherson		
Dr. and Mrs. Joseph Ebner	Dick and Annie Martin	Tribute Donations	
Edwin S. Webster Foundation	Jeff and Missy Mason	In Honor of Linda S. Nestor and	
Jeanette I. Fournier	MegaPrint, Inc.	the radiology technologists	
Paul & Gisela Estes	Dr. Scott Meyer and	by Harte C. Crow, M.D.	
Douglas Fais	Ms. Nancy Dyer	Memorial Donations	
Reine Fischler Art Company	Anne Milender	In Memory of Beverly Aldridge	
Lisa and Guy Ford	Robert Morton	by Victor Aldridge	
Freudenberg-NOK (Bristol/	Mountain View Grand	In Memory of	Recognizing every gift is very
Ashland) Employees Fund	Northeast Delta Dental	Joseph A. Bachorowski	important to us. If an error
Richard E. & Marie T. Gardner	Foundation, Inc.	by Lisa and Guy Ford	has occurred, please accept
Linda and John Gately	Henry W. Parker	Mr. and Mrs. Lester J. Gilbert	our apology, but please let us
Gateway Alliance Church	Richard W. Peterson	Irene Goddu	know so that we can correct the
Mr. and Mrs. Lester J. Gilbert	Jane Porter Potter		mistake. Thank you!
	David and Barbara Preston Fund		

Get Ready for Golf Season

Tired of the cold and snow? Are you longing for the links? While we may not be able to rush winter along, Speare Memorial Hospital's Rehabilitation Services can help you "get in the swing" with Golf Conditioning. The eight week program begins on Tuesday, March 4 and runs from 6 - 7 p.m. on Tuesdays and Wednesdays through April 24. Sessions will take place in the Rehab gym located at 20 Highland St. in Plymouth, the Citizen's Bank building. The cost of the program

is \$90 and may be reimbursable by insurance.

Designed by SMH's physical therapy professionals, the Golf Conditioning program features golf-specific exercises to improve the body's range of motion and strength through patterns of stretching and toning, helping golfers to understand the body mechanics necessary to enhance their game. The program strives to insure each participant has individualized attention and quality instruction, but participants

are encouraged to work at their own pace, progressing at a rate that is comfortable for them. All participants are asked to bring a gymball and water bottle.

Although the Golf Conditioning program has been developed to prepare golfers for the upcoming season, it benefits anyone seeking to improve their level of fitness and flexibility. For more information or to register call Rehabilitation Services at 238-2225.

Prepare Today for Tomorrow

Speare Memorial Hospital to host Eldercare Conference for Families and Older Adults

Consider the following scenario: Your brother, age 75, is admitted to the hospital. After a two to three day stay he is feeling much improved and ready to go home. However, this is not your brother's first hospital stay this year, and while he doesn't require hospital care, he can no longer care for himself. Going home alone is not an option. Where will your brother go?

This scenario is all too real for many families. "What can we do? Where can we go for help? What services, if any, are available?" These are among the most frequently asked questions when families are faced with making extended or end-of-life care decisions for a family member in the absence of advanced planning. "It is a very emotionally overwhelming time for both the patient and the family as a decision has to be made in a fairly short amount of time," notes Kathy Wieliczko, director of Social Services at Speare Memorial Hospital. "Unfortunately the decision is usually one of availability versus choice."

As one former patient's family member reflects, "I doubt that anyone is truly prepared for death. No matter how much we read, discuss or plan, it isn't until it happens that we truly know. Like all the major points in our lives—leaving home, marriage, the birth of our children—we learn to say 'yes, this is natural, I will do well.' But death?"

Speare Memorial Hospital wants to help families begin the discussion regarding long-term and advanced care planning. Following a very successful Health & Wellness



presentation last year on the 10 most difficult conversations to have with your parents, SMH is planning to host a half day conference that will bring together the service providers from central New Hampshire. **Eldercare: Conference for Families and Older Adults** will be held on Saturday, March 15 beginning at 9 a.m. at the Common Man Inn.

"The feedback we received from last year's presentation on eldercare was that it was a good overview, but people wanted more specific information about services available locally and how to access them," explains SMH's Director of Community Relations Michele Hutchins. "Kathy and I essentially approached one another about the feasibility of doing something more in-depth on eldercare, but from different points of reference. We are putting together a program that not only responds to those specific information requests, but also addresses central New Hampshire's growing population of retirees."

Continued on page 6

Save the Date!

The School Dental Health Program Golf Classic will be held on Thursday, June 12, 2008 at award winning Owl's Nest Golf Club in Campton. The tournament has sold out several years in a row. Contact Susan Durgy at 238-2211 to make your reservation early!

Speare Memorial Hospital's Weight Loss Support Group

When: Meets every Monday
Weigh-in: 5 – 5:30 p.m.
Program: 5:30 – 6 p.m.

Location: Cafeteria

There are six essentials for a successful weight loss program:

1. Set both short term and long term goals
2. Support
3. Meal Plan
4. Portion Control
5. Exercise Program
6. Food Diary

Come join us and let 2008 be the year you meet your weight loss goals!
Call 238-6472 for more information

CHALLENGES • SUPPORT • SOLUTIONS Conference For Parents



Positive Thoughts Lead to Positive Actions

Save the Date! 2008 Conference for Parents

Saturday, April 5
8 a.m. – 12:30 p.m.
Plymouth Regional High School
Who is Raising Our Children?
The Power of Media Influence

Health Beat

The WELLNESS NEWSLETTER for the Community We Serve

Acknowledging New Hampshire's Mental Health Crisis Continued from page 1

demand. Meanwhile, these patients remain in our emergency rooms.

One Small Step

However, Speare Memorial Hospital is taking action to provide greater access to existing services. We have made the commitment to implement technology to assist in accessing Genesis Behavioral Health's services in Plymouth. We are in the process of installing video conferencing equipment, which will allow Genesis to conduct an assessment remotely and in a more timely manner. From that assessment they can provide us with the necessary documentation to facilitate an admission to the State Hospital, if deemed appropriate, directly from Speare Memorial Hospital.

It is but one small step on the mental health care continuum, but one big step in connecting mental health patients in crisis with the care they need, when and where they need it. To solve the whole mental health crisis, the state of New Hampshire has to take steps to ensure adequate: funding for service providers, Medicaid reimbursement to those providers, and beds available at the State Hospital or other designated receiving facilities.

Prepare Today for Tomorrow

Continued from page 5

The conference will open on March 15 at 8:30 a.m. for registration, visiting with exhibitors and a continental breakfast. At 9 a.m., Lisa Morris from ServiceLink of Belknap County will deliver the keynote address. Her presentation will be followed by a panel discussion on key issues including: hospice, Medicaid, mental health, funeral planning, hospital social work/ discharge planning and doctor prescribed clinical needs.

Sponsored in part by Genesis and Apria Healthcare, there is no cost to attend ***Eldercare: Conference for Families & Older Adults***, but advance registration is required. Call Speare Memorial Hospital's Community Relations office at (603) 238-6468 to register, or email: mhutchins@spearehospital.com.

Save the Date! Eldercare: Conference for Families and Older Adults

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Registration starts at 8:30 a.m., conference begins at 9 a.m.
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