Standardizing care

Changes are under way to ensure clinical practices across the campus share the same structure.

Plans are progressing to standardize the structure of clinical practices in the Ambulatory Care Center (ACC) with those in the Doctors Office Building (DOB).

Although all BUMC physicians are a part of the Faculty Practice Plan Foundation (FPP), not all of the practices are managed in the same way. For example, practices in the DOB are led by department chairs and run as not-for-profit companies, whereas those in the ACC have been managed by the hospital.

The process is expected to be finished later this month.

“The goal is to give the responsibility and accountability to the local physician managers in the ACC so that we are better positioned to meet our organizational objectives,” said John Chessare, MD, MPH, senior vice president and chief medical officer at BMC. Chessare is leading the restructuring effort with Ben Beres, executive director of the FPP.

In the DOB, the department chair currently has ultimate responsibility for the day-to-day operations of the department. By organizing the ACC practices to work in the same way, each department chair will now have general oversight of his or her ACC practice. Day-to-day budget management will be vested in each ACC practice.

Although management responsibilities will change, all employees will remain BMC employees, all union affiliations will remain intact and current professional billing arrangements will continue.

“In this new model, physicians will have greater autonomy within their practices.”
— Ben Beres

Couple hope to make their match in March

Ari and Kirsten Berman are both fourth-year medical students — and newlyweds — who hope Match Day on March 16 brings nothing but good news.

Both plan to specialize in internal medicine and both have applied for residencies at Boston hospitals. Although they don't expect to have a problem making their matches, the concern is still there. What happens if they don't match together? “Well,” said Ari, laughing, “that would be very bad.”

Match Day is an annual event during which fourth-year medical students across the country receive the results of a national computerized process that matches medical students with the teaching hospitals where they will complete postgraduate training in intern and residency programs. At BUSM, the Bermans are not the only couple hoping to match together.

“This year is the year of the couples,” said Arthur Culbert, PhD, associate dean of Student Affairs at BUSM. “Usually we have one or two couples in the graduating class, but this year we have around five or six.”

Ari, 28, is a native of Maine and Kirsten, 24, hails from both West Virginia and the Virgin Islands. The couple met at a BU Graduate School boat cruise dance while she was a first-year medical student at BUSM and he was working at the Mallory...
**Directorate assistance now available on intranet**

Last year, BMC spent approximately $100,000 dialing directory assistance. Now, in an effort to combat these high costs, the Department of Telecommunications is asking employees to stop picking up the phone and start clicking the mouse.

"We have believed, based on previous research, that oral transmission of HIV was not a big issue. But lately we're realizing it poses a bigger concern than we thought," said Denise Russo, program administrator for AIDS-related grants at the NIH's National Institute of Dental and Craniofacial Research. "Dr. Chou has illuminated an area of research that is becoming very important, and we're eager to see more of his work."

Chou's study appeared in a recent issue of the Journal of Oral Pathology & Medicine.

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**BMC expands employee recognition programs**

Placing increased emphasis on employee recognition, BMC will begin holding quarterly ceremonies to recognize those who have been selected as winners of the WE CARE Individual Employee Awards. In addition to the ceremonies, the hospital will also launch the WE CARE Team Recognition Award later this year.

The ceremonies, beginning this month, will offer all employees who have been selected as WE CARE Individual Employee Award winners since the program started in June 1999. Winners' photos and accomplishments have been featured in display cases around the medical center, as well as listed in MedCenter News.

"What I find fascinating is that nominees are recognized by their peers for their leadership, enthusiasm and contributions," said Elaine Ullian, BMC president and CEO. "We appreciate that our experts are those people closest to the work -- on the job-race and every day, adding value."

The WE CARE Individual Employee Awards honor employees who, in the course of their jobs, exceed required standards and help further the mission of BMC. Criteria used to judge nominees include the significance of their contributions to BMC, the quality of independent thought, insight or creativity involved in their actions. Winners may select from either a $100 American Express Gift Cheque or an $100 U.S. savings bond. Employees are eligible to win the award once a year.

"By instituting a quarterly ceremony, we hope to place an even brighter spotlight on the accomplishments of those employees who have gone above and beyond," said Patricia Webb, vice president of Human Resources at BMC.

Later this year, BMC will launch the WE CARE Team Recognition Award. "The team awards will focus on groups of individuals whose joint efforts support a cooperative, working environment and exemplify excellence in the delivery of service to our internal or external customers," said Webb. "We are confident we will have a recognition pin and a framed certificate." "One of the more rewarding aspects of all the WE CARE programs is the opportunity to recognize our members of our staff who bring Boston Medical Center's mission to life on a daily basis," said Gloria Miller-Bogun, RN, vice president of Nursing at BMC.

Nomination forms can be found in Human Resources or on BMC's intranet site: www.intranet.bmc.org. For more information, call 638-8573.

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**Service shuttles patients between health centers and hospital**

E ven before the Big Dig created chronically congested traffic, Boston was a tough town to navigate. For BMC HealthNet Plan (BMC-HP) members, however, the trip from Boston HealthNet health centers to the medical center just got a lot easier.

BMC has introduced two new shuttle buses to supplement the services between the health centers and the hospital. A third vehicle, a mini-bus, operates on a continuous loop between the East Boston Neighborhood Health Center and BMC.

"We want to offer patients the opportunity to get to the medical center in a safe and efficient manner," said Mary Boran, administrative coordinator for Transportation at BMC. "We believe these buses are exactly what they have been designed for."

BMC-HP members can use the shuttle service, which runs regularly throughout the day, free of charge. The larger two buses have been "wrapped" in the colorful purple, yellow and white BMC-HP logos, making them easy to identify. According to Boyan, BMC-HP members make frequent use of the shuttles to fill prescriptions, undergo certain tests, or see specialists. "Many are elderly and don't drive," she said.

"To get here, they might have to take public transportation, which could involve changing buses and spending money. The shuttle is a convenient way to travel."

One bus serves the General Practice and Dental Center, the Matapan Community Health Center, the Health Center New Neighborhood Health Center, the Roxbury Comprehensive Community Health Center, and the Whitter Street Health Center. The other travels between the Codman Square Health Center, the Dorchester House Multi-Service Center, the Upham's Corner Health Center, and the South Boston Community Health Center.

"By adding more of these buses to transport patients between many Boston HealthNet health centers and the medical center, our patients can now get to the hospital or their health center in a safe and easy manner," said Boyan.

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**SHP board welcomes new members**

SHP recently added five new members, who bring a wealth of experience and expertise in various areas of public health, to its Board of Visitors.

Tristan Blake, South End Community Health Center; Ira Davis, Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection; Alan Jette, BU's Sargent College of Health and Rehabilitation Sciences; William Van Fossen, Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Massachusetts; and Sally Dean, an independent health consultant and former director of the Fenway Community Health Center, will join the board this year.

The Board of Visitors serves in an advisory capacity to SHP. The board comprises public health professionals from the Boston area and beyond.

"We are very excited to begin working with our new members, who bring to the board a vast array of public health experience," said Dean Robert Morran, MD, MPH, MBA.

A few of the new members are already active with the school and local community. Davis works with SHP's alumni board and Dean has taught in the health sciences classes at the school. Jette is a professor of social and behavioral sciences at SHP and a full-time faculty member at SHP.

Blake also has strong ties to the South End. He has served as executive director of the health center for almost 20 years. Van Fossen has been president and CEO of Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Massachusetts since 1992.

"We are thrilled to have all these new members, many of whom have already partnered with the school and our local community," said Evan. "These new members will bring a wealth of experience and expertise to our board of visitors and will help us to continue our work of supporting and shaping the future of our school and our community."
The students begin the course during their months and the program intertwines traditions in the health care industry, and it's four years of medical education. The course reviews the career path on which they are nature of the medical profession in the 21st century and introduces students to the wide array of possibilities that exist for their medical careers.

A number of factors have probably contributed to the decline, and while we cannot say whether these nursing homes provide excellent or even acceptable overall care, we are encouraged by these improvements," he said.

Pressure ulcers, otherwise known as bedsores, result when blood flow to the skin is somehow obstructed. Bedsores are common among bedridden patients: a lack of movement results in constant pressure being placed upon a particular area of the body, such as the pressure and lack of blood flow can cause ulceration of the skin. The study appeared in the January 2000 edition of the Journal of the American Geriatrics Society.

Physicians offer hope for chronic snoring BUMC physicians are now offering an innovative treatment to help patients combat snoring disorders.

The new procedure — somnoplasty — uses low-power, low-temperature radio frequency energy to treat an area in the soft palate or the tissues where snoring most often originates. According to Gregory Grifone, MD, FACS, director of the Voice and Swallowing Clinic in the Department of Otorhinolaryngology — Head and Neck Surgery at BUMC, and assistant professor of otorhinolaryngology — head and neck surgery at BUSM, somnoplasty is minimally invasive and virtually painless.

During the procedure, a small probe heats the tissue within the soft palate, creating an area of coagulation that the body naturally removes over the following four to six weeks. This procedure reduces the amount of tissue and softens the area responsible for snoring.

Somnoplasty can be performed in a physician's office using local anesthesia and takes less than 30 minutes. "Once the procedure is complete, there may be some minor swelling and or discomfort, much like feeling of an oncoming cold," said Grifone. "During the next month, the patient may experience a gradual decrease in their snoring.

Grifone added that those considering the procedure can consult with their physicians to rule out sleep apnea (a potentially life-threatening condition that is characterized by brief interruptions of breathing during sleep). Sleep apnea can be detected through an examination of a person's medical history together with an overnight sleep test.

"A slow heart rate is defined as fewer than 60 beats per minute (rpm), which results in a lengthened output of blood from the heart. A fast heartbeat is greater than 100 bpm and is often closer to 200-300 bpm. Because the heart's contractions are inefficient and an insufficient amount of blood is pumped through the body," he said.

The EP lab is filled with state-of-the-art diagnostic equipment. A special X-ray machine uses two cameras to construct a two-dimensional, real-time image of a beating heart. Other instruments localize the source of the rhythm problem, in a process known as "mapping."

Ultrasound is also a tool doctors use to diagnose rhythm problems. "The lab offers us multiple ways to locate the source of the abnormal rhythm and subsequently treat it," Monahan said. "It also places Boston Medical Center on the cutting edge of treating cardiac patients."

How fast, or slow, the heart is beating will tell us something about its function. "With a slow heartbeat, we will implant a pacemaker, which keeps the heart beating about the certain rate," Monahan said.

Several treatments are available to treat a fast heartbeat. Medication in one option, as is cauterization of the area in the heart producing an irregular heartbeat. A third option is an ICD, an implantable cardiac defibrillator, which shock delivers if electrical impulses become unstable. "The advances in the technology available to treat heart arrhythmias are driving electrophysiology, which is a growing area in cardiology," Monahan said.

The technology is also allowing us to treat successfully a wider range of patients and reduce the number of deaths from electrical problems within the heart."
BMC to introduce patient education TV

Patients will soon have more options as they surf through television channels during their stay at BMC. The New Patient Education Television Network will introduce 19 new channels through the year to educate patients and families concerning relevant health issues. The network will serve as a supplement to one-on-one interaction between doctors and nurses and their patients.

Each channel will discuss a different health topic such as cardiovascular health, physical fitness, nutrition and relaxation techniques, as well as common patient diagnoses. These 19 new channels will be added to the basic cable service already available in all patient rooms.

In addition, two channels will focus on new moms and provide helpful information to new mothers. Available in maternity areas, the channels will provide information to new mothers.

Paul Celucci has selected Rebecca Gadon, RN, co-chair of the Patient Education Steering Committee and director of Nursing Operations at BMC, as the co-founder and CEO, to be a member of the newly created Governor's Board of Economic Advisors. Ullian is the only health care representative among the 25 business and academic leaders who comprise the board. The board draws to members from the CEOs and presidents of companies ranging from Bell Atlantic and Liberty to Herrick, Johnson, Smith and Reynolds.

Created by an executive order in January, the Governor's Board of Economic Advisors will identify the state's most pressing problems and issues associated with doing business in Massachusetts. It will work in conjunction with the Governor's Economic Development Council, which will focus on issues raised and develop possible initiatives.

"Making sure that Massachusetts' economy continues to be strong benefits everyone, from business owners to university students," Ullian said. "We were thrilled to have the opportunity to work together to ensure that the future of Massachusetts continues to be bright."

In advising the Celucci administration, the board will focus on four economic categories: addressing the cost of doing business in Massachusetts; expanding the state's workforce; upgrading the state's infrastructure; and addressing the state's growth and development.

"In the spring of 1996, the Celucci administration committed to creating a climate where businesses can flourish," Celucci said. "By helping businesses understand the importance of their new employees and those living below the poverty line, the show's moderator presented two case studies:..."
Richard Shenin, MD, vice chairman of the Division of Surgery and chairman of the Department of Cardiothoracic Surgery at BMC, and professor and chairman of Cardiothoracic Surgery at BUSM, was recently named one of the nation’s top doctors in cardiac surgery by Consumers Checkbook, a nonprofit consumer information and service center. More than 260,000 physicians were surveyed. In addition, the Thoracic Surgery Training Directors Association appointed Shenin editor of the new curriculum for cardiothoracic surgery residents. He is responsible for the entire section covering adult cardiac surgery. Shenin was also recently elected chairman of the American Association of Thoracic Surgeons (AATS) Workforce Committee to study and understand the demand for thoracic surgeons in the United States. In addition, Shenin was appointed as the representative from the AATS and the Society of Thoracic Surgeons to work on the cardiovascular Dartmouth Atlas with the Dartmouth Health Policy Institute at Dartmouth University.

New appointments

Thomas Greenwood has been named Security Operations Supervisor. In his new position, Greenwood is responsible for overseeing all the security operations on both the East Newton Street and Harrison Avenue campuses, in addition to supervising security officers. He came to BMC as a special police officer in 1997.

Lynn Hendricks was recently appointed assistant vice president and director of Development at BUSM. Hendricks has been the director of Major Gifts at BUSM since May 1998 and acting director of Development since August 1999. Before coming to BUSM, Hendricks worked at Tufts School of Dental Medicine and the University of New England.

Melanie Kazlas, MD, has been named director of the Pediatric Ophthalmology Clinic at BMC. Kazlas received her MD from Albany Medical College in 1989 and completed both her residency and fellowship in pediatric ophthalmology and strabismus at Manhattan Eye, Ear and Throat Hospital in New York. Most recently she was director of Pediatric Ophthalmology at BUSM.

James Ryan, MD, MPH, FA COEM, has been appointed to the recently created position of medical director of the Occupational and Environmental Medicine Department at BMC. In this capacity, Ryan is responsible for the clinical, occupational and environmental health services provided to employees and students at BMC and the BU Medical Campus. Ryan came to BMC from the Cambridge Health Alliance, where he served as medical director of the Occupational and Employee Health Department. Ryan received his MD from BUSM in 1973 and an MPH from the Harvard University School of Public Health in 1986. He is a Fellow of the American College of Occupational and Environmental Medicine.

BMC announces February WE CARE winners

Recognized for their outstanding dedication and commitment to the mission of BMC, several employees were recently honored with WE CARE Individual Employee Awards. The awards honor employees who, in the course of their jobs, exceed required standards and responsibilities and help further the mission of BMC to provide exceptional care without exception. Criteria used to judge nominees include the significance of their contribution to BMC and the amount of independent thought, insight or creativity involved in their actions.

The February awards were presented to: Rebecca Brown, RN, research nurse manager, Department of Oncology; Richard Gonsalves, receptionist, Information Services; and Robert McGrath, HelpDesk technician, Information Technology.

Employees can view present and past winners on the BMC Web site:
To view:
Go to bmc.org
Click on “What’s New”
Click on “WE CARE – Employee Recognition Award”

People

Florence Allen-Greenway, director of the Minority Recruitment Program at BMC, was recently honored by the Martin Luther King Jr. Action Project at Lincoln-Sudbury Regional High School. Greenway was recognized for her work as president of Health Care for All, a non-profit organization that works to ensure quality health care for those who may be overlooked in today’s health care system.

Supriya Ramanathan, MD, a pediatrician with the Mattapan Community Health Center, recently received a Community Access to Child Health (CATCH) grant awarded by the American Academy of Pediatrics and funded by Wyeth Lederle Vaccines. Ramanathan runs the program, "Promoting Empowerment of Adolescent in Creating Community Health Services," at the center.

Vaishali Sanchorawala, MD, clinical coordinator of the Stem Cell Transplant Program, Section of Hematology/Oncology in the Department of Medicine at BMC, and assistant professor of medicine at BUSM, made a presentation at a recent meeting of the American Society of Hematology in New Orleans. Her presentation was titled, "Five years in Creating Community Health Services."

Richard Shemin, MD, vice chairman of the Department of Cardiothoracic Surgery at BMC, and professor and chairman of Cardiothoracic Surgery at BUSM, was recently named one of the nation’s top doctors in cardiac surgery by Consumers Checkbook, a nonprofit consumer information and service center. More than 260,000 physicians were surveyed. In addition, the Thoracic Surgery Training Directors Association appointed Shemin editor of the new curriculum for cardiothoracic surgery residents. He is responsible for the entire section covering adult cardiac surgery. Shemin was also recently elected chairman of the American Association of Thoracic Surgeons (AATS) Workforce Committee to study and understand the demand for thoracic surgeons in the United States. In addition, Shemin was appointed as the representative from the AATS and the Society of Thoracic Surgeons to work on the cardiovascular Dartmouth Atlas with the Dartmouth Health Policy Institute at Dartmouth University.

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A timely addition

Gracing the entrance of the medical campus, a fifteen-foot, four-sided clock now greets employees, faculty, students and visitors on the Talbot Building lawn facing Albany Street.

Save the Date!

BMC Gala
“International Avenue”
June 10, 2000

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