



COMMUNITY HEALTH PROGRAMS

healthy people • families • communities

Newsletter | Fall 2020

444 Stockbridge Road | Great Barrington, MA 01230 | chpberkshires.org | Lia Spiliotes, Chief Executive Officer

Take care of yourself and your loved ones.



Friends,

Pandemic fatigue is upon us. Winter is coming and COVID-19 levels are rising in many areas. Many of us are hurting financially and emotionally. We are weary.

But we can take care of one another, pull together and stay the course. We can do the simple work of keeping Berkshire COVID numbers low for ourselves, our families, our communities. We can do this.

But how do we tend to our social and mental health, our community health, our overdue health care needs?

Keep socially connected in ways comfortable for you. Bundle up warm and keep going outdoors, with low-risk walks, hikes and park visits. Create (and protect) your small pod of COVID-safe friends with whom you can share a meal or book group; you can even do this online. Tend to your overdue health care: annual physical, cholesterol checks, cancer screenings and any worrisome symptoms. Help keep our local businesses afloat. If time allows, find a volunteer opportunity that helps others and brings meaning to your life.

And make sure to say no. Say no to too many video social calls after long days of work and caring for kids. Say no to too much news and social media. Saying no helps you keep proper boundaries, so you can best care for yourself and those who need you most. And absolutely ask for help if you need it.

At CHP, we are trying to walk the talk. We continue to review our safe workspace protocols and procedures for patients and staff. We want patients to come back for care and to call when they feel sick. Our Family Services team is creating in-person and online connection opportunities

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Mission Moment

Our community...

Special Deal at Adams Hometown Market: Health Care

The Adams Hometown Market has something extra to offer: health care.

On Wednesdays from 1-4 p.m. the Adams Hometown Market sets aside a parking lot area for BOB, the big orange bus, staffed by CHP clinicians and program staff. Visitors can be seen for a flu shot, sick visit, blood pressure check or other concerns.

"This the busiest location for our rolling operation. We're seeing over 30 people every week," says Katie Race, coordinator of the MHU operation, which makes stops at other Berkshire destinations on weekdays.

But the CHP staff is doing more: each visitor is asked if he or she



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ADMINISTRATION

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Chief Financial Officer

Jennifer Wilkinson
Chief Operating Officer

Betsy Strickler
Chief Communications Officer

Karen Johnson
Chief Human Resources Officer

Christopher Sprowl, MD, MMM
Chief Medical Officer (Interim)

Michelle Derr
Director of WIC & Family Services

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Donor Spotlight: Jane Braus

Donor Builds a Giving Spirit in her Adopted Community



Jane Braus has invested much of her life's work in supporting and volunteering for causes that inspire her. The Planned Parenthood organization and the United Nations Association have been recipients of her generosity and professional skills as a writer and publicist.

A New York native, who for years had a second home in Stockbridge, Jane relocated in 2014 to Kimball Farms in Lenox. Each year residents of this com-

munity select a local nonprofit organization to support, and that's how Jane learned of CHP. Once Kimball Farms residents made their gift, Jane kept giving as a regular donor and friend.

She says she's inspired by the breadth of care that CHP provides the community—well beyond medical care. CHP's Family Services, which provides food, clothing, parent education and playgroups motivate Jane to make an annual gift.

"I like that CHP does such a variety of things for the community and provides for the most basic needs of people," said Jane.

As a writer, her career path in New York included journalism and public relations. She worked for the Boys Clubs of America, a detective magazine and a magazine publishing company.

Jane and her late husband, Jay Braus, raised four children in New York city, where he worked in the real estate world. The family eventually bought their second home in Stockbridge, and for 30 years, they came and went during summers and weekends. After her husband's passing, Jane settled in the Berkshires full time.

"There are so many problems in the world and I am happy to help CHP handle some of them," said Jane.

Our Mission...

CHP's mission is to improve the health of people throughout the Berkshires by delivering exceptional, compassionate health care.

As a federally qualified health center, we care for patients and work with families whose needs are not always reimbursed by health insurance. Your support matters. Please donate today at chpberkshires.org.

Take care

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for families and children, and doing amazing work to fight food insecurity around the county.

To do our best work at CHP, we too need help. Our Annual Fall Appeal is coming, and we urge our friends to reach deep during this unusual year, to help us to help our neighbors take care of themselves. We know we can count on you, and we thank you.

Please, take care of yourself.

Lia Spiliotes

Community Health Programs, CEO



Mission Moment

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is having trouble affording groceries or facing other challenges. If so, the CHP team makes referrals for health insurance information, social services, food banks and other resources. And thanks to donor support, we also offer gift cards to the Adams Hometown Market.

“I feel we’re doing a great justice by having the van here for flu shots, checkups and other things people may need checked out,” said Robert Pytko, store manager. “Being a community partner is what Hometown Market is all about.”

People in town have been health conscious and following COVID-19 protocols, and generally keeping an upbeat spirit. “It’s not doom and gloom around here,” he said.

The MHU is at the market every Wednesday, 1-4 p.m. Appointments are not required but anyone with questions or preferring to reserve a visit time can call (413) 429-2946.

Visitors don’t need to be CHP patients to receive care.

The two rolling health units are key tools in our effort to go where people are already congregating or passing through, in order to provide easy, street-level access to health care and community resources.

“The Adams Police offered to provide rides to some people without transportation, so we have been able to help even more people,” said Katie. “This is a great community effort.”

By The Numbers:

Late Summer - Early Fall 2020
Snapshot of how we are serving
the community



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- **492 COVID-19 tests**
- **996 Flu shots**
- **3,190 TeleHealth visits**
- **5,839 Telephone appointments**
- **2,453 New baby/well-child visits**
- **1,385 Diabetes care**
- **3,199 Hypertension care**



**2020 CHP Annual Appeal
Help Us Help Others.**

CHPBerkshires.org/

2020 CHP Employee of the Year



Mary Feuer was recently named CHP Employee of the Year. For 29 years, the assistant director of CHP Family Services has rarely had a day on the job that matched any other.

One day, Mary is crawling under CHP's mobile health unit to adjust the jacks securing the wheelchair lift. Another day she is working well into the evening to help a family facing a food or housing crisis, or helping homeless people in Pittsfield.

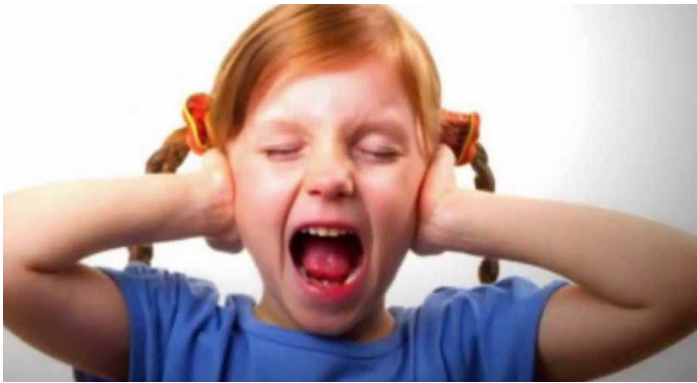
Since COVID-19, the work of Mary and her colleagues at Family Services has been amplified. Local families who already struggled to make ends meet are now negotiating the risk of virus exposure, recent unemployment benefit cuts and the strains of being isolated.

Family Services Director Michelle Derr, who has worked with Mary for these past three decades at CHP, notes that a 10 - 11 hour day is common for Mary. She'll pitch in to do anything, including the mobile health unit's COVID-19 super cleanings required at the end of each day.

"Mary will pitch in to do anything. She does all of this with a smile on her face, and some crazy jokes," says Michelle. "We work with a lot of families who are experiencing crisis, and Mary is consistently optimistic, compassionate and good-humored."

Thank you Mary, for your leadership by example.

Gifts & Grants



CHP Family Services hosts a free parent workshop via ZOOM each month as a resource for caregivers thanks to the Jewish Women's Foundation of the Berkshires. [Check Yourself Before You Wreck Yourself](#) is led by Cynthia Segui, LICSW, and Kim Waterman, MEd. Parents are able to share challenges and get individual advice while connecting with others in a supportive way. Now more than ever, practical tips and real solutions to deal with tantrums, transitions, and difficult moments are critical to families.

Recent Grants to CHP include:

- **Jewish Women's Foundation of the Berkshires** \$3,200 for Parent Workshop Series
- **Berkshire Hills Regional School District through Berkshire Taconic Community Foundation** \$27,500 for PC+ program
- **Commonwealth Health Insurance Connector** \$150,000 for Navigator Insurance Enrollment program expansion
- **MassHealth Provider Access Improvement** \$128,373 to allow for the purchase of bariatric and accessible equipment at 9 practices – including waiting room chairs, scales, blood pressure cuffs, and power convertible medical and dental exam chairs and tables

Insurance Enrollment Program Expansion

CHP has received a grant from the Commonwealth Health Insurance Connector Authority (the "Health Connector") for the Massachusetts Navigator Program. The grant provides \$150,000 over two years, and expands CHP's current enrollment staff and programming, allowing more local residents to receive assistance with health insurance enrollment. This outreach, education, and enrollment program is focused on reaching those who are uninsured, who experience gaps in coverage, and those who live in communities most vulnerable to uninsurance. The program also helps make sure current members maintain insurance coverage. With these grant funds, CHP will double our efforts to assist those identified as disproportionately underserved, most likely to be uninsured, and those who need support in languages other than English. The program offers insurance enrollment services to both CHP patients and members of the community at large.

In addition to directly supporting currently enrolled members in maintaining insurance and providing uninsured residents with enrollment support services, the Navigator Program also helps increase awareness of insurance coverage. CHP's expanded enrollment navigator team, includes bilingual staff who are able to provide services in-person and via telephone. Additionally, as state and local COVID guidelines permit, the navigators will participate in community events, visit local churches, and be available to meet at libraries and community centers to provide insurance enrollment information and support.





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Housatonic Food Train: Village Food Donation Pick-up Helps Fill CHP Food Shelves



Volunteers Carol and Ellen unload their vehicle.

On the 1st and 3rd Sunday of each month, neighbors in Housatonic village leave groceries outside their doors for pick-up by a Housatonic Food Train volunteer. Vehicles are packed to the brim loaded with supplies to restock shelves of CHP's food assistance programs.

The Food Train came about in the early months of COVID-19 as local food needs at CHP surged. Posting in the Housatonic Neighbors Facebook group, Ellen Lahr gauged interest and found that people wanted to help.

On that very first Sunday, her car was packed! "I assumed some people who might normally drive to a food bank to make a donation may not want to leave home," said Ellen. "This seemed like a way to help donors and CHP."

The Food Train is growing, as is the need for CHP's food assistance program. Now, a small crew of rotating drivers shares the pickup and drop-off job. Thank you Ellen for thinking "outside of the box" and coordinating these efforts!

"The generosity of the Housatonic Food Train has been such a creative and wonderful help," says Mary Feuer of Family Services. "With the cold weather coming, this effort will help us to continue assisting families who may have to choose between fuel and food. It is so great to see neighbors helping neighbors."